

Meeting called to order @ 6:35 p.m. by Nichole Mossalam.

At 6:40, Nichole read the COVID Statement from Governor Baker.

1. Roll Call of Committee Members: Maria Luise, Nichole Mossalam, Kerlyne Pacombe, Marilyn Andrews, Frank Cina were present.

Guests: Karen Lynch, Malden's Human Rights and Fair Housing Commission
David Hoff, Melrose, MA Disability Commission

2. Approval of Minutes from February 11, 2021 meeting: Frank made a motion to accept the Minutes and Kerlyne seconded the Minutes. All were in favor.

3. Any updates or action items that need to be addressed from the previous meeting:

- **Update on interview process and next steps for new Commission members.**

Nichole reported that there were 18 applicants total who applied. She shared it was a large group of amazing applicants. The Mayor and Kathleen Manning-Hall have all the recommendations from the Interview Committee. The Mayor will do the next steps and get in touch with candidates. Next the candidates will meet with the City Council and will be able to start with the April Commission meeting.

- **Update on ADA Self-Evaluation:** Maria gave background to the Commission and to David Hoff. KMA Architecture is at the "tail end of the ADA Evaluation," and are finalizing the report. The Public Facilities Director and KMA Architecture plan to meet next week. The next step is that the Mayor and City Council will meet with KMA. The hope is to have the last report sometime in April 2021.

- **Update on Safe Watch Program link added to Website:**

Ron Cochran added the Safe Watch link from the Malden Police to the Disability Commission website.

- **Discussion of any update on the Massachusetts Office on Disability Summit:**

Captain Glenn Cronin is interested in having the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) representative speak to the Disability Commission and to the public. The topics would include:

How to prepare for an emergency and what is involved in the MOD's Emergency Preparedness Plan. KMA Architecture found some gaps and Captain Cronin is addressing these gaps. Marilyn made a Motion to invite Captain Glenn Cronin and an MOD representative to a Commission meeting. Frank seconded this Motion. All were in favor.

Marilyn shared her notes from MOD's Summit held virtually on March 4, 2021. These notes are attached to these minutes.

- **Discussion of goals for the new year and preparation for the Annual Report**

Commissioners listed the following goal ideas for this year.

- a. Work with City Councilors Steve Winslow and Ryan O'Malley once funds are secured from the CBDG (Community Development Block Grant) application that is in process. Commissioners would like to look at sidewalk accessibility. Once these funds are secured, an invitation will be sent to invite the two City Councilors to a Commission meeting.
- b. Kerlyne suggested to use the results of the ADA Study as a framework for setting goals, and to invite the new Commissioners to take part in the goal setting for the year.
- c. Nichole will write a letter within the week to the City Council to request that there is funding for the Commission to work with goals from the ADA Self-Evaluation study.

4. New Business

- **Discussion of any new business.**
- **Guest: Karen Lynch, Human Rights and Fair Housing Commission**

Karen explained the follow-up from discussion at 02/11/2021 Disability Commission Meeting with regards to the veteran who is not able to find a home due to his family's service animal. Karen shared that the Human Rights and Fair Housing Commission would like to write a joint letter to promote events that educate the real estate community and the community-at-large. Karen shared that this letter is being written by Paul Weston of their commission. The purpose of this letter is to share professional trainings that explore legal issues that affect those with differing abilities, and provide continuing credits in their work. They would also like to establish an ongoing relationship with the realtors' associations.

There are several continuing education programs that meet the State requirements for a realtor's license including:

"Rentals the Right Way"

"Demystifying Housing Vouchers and Residential Assistance Programs"

"The Way Home: Fair Housing Training Seminar"

Question was also asked if the trainings in the letter from Paul Weston cover service animals. A Motion was made by Marilyn and seconded by Frank. The Motion reads, "Upon confirmation of service animal training and in collaboration with the Human Rights and Fair Housing Commission, the Disability would like to be involved in these events."

The discussion continued with the idea of a blurb to promote these events and to explain why they are needed. Depending on the status of the ADA Self-Evaluation, an invitation may be extended to Kevin Duffy, Strategy and Business from the Mayor's Office, and the Malden Chamber of Commerce.

It was also suggested for a permanent agenda item that discussion of informational sessions for various types of businesses, rights and responsibilities in order to bring out greater accessibility. The first step is to start with realtors. Future discussion will involve how to motivate all businesses to attend. There can be a focus on one business venue at a time with "General Business Awareness."

Karen Lynch asked if there was a cost for realtors to take these classes. For the general public, no one was aware if there is a fee or not. Nichole can ask for "an act of good will" for the members of the Disability and the Human Rights and Fair Housing Commissions. The New England ADA Center may have information on housing and service animals.

Nichole shared that the Commission needs to demystify the myths around disabilities and accessibility.

Update on AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication Boards):

Marilyn provided an update on this. Maria, Marilyn and Imene Bouzaine-Saidi met today on Zoom. Imene located an agency and is working through this process and the pricing. Marilyn thanked Imene for her efforts. Next step is to secure funding and to start to look at a few playgrounds to install these. Nichole mentioned that she would like to share this project with the City Council since this is an example of the type of project the Disability Commission needs funding for.

Nichole asked if an Ex-Officio from the Human Rights and Fair Housing Commission should serve on the Disability Commission? Currently Maria and Nichole both serve on the Human Rights and Fair Housing Commission as Ex-Officio.

- **Public Comment:**

Nichole reminded all that the Public Comment portion is limited to 2 minutes or less. She will call on Constituents in the order of raised hands.

Constituent #1: Suggested that OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) can help with issues with service animals. She also shared that Senator Elizabeth Warren is writing a new housing bill and is including the accessibility issues. It will go to the Congress in one month.

Congresswoman Marcia Fudge is working with HUD to address issues with housing and vouchers.

Constituent #2: Question for those who are not able to leave their home to get the COVID vaccine. There are programs where nurses go to homes. Does

this type of program include people of differing abilities? Another constituent responded that there is a program through MaryLou Sudders' office for In-Home vaccines. She also said that information can be found through MassADAPT.

5. **Scheduling of Next Meeting:** The next Commission meeting will be held on Thursday, April 8, 2021 via Zoom.
6. **Adjournment:** Frank made a Motion to adjourn the Meeting. Marilyn seconded it. All were in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilyn R. Andrews, Clerk