

## COMMISSION ON DISABILITY'S RECORD

May 4, 2023

### ATTENDANCE AND CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom Webinar remote participation, by Commission on Disability Co-Chair Rania Kelly. Also participating were Commission members MaryAnne Carty, Stephanie Finegold, Michelle Fiola-Reidy, Marianne LeBlanc Cummings (Select Board Liaison), Missy O'Regan, Elizabeth Polin, and Connie Rizoli. Also attending: Bev Rainforth (guest), Trish Tucke (COA Liaison), and Dori Parmelee (School Committee Liaison). Janice Barba (Staff Liaison) recorded the minutes.

### NEW BUSINESS

1. **Accept Minutes of the March 2, 2023 Meeting**

- *Upon a motion by C. Rizoli and seconded by M. O'Regan, the Commission voted unanimously in favor to accept the minutes of March 2, 2023.*

2. **Webpage for the Commission on Disability to post events, training, and activities in the community and surrounding towns.**

- *Commission members discussed the desire and purpose of creating a webpage much like Westwood SEPAC's website. Facebook and Instagram were mentioned, but some think that social media may not be the best way to reach caregivers of those in need, particularly those over 21, transitioning away from high school.*
- *R. Kelly informed about the Massachusetts Alliance for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Disability Policy (MA21), according to its website, is "an organization formed in 2007 to protect the right of people with disabilities to self-direct, and through its efforts helped pass the Real Lives Law in 2014. MA21 is a partnership of self-advocates, family members, other stakeholders, and disability advocacy organizations". [www.MA21alliance.org](http://www.MA21alliance.org) Interested caregivers can sign up for Zoom sessions to participate in advocating for changes to MA DDS Self-Directed Services.*

3. **Westwood Board liaisons for School Committee - Dori Parmelee, Planning Board - Kate Nee, Board of Health, Fair Housing Commission, FinCom, Library Trustees, Municipal Facilities Task Force, Open Space & Recreation Plan Committee, Pedestrian and Bike Safety Committee, School Building Committee, Westwood Housing Authority, Youth and Family Services Advisory Group.**

- *Commission members identified possible liaisons for Planning Board (Ellen Rollings) and the Recreation Commission (Theresa Laham and/or Katie Collins). Commission members said they will contact these people to confirm their interest in serving as liaisons.*
- *C. Rizoli informed that she is the liaison to the Westwood Human Rights Task Force.*
- *Muffin House Cafe – M. Carty said that the HP parking spaces are too far away from the Café which diminishes the accessibility.*

### OLD BUSINESS

1. **MOD Municipal Planning Grant Award for ADA Self-Evaluation and Updated Municipal Plan**

- *Commission members discussed the quality of the MOD survey questions and were impressed with the Grant Institute of Human Design.*
- *The ADA Self-Evaluation and Updated Municipal Plan are underway now.*

2. **Inclusion in Town Recreation Programs**

- *M. LeBlanc Cummings informed the Commission that the Town prioritized and included funding a Recreation Inclusion Specialist position in the FY24 Town budget.*
- *R. Kelly asked Commission members had heard any update on the inclusion of a sensory hour at Westwood Day.*
- *S. Finegold said she discussed a plan for the new Recreation Inclusion Specialist to collaborate with SEPAC with R. Adams, Director of the Recreation Department.*
- *C. Rizoli suggested holding a "Transition Fair"*

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- *R. Kelly said that she would be attending an "Inclusion Summit" that the ARC Circle Program will hold this summer in the MetroWest.*

### 3. School Street Playground

- *R. Kelly informed the Commission that the playground reconstruction will begin on May 15, 2023, and will likely take about a month to be completed. The reconstruction will incorporate new accessible playground equipment that is inclusive for all children.*
- *A Commission member asked how the Town administration will get the word out to residents about the playground closure. J. Barba said she would check with C. Coleman and get back to the Commission members.*
- *E. Polin asked D. Parmelee if the School Committee has any plans for increasing accessibility on the preschool playground. D. Parmelee said she'd be meeting with T. Mullin today and would inquire about it.*
- *R. Kelly said that she would send a PowerPoint presentation on the "Transition from School to Adult Life - Timelines" to the Commission members.*

### 4. Creating a virtual support group via Zoom for parents and caregivers for people who have aged out of the school (22+) but still want/need the support.

- *Commission members discussed the need for this type of group to assist caregivers with elementary, middle school, high school, and after transitions. R. Kelly suggested utilizing the resources of the Massachusetts Alliance for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Disability Policy (MA21), including The ARC.*

### 5. Farm Adapted Programming

- *B. Rainforth reported that sensory-friendly days are planned at Weir River Farm.*
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### REPORTS & FOR YOUR INFORMATION

SEPAC Update – *R. Kelly informed Commission members that SEPAC has a meeting scheduled for tonight, 5/4/23 from 7-9 pm.*

Legislative Update – *none reported*

### OTHER BUSINESS

None

### NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT

- *A next meeting date was not set.*
- *Upon a motion by M. Fiola-Reidy and seconded by E. Polin, the Commission voted unanimously in favor to adjourn the meeting at approximately 2 pm.*