

MAYOR'S COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

AGENDA
April 11, 2012,

Piedmont Room Boston City Hall
5:30p.m. -7:30 p.m.

- Introductions
- Approval of March Minutes
- Commissioner's report: Kristen McCosh
- Architectural Access Update: Kathryn Aldrich
- Chair's Report: Carl Richardson
- Proposal To Read Minutes Every Meeting
- Commitment of Membership
- Membership Composition
- Direction of Committee
- Discussion of when to have election
- AAB Working Group
- Legislative Priorities
- Public Input
- Old Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Minutes for Wednesday, April 11, 2011
5th Floor Piemonte Room Boston City Hall
5:30-7:30PM

Present:

(CR) Carl Richardson, Acting-chair
 (SL) Suzanne Leveille

Staff Present:

(KA) Kathryn Aldrich

Absent:

(KM) Kristen McCosh, Commissioner
 (EB) Eileen Brewster
 (DE) David Estrada
 (JWinske) John Winske
 (HW) Heather Watkins
 (JWard) Janice Ward
 (AB) Arnold Berry

No meeting held. Quorum was not present.

Public Concern:

John Almonte attended and presented a recent situation that occurred with the Boston taxi cab system. John planned a trip to Florida with the intention of flying out of Logan Airport. He typically drives his own accessible vehicle, but did not want to leave his vehicle at the airport for the duration of his trip. The goal was to identify a local cab company that would be able to accommodate his powered wheelchair. Metro Cab was the only company that was able to. He spoke to Aaron at Metro Cab 4 times in December and explained his powered chair and that he would be bringing a manual chair, another person and luggage. He called back to confirm the appointment. When the cab arrived at 4am the morning of the trip, the cab appeared to be accessible. At the sight of the rear entry it was evident that the cab was accessible to manual wheelchairs only. The cab driver manually removed the ramp and John attempted to enter the van. He hit his head, even when trying to tip backwards. The cab driver primarily spoke Spanish and tried to say that he needed the other van Metro has for wheelchairs. The cab driver then left saying he had other appointments, but another cab should be on the way. After being told a cab was on the way for 40 minutes, John finally spoke to a dispatcher who was at least apologetic. The dispatcher explained that although they do have the accessible cab, it was on the other side of town and not able to get there in time. John and his friend were ultimately forced to take his own accessible vehicle to Logan airport.

Before leaving Florida, John's friend contacted the GM of Metro who rudely told them the cabs were accessible and met City of Boston specifications. John had to pay the \$200 for parking his vehicle at Logan that he was trying to avoid. He called Metro again to speak to the owner and spoke to Aaron, who had made the initial appointment. When John requested he be put through to the owner, Aaron refused saying John was going to get him fired. John told him that he was not above suing Metro Cab if that is what it took. When he was finally put through to Steven Sullivan, the owner, Sullivan threatened him that he had John on taping saying he was going to shoot his employee and that he needed to drop the issue. John remained calm and pointed out that he would never say that, but he did say he would sue.

About 30 minutes later Captain O'Connor called to discuss the complaint. Captain O'Connor said that in the two years he's been in his position there has never been a complaint, but takes full responsibility. Captain O'Connor said that he would follow up or his partner would. The next day his partner called to follow up and acknowledged that Metro Cab did not do the right thing.

John is concerned about others who are not able to speak up for themselves and that the codes and specifications are outdated. He had no issues getting an accessible cab in Florida.