

Disability Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 9th, 2023

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

Meeting called to order at 6:49pm

1. Roll Call of Commission Members:
 - a. **Present** – Marilyn Andrews, Nichole Mossalam, Maria Luise, Amanda Belles, Chuks Ezewuzie, Shanti Chilikuri, Tovah Miller, Ralph Long
 - b. **Absent** –
2. **Approval of Minutes** -
 - a. May 12 – Motion to accept Maria Luise
 - i. Seconded by Amanda Belles
 - ii. Passed Unanimously
 - b. November Minutes – Motion to accept Maria Luise
 - i. Seconded by Amanda Belles
 - ii. Passed Unanimously
 - c. January Minutes – Motion to accept by Shanti Chilikuri
 - i. Seconded by Tovah Miller
 - ii. Passed Unanimously
 - d. February minutes – Motion to accept by Tovah Miller
 - i. Seconded by Shanti
 - ii. Passed Unanimously
3. **Subcommittee Reports**
 - a. **Policy by Chuks** – Introduction of Marita Coombs, Senior Librarian, Malden Public Library to speak about providing accessibility
 - i. They've been dealing with making the library more accessible for all and is attending to learn more ways to improve accessibility.
 - ii. Chuks mentions the need to make the library more accessible for those with visual impairment. Due to some individuals misusing equipment, suggestion made that specialized accessibility equipment be stored in a mobile box that can be moved to rooms when it's needed. Various other types of equipment suggested as well; Braille embosser, speech to text programs, speech synthesizer, and more

- iii. Maria Luise mentions possible grants from the MOD for MPL accessibility project
- b. Schools by Marilyn**
 - i. CPA approved grant for the ELC improvements and was subsequently approved by the Mayor. Next step is final approval for appropriation of the funds by the City Council. Suggestion made that members of the Commission attend their meeting to provide support.
- c. Public Facilities by Maria and Tovah**
 - i. Met with Eric Ruben, Director of Public Facilities, to begin process of implementing recommendations from the ADA report.
- d. GRIT Chair Software by Nichole**
 - i. Survey written up and will be sent to Ron tomorrow, Friday March 10th
- e. Discussion of Memorial for Frank Cina and Plaque wording by Marilyn and Amanda**
 - i. Amanda working on wording for the plaque
 - ii. Suggestion to collect toy cars to give out to children
 - iii. Reach MTEC for decorating
 - iv. Maria will be in touch with Frank's cousin
 - v. City officials and others may be offered to speak
 - vi. Tentative date being planned for in the Spring
- f. Wellington Circle Study Meeting of March 2nd update by Amanda**
 - i. Different configuration options have been discussed and reviewed
 - ii. This past meeting went over the current, preferred configuration – it should reduce travel time by 25%
 - iii. Amanda raised concern of making sure pedestrian signals long enough to allow those with mobility issues to be able to cross long sections. Suggestion was made to have protected pedestrian medians
 - iv. Process about to move towards comment period
 - v. Amanda believes more Commissioners should join the next public meeting to ensure all mobility/accessibility issues are covered
- g. Calendar of Disability Events by Shanti**
 - i. Shanti will be putting together a calendar for 2023 of all dates
- h. Northeast Metro Tech Project Meeting of March 6th update by Amanda**
 - i. Was organized by Wakefield Disability Commission
 - ii. Proposing 22 more accessible parking spots
 - iii. Making more bathrooms accessible
 - iv. Adding in more elevators
 - v. Was mentioned that they have the highest rate of students with disabilities in the state
 - vi. Amanda makes suggestion to reach out and listen to the students affected before taking any positions.

vii. Marilyn provided update that our advocacy letter about the building was sent out to full legislative delegation, MSBA, and NEMT Building Association. Rep. Steven Ultrino responded with helpful information.

viii. Send a thank you reply to Elena Axelrod and request we stay updated

4. New Business

a. Nichole brings up issue of remote/hybrid job posting scams that can impact the differently abled community and a need for awareness training.

b. Marilyn provides updates on Children's Mental Health Awareness week coming up in May

c. Marilyn reads article from the Boston Globe about the passing of Disability Activist and Advocate Judith Heumann and in commemoration of long-lasting legacy

d. No public comment

5. Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, April 13th, 2023

6. Motion to adjourn by Chuks

a. Seconded by Tovah

b. Passed unanimously

Action Items:

Provide a list of accessibility equipment and software items for MPL – Chuks Ezewuzie

Look into grants for MPL project – Maria Luise

Notify everyone of when to send letters of support for ELC Project funding – Maria Luise

Send GRIT Survey to Ron – Nichole Mossalam

Create shared document for disability events calendar w/ March 23rd deadline for input – Nichole Mossalam

Send event calendar project email – Nichole Mossalam

Send thank you reply - Marilyn