

Disability Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 12th, 2023

Note: Members of the Commission may choose to participate in the meeting in person or remotely.

Meeting called to order at 6:50pm

1. Roll Call of Commission Members:
 - a. **Present** - Shanti Chilikuri, Tovah Miller, Amanda Belles, Nichole Mossalam, Marilyn Andrews, Chuks Ezewuzie
 - b. **Late** – Maria Luise, Ralph Long
 - c. **Absent** – None
2. Approval of minutes – Motion to table by Chuks, Seconded by Amanda, Passes unanimously
3. Guest Speakers introduced by Amanda Belles for discussion of the new Malden Hospital Inpatient Facility
 - a. City Councilor Amanda Linehan, Ward 3; Sean Curran; and Miles Kramer; Someone from Tufts Medicine; Lori Howley from Tufts Medicine and Melrose Wakefield Hospital; City Councillor At-Large Karen Colon-Hayes; Amanda Ceide Intensive Care Coordinator at Elliot Center
 - b. Speech by Sean Curran Highlights – Background on Hospital site, study was conducted to discover the greatest need that the building could be used to meet, this led to the joint venture between Acadia Health and Tufts Medicine, there were many community conversations to ensure community input was considered at all levels of planning and implementation. This has led to the current plan of the inpatient facility along with over 9 acres of open space to the community
 - c. Speech by Miles Highlights – Introduction to Acadia and its work
 - d. Questions by Commissioners – Chuks asks about building accessibility as it is an older building - 10% of the beds will be ADA Accessible and all common areas as well, all room are designed to be bright and open with a very pleasant environment. Gives full overview of facilities. Chuks asks how they know that 10% will be adequate. They meet the legal guidelines and placed emphasis of accessibility on common areas as most of a patients’ time will be out of their rooms, no patient will be turned away. Amanda asks why not make every bed accessible. There is a need to balance between safety measures to prevent self-

harm and meeting accessibility needs. Amanda asks where will patients go when the facilities are full and when they are ready to be discharged. There will be an intake and referral team to evaluate and balance these needs. Additionally, outpatient programs will be available for those who may not need the full inpatient care. Marilyn states she's glad this is all happening and expresses concern on how the stigma of addiction treatment will be handled. Tovah asks about capabilities of accepting ED cases.....They aim for a 15 minute decision turnaround time for ED admissions. Tovah asks what percentage are reserved for adolescent, 24 of the 144 will be reserved for them. Tovah asks about geriatric beds, there will be a dedicated geriatric program. Amanda asks Councillor Linehan if there has been any pushback on this project and if so, how can the Commission offer support? There has been some concerns expressed but overall the community has been very supportive and recognizes the need that this will fulfill. Most concerns have been about security and safety which have mainly been overcome. Chuks asks about timeline for opening, there is still a process to be pursued with the city and other regulating bodies. They hope to open by the end of 2024. Guest Amanda Ceide asks about which healthcare plans will be accepted, most of their patients are Medicaid/Medicare, they care for all and have a robust charity program.

4. Subcommittee Reports and Updates

- a. Updates that Tovah Miller appointed as Chair of Public Facilities
- b. Policy subcommittee updates by Chuks – Upcoming meeting next Thursday January 26th, The subcommittee will be discussing accessibility of city communications electronically, online, and more along with have a Disabilities Services Center of some sort. Marilyn provides reminder of need to properly post meeting Agenda.
- c. Schools and ELC project update by Marilyn – They are currently finalizing the design and should be hearing back soon.
- d. GRIT Survey – Demographics Do you live or work Malden, Do you have a disability or have a family member with a disability, How frequently would you use this,
- e. Update on Memorial for Frank by Maria Luise – No updates at this time

5. Funding proposals – The Commission is able to write a letter to the Mayor to ask for funding of accessibility projects and initiatives for funding consideration.

6. Update on Inter-City Disability Commission Cooperation by Marilyn -

7. New Business

- a. How do we handle unexcused absences of commissioners – referred to policy subcommittee
- b. Resident complaint – issue with signalization and accessibility at an intersection of Eastern and Madison, was referred to and assessed by the engineering department, there are issues that were identified and a meeting is scheduled to

take corrective action. Maria Luise will contact the complainant to provide update.

- c. Resident complaint – issues with sidewalk on Chestnut St. Marilyn will send pictures to Maria Luise for investigation.
 - d. Maria Luise provided update that the Mayor signed a contract with AudioEye and will be added onto the website soon.
 - e. Marilyn provided information on Malden resident who wrote a book. Marilyn will ask him if he would like to be a guest at a meeting or have a separate book discussion event. Update at next meeting.
 - f. Amanda brings up issue of accessible parking issue around city hall. Discussion of various need and competing interests for surrounding parking. Maria Luise will investigate possible solutions.
 - g. Chuks brings up a need for Commission to recognize and plan events around designated day and month for various types of differing ability awareness
8. Motion to adjourn by Amanda, second by Chuks