

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

Monday, August 13, 2007
Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Steve Jankower; Dr. Ron Cheek; Carole Glover; Richard Phelps; Paul Fontana.

Guests in Attendance: Yenter Tu; Peggy Stelly; Harold Arceneaux; Charlotte Ducote; Mark Guillory; Donald Leger

Staff Present: Ben Berthelot; Mike Mitchell

1. The July 2007 meeting minutes were approved.
2. Steve Jankower introduced guest speaker Donald Leger, LSU Health Sciences Center, Program Coordinator for the LA Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Project. Donald explained that he works with people with disabilities to inform them about SSI, SSDI, and how working will or will not affect benefits. He works with many social service agencies and his services are free. Dr. Cheek asked that we provide a link to the services offered on the President's Awareness Committee for Citizens with Disabilities link of the website. The website is not up yet, but Ben Berthelot told the committee. Steve Jankower stated that there is a lot of mis-information out there and that the rules have changed.
3. Steve Jankower introduced guest speaker Charlotte Ducote, Program Director/AT Coordinator Region VI&IV Center for Assistive Technology. Charlotte talked about the assistive services her organization provides at Lerosen Elementary (Charter School). The Center for Assistive Technology provides free training and a lending library that lends resources to schools. The committee asked that a link to www.atanswers.com be placed on the website as well.
4. Correspondence: Ben Berthelot referenced an email received from Yenter Tu that was part of the agenda packet. Three calls were received to the Disability Hotline.
 - a. Lou Broussad – resident at Les Petites Maison complaining of raw sewerage in front of her unit. Ben referred the call to the Environmental Quality Division who went out to investigate the complaint.
 - b. Keri Shaw – wanted to know how to join the committee. Ben referred her to the Advocacy Center, since the Advocacy Center has yet to make an appointment to the committee.
 - c. Linda Moore – Ben returned Linda's call and missed her return call. He will follow up with her.
5. Old Business:
 - a. Carole Glover and Richard Phelps discussed the Paratransit Survey they compiled to gauge interest in running paratransit outside of the city limits. The committee recommended a couple of changes and asked that the survey be distributed to as many agencies in town as possible. The committee also asked that a deadline to September 15th be added on the

survey so that the results could be reported at the next meeting. Steve mentioned that he and Dr. Cheek are scheduled to discuss extending the service to area mayors at the September Council of Governments meeting.

- b. Mike Mitchell discussed the Public Hearing on proposed city bus route changes/fare increases. He stated that the deadline for public comment was extended to August 2nd because several disabled individuals felt they hadn't been properly notified of the public comment time. Mike stated that he received several comments that the rates, although needed, were excessive and perhaps a gradual increase would be better. His staff will be addressing this in the final report that will be issued to Director Tony Tramel in the very near future. Any action would require Council approval, which would provide another avenue for public comment. Steve asked that Mike continue to keep the committee posted.

- i. Richard Phelps discussed a few complaints he has heard regarding scheduling and the amount of time that riders can expect to be on a bus. Peggy Stelly echoed Richard's comments. Mike indicated that no one should be on the bus for longer than 1 hour and 15 minutes. Paul Fontana and others asked that the riders be informed of this so that they can plan accordingly when scheduling rides. Mike also informed the group that a customer complaint line is available (291-7041). If his office does not hear about the complaints, it is hard to act on them. He encouraged riders to call the number with complaints.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m.
7. The next two meetings of the President's Awareness Committee for Citizens with Disabilities will be held one week later than the normal meeting time - Monday, September , 17, 2007 and Monday, October 15, 2007 from 11:30-12:30 pm in the Council Briefing Room on the first floor of Lafayette City Hall.