

Westwood Disability Commission
September 30, 2022 3:00 PM
via zoom webinar

Minutes

Attendees:

Commission Members: Anne Berry Goodfellow, MaryAnne Carty, Rania Kelly, Marianne LeBlanc, Frannie MacQueen, Jette Meglan, Connie Rizoli

Guest: Liz Polin

Agenda item: Chair and Member updates

The Commission is continuing to seek new members. Rania has interest from a couple of SEPAC members.

Agenda item: New Business – Election of Officers

Rania Kelly was nominated to serve as 1st Co Chair
Anne was nominated to serve as 2nd Co-Chair
The Commission voted unanimously to elect Rania and Anne as Co-Chairs

Anne asked for volunteers to serve as Recording Secretary
No one stepped forward

Connie and MaryAnne are willing to take some meeting notes to help out.

Agenda item: New Business - Recreation Programs

Rania has been appointed as an associate member of the Recreation Commission.

Rania reported that a parent has raised concerns about inclusion in Summer Recreation programs with the Recreation Commission. The parent was informed that her child had to bring a 1:1 aide or leave the program. The parent stated that surrounding towns provide support in the recreation programs.

Anne spoke with the Recreation Department head who said that 45 neurodiverse children participate in the Summer Recreation Program and that the Recreation Department has hired additional staff to support neurodiverse children.

In addition, the Department will contact other towns to learn what they are doing to support children with disabilities.

The Recreation Department has recently added in some therapeutic recreation programs and a “parents’ night out.” Since the Rec programs are funded by participation, it is important that

families support these programs so that the Rec Department is assured of the need for this type of program offering.

Rania also discussed the Recent Westwood Day event. She has suggested that the Recreation Department consider opening the activities early for a low key “sensory hour” for children who would be overwhelmed by or lost in the crowd.

Agenda item: Old Business – Accessible Voting

Follow up on accessibility at the new town-wide voting location at the High School.

Town Clerk Dottie Powers informed the Commission that the plans to have voting for all precincts at the High School was reviewed and approved by the Secretary of State’s Office. She said that she understands that the first use of the High School for voting was somewhat confusing, and she said that there will be improved signage for the accessible entrance/exit.

Dottie will also publicize accessible voting accommodations including absentee voting, accessible voting by mail, early voting at the Jaillet Meeting room at the Police Station, accessible voting machines at all locations and permission for voters to have assistance at the High School in person voting location.

MaryAnne pointed out that there was no hand railing at the staired exit. Anne will follow up with Dottie to ask for a hand railing to be installed.

Agenda item: Old Business – School Street Playground

Funding for the new equipment has been requested, and the Recreation Department is waiting for the approval to place the order.

Agenda item: For your information

The Town has submitted a grant application to the Mass Office on Disability to complete a full Americans with Disabilities Act audit. Rania drafted the grant application in conjunction with Danielle Sutton.

The Mass Office on Disability is having its annual Summit on October 27, 2022. This year the Theme is Accessibility in a Digital World.

Agenda item: Adjournment 4 PM and Next Meeting November 3, 2022, 1:00 PM