

Meeting called to order @ 6:40 p.m. by Nichole Mossalam;
This meeting was a Hybrid session.
This Meeting was recorded.

1. **Roll Call of Committee Members:** Maria Luise, Nichole Mossalam, Marilyn Andrews, Amanda Belles, Shanti Chilkuri, Frank Cina, Kerlyne Pacombe, and Lauren Schipper were present.
Chukwuka Ezewuzie was not present for this meeting

2. **Approval of Minutes from the July 29, 2021 meeting**

A Motion was made by Amanda Belles and seconded by Maria to table the July 29, 2021 minutes until the next meeting. Amanda will send suggested edits to Marilyn for review. All were in favor of this Motion.

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

- **Further discussion of strategy for reviewing ADA Self-Evaluation Report: Formation of sub-committees based on needs from ADA Self-Evaluation.**

Frank reported on the Policy, Public Works/Facilities and shared that there were not many "Priority A" listings in the "Findings and Recommendations." They will look at the study deeper to address the recommendations in the City's parks and buildings. Eric Rubin, Public Facilities Director, met with Frank and Maria since he helped to write some of the recommendations in the ADA Self-Evaluation. Maria and Frank will make a list to review with Frank. Maria and Frank will look more closely at the ones listed as "Priority A" for grant applications.

The next sub-committee report was given by Lauren who is the Policy Chair. Lauren and Amanda reviewed the ADA Self-Evaluation "Findings and Recommendations" to look at the City's policies that are closely related to one another. They looked at ones that had similar city departments that they need to collaborate with. They identified three key areas to address and reach out to the community: Item #5 Documents and Publications, Item #7 Grievance Policies and Item #27 Human Resources which includes Employment. These items involve some of the same departments. Human Resources and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer (D.E.I.), Bybiose Larochelle, will be asked to be involved in the areas that the Policy sub-committee is addressing.

Amanda discussed that there is no written policy with ADA actual blurb language for accessibility and accommodations for the City Boards and Commissions. This sub-committee will look at this to put a written policy in place. Lauren and Amanda had checked with Maria on this.

Nichole asked re: top priorities for all Commission members. Lauren mentioned that there were a lot of significant barriers for fair and equitable access for Item #27 Human Resources/Employment and read to the Commission Item #27 (pg. 12) Recommendations.

Next step is a meeting with Human Resources and the D.E.I. Officer to explain the role of the Disability Commission, and the ADA Recommendations. The second area that this sub-committee identified is Item #5 Documents and Publications (pg. 4). The Policy sub-committee will review all documents for stigmatization as well as language for alignment for different groups with relation to disability and to provide accessibility with alternative formats. Maria will help to schedule the meeting with Human Resources, the D.E.I. Officer and the Policy sub-committee.

Nichole would like to invite the D.E.I. Officer to the next meeting for an introduction to the Commission.

Marilyn reported for the School sub-committee and referred to Item #21 (pg. 26). Marilyn, Kerlyne and Maria have a meeting with Malden's Superintendent of Schools, Ligia Noriega-Murphy on Friday, August 29, 2021 to discuss the ADA Self-Evaluation and to review the evaluation as well as to get her feedback on how to proceed with the ADA recommendations. Marilyn asked what is the best way to let all the Commissioners know what transpired in this meeting? Nichole reviewed that an email can be sent to cover: information, outcome, and next steps from the meeting with the Superintendent. Commissioners are allowed to email to Marilyn, Maria, or Kerlyne for clarification only to keep in the guidelines of the Open Meeting Law.

- **Update on potential grants for accessibility projects:**

Two potential grants were described by Maria. The first is from the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) and the application process opens in mid-August. This grant is only for physical accommodations, construction and to bring things up to code.

The second grant source is from CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) and this money is geared to sidewalks and roads.

Maria mentioned in the fall that they get notices for available grants. Maria will email the Commissioners with information on any new possible grants. For the next Commission meeting, Frank and Maria will talk with the DPW to get their help managing this project.

- **Further update on Emergency Preparedness Forum for 9/22/21 and sample flyer.**

Maria shared a copy of the draft flyer with all the Commissioners and will update a copy and circulate among the Commissioners. For this event, there will be pre-registration with Maria. Emergency kits will be available for all attendees upon registration. Attendees should register before the date of the event to ensure that there will be enough kits for all. Nichole suggested adding this to the flyer.

- **Update on AAC Boards for ELC and K-8 playgrounds**

Maria reported that the sign company has held difficulty getting parts due to COVID. Marilyn shared that Imene Bouzaine-Saidi has been in continual communication with the sign company.

Marilyn will go to Duggar Park in Medford where there is an AAC Board installed to see how it looks. Marilyn shared that Maria has taken care of the funding in regarding to the making and installation of this project.

- **Update from Amanda Belles on progress of Wellington Circle collaboration efforts.**

Nichole complemented Amanda for communicating with the Disability Commission representatives from Revere, Somerville, and Medford. Amanda shared that each representative **was** to go back to their working group members for the respective cities with four questions:

1. What is the current status of the study?
2. Are there representatives in each working groups from diverse communities, specifically from the differing abilities community?
3. If the answer to #2 is no, how can we get seats (representation) in these groups?
4. When is the next community public meeting for the study?

Nichole said there needs to be a vote for the following two items.

1. Official representative for the Wellington Circle working group. Nichole has suggested that Amanda be this representative.
2. Someone is needed once/month to spearhead the inner-city collaboration group which now includes Revere, Somerville and Medford. This is a project that

Amanda has started. Nichole asked Amanda if she was willing to take over this city-working group. Amanda shared that there are other issues between the cities that are overlapping and the conversations will continue monthly. Next meeting is the middle of September.

Nichole thanked Amanda for her great work. Marilyn made a Motion to have Amanda serve as the representative on the Wellington Circle collaboration efforts with the committee that is meeting once a month. Maria seconded the Motion. All were in favor. Amanda asked that all Commissioners share with her any ideas for either of these two committees.

Amanda shared that Neil Osborne has suggested to have a large meeting of all the Disability Commissions.

Currently there are two Malden City Councilors on the Wellington Circle collaboration. They are Steve Winslow, Councilor At-Large and Amanda Linehan, Ward 3 City Councilor

4. New Business:

- **Discussion of any new business.**

Amanda mentioned that there is a state-wide group, CODA Board, which stands for the Commission of Disability Alliance. This is hosted by Somerville. Any Disability Commission member can host once a month. This is to connect all other Disability Commissions throughout the State. Amanda has the contact information and the meetings are currently held on Zoom. Shanti volunteered to be the representative. She will attend the first meeting and report back and decide her future role.

Nichole read to the Commission a message she received from a constituent in regards to a vintage store that is located on the corner of Eastern and Highland Avenues. The issue is that there is a concrete step up to enter the store and this entrance is not fully accessible to a powered wheelchair. Constituent would like this addressed for this and many buildings that are "grandfathered in," for accessibility. Maria said the Building Commissioner can go to the store to investigate the concern and for all to keep in mind that this is a situation that is up to the State and not Malden. Nichole asked if Kevin Duffy and the Chamber of Commerce can work with the business owners for grants and updates. There are two areas to look at with regard to structural changes: Building owner and the Landlord for structural changes. The Chamber could help with inside spaces and to how to make it more accessible. Nichole supports the educational angle rather than being combative. Kerlyne asked if the Commission could provide a "101 course" in regards to access education. Maria can connect the Commission with the Chamber. Next step could be to reach out to Kevin Duffy, and to

Massachusetts Office on Disability for educational purposes. Nichole will reach out to MOD, Kevin Duffy and the Chamber of Commerce. Lauren did mention if a building were making significant alterations, it may make the owner update the accessibility and re-address being grandfathered in due to the plan for building alterations.

Kerlyne shared that she is stepping down from the Disability Commission. She has recently opened a private practice as a LICSW and this is going very well. The Commission members thanked Kerlyne for the tremendous work on the Commission, her unique perspective, as well as her wisdom. She will be missed.

- **Public Comment:** No Public Comment was made.

- 5. Scheduling of Next Meeting:** The next Commission meeting will be held Thursday, September 9, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. via Hybrid. In-Person meeting will take place at City Hall, 215 Pleasant Street, Malden in the first-floor conference room.
- 6. Adjournment:** Frank made a Motion to adjourn the meeting and Amanda seconded this Motion. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilyn R. Andrews, Clerk