

## **Lafayette City-Parish President's Awareness Committee for Citizens with Disabilities**

Monday, March 10, 2008  
Meeting Minutes

**Board Members Present:** Harold Arceneaux; Jim Richard; Peggy Stelly

**Excused:** Paul Fontana; Richard Phelps

**Guests in Attendance:** Ashley Bertrand; Troy Abshire; Mark Guillory; Dan Arabie;  
Yenter Tu; Leslie Perrodin; Chuck Falcon; Deborah Aymond; Linda Trahan

**Staff Present:** Ben Berthelot

1. Jim Richard called the meeting to order and welcomed the guests.
2. The February meeting minutes were approved.
3. Old Business: Council of Government's (COG) Meeting. Peggy Stelly discussed the COG meeting that she attended to present to the area mayors the idea of extending the paratransit service outside the city limits of Lafayette. Peggy attended the COG meeting to discuss possible funding options. Peggy said the mayors weren't totally against the idea, but that they were hesitant to commit to the concept because of the lack of ridership that took place during previous attempts to extend the service. Peggy said the recommendation came that the committee explore the idea of vouchers for paratransit service outside of the city limits. The committee discussed the voucher system, and said that currently there was only one cab company in Lafayette that could provide adequate service – Quality Cabs. Ben Berthelot said that he would see if Transit staff could research other communities that use voucher systems and have the transit staff come back to the committee to report, either at the April or May meeting.
4. New Business: Ben Berthelot directed the committee to the documents that were attached to the agenda: 1. Committee By-laws and Resolution 2. Email from Paul Fontana 3. Email from Peggy Stelly. Berthelot told the committee that Paul Fontana had raised a concern about the purpose of the committee in an email, and Peggy Stelly sent a similar email and also had questions about guests taking up the majority of the agenda. Berthelot told the committee that it was their committee and they could decide whatever they wanted to put on the agenda. Jim Richard suggested asked if there was a possibility of forming subcommittees to allow non-voting members to participate and take some of the workload off of the committee. Berthelot said the resolution allows for the creation of subcommittees. Harold Arceneaux asked that it be put into the minutes that he replied to Paul Fontana's email stating that the committee was a requirement and mandated and that he had worked hard with councilmen and the administration to bring the committee back after years of absence. Jim Richard said in the future, when need be, the committee would utilize subcommittees.
5. Public Comments: Ashley Bertrand with LARC discussed "National Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month," which is being celebrated during the month of March. She discussed some of the awareness they

are hoping to create during the month, such as People First Language. Bertrand introduced Troy Abshire with the Office of Developmental Disabilities, who said that his office would work with the committee to help provide stats pertaining to the Transportation issue discussed earlier in the meeting. Dan Arabie brought up funding for an initiative he would like the committee to explore. Berthelot explained that the committee does not have any funding tied to it, and suggested he contact his councilman directly. Arabie also mentioned that he had read through old minutes of the committee and saw that the committee had at one time discussed movies at the Grand Theatre and the fact that they were not available for the visually or audio impaired. Berthelot said the committee approached the Grand about this subject, but that ultimately LCG cannot mandate private companies to provide any services. Peggy Stelly encouraged Arabie to personally contact the Grand.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.
7. The next meeting of the President's Awareness Committee for Citizens with Disabilities is scheduled for Monday, April 14, 2008 from 11:30-12:30 in the Council Briefing Room on the first floor of Lafayette City Hall.