

COMMISSION ON DISABILITY'S RECORD

October 5, 2023

APPROVED 11/02/23

ATTENDANCE AND CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:06 p.m. via Zoom webinar participation by Chair Rania Kelly and the following Commission members were present: MaryAnne Carty, Stephanie Finegold, Missy O'Regan, Elizabeth Polin, Connie Rizoli, Mary Sethna. Also attending: Trish Tucke, COA Operations Manager, Dori Parmelee, School Committee representative, and Ellen Rollings, Westwood Planning Board member (86 Greenhill Road). Absent: Michelle Fiola Reidy, Marianne LeBlanc Cummings, and Frances MacQueen. Staff Liaison Janice Donovan recorded the minutes.

Chair R. Kelly read the Commission on Disability's Mission Statement:

The mission of the Commission on Disability is to provide information, referral, guidance, and technical assistance to residents and Town departments on matters of disability.

OLD BUSINESS

Accept Meeting Minutes of September 7, 2023

Upon a motion by C. Rizoli and seconded by M. O'Regan, Commission members voted unanimously in favor to approve the minutes as written via a roll call vote: M. Carty (aye), S. Finegold (had not yet entered the webinar at that time), M. O'Regan (aye), E. Polin (aye) C. Rizoli (aye), M. Sethna (aye), R. Kelly (aye).

NEW BUSINESS

General Discussion about Establishing Sensory-Friendly Hours at all Town Events.

E. Polin asked why sensory-friendly hours were not established at this year's Westwood Day.

Commission members recalled that this accommodation was discussed last year and they had hoped it would have been incorporated this year.

- What is the process for getting sensory-friendly hours established for all town events?
- Should we direct our questions to Chris Coleman, the ADA Coordinator?
- Should "best practices" for community meetings and events be established? Who should be responsible for doing this? Will the ADA access study make recommendations for the Town's programs, services, and activities?
- M. Carty recommended that the Commission meet with the Westwood Day planning committee at the beginning of the planning process to discuss this.
- What other towns offer sensory-friendly hours at their events?
- R. Kelly asked Janice to seek the answers to these questions and said that this discussion would be continued to the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

A Commission member asked when the ADA study will be completed and requested an update from Chris Coleman at the same time that the sensory-friendly hours are discussed.

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REPORTS & FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- SEPAC Update – S. Finegold informed us that [SEPAC](#) will have a table at the High School this week and a well-visited booth at Westwood Day. E. Polin added that SEPAC held a fall social for all of the community last Sunday. The social was well-attended, kids played with legos, kinetic sand and games at Martha Jones Elementary School. The first community meeting of SEPAC is scheduled for Wednesday, October 11th, 7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. at the Library. In addition, a Coffee Meetup is scheduled for Saturday, October 14th, 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. at Muffin House Café.
- Legislative Update –S. Finegold reported that on July 11th, she and a handful of other community members went to the State House to testify in favor of [House Bill 535](#), which is an *Act Relative to Creating Neurodiversity Education for Students K-12*. The bill was sponsored by Rep. McMurtry, and it has now been referred to the Joint Committee on Education.
- R. Kelly suggested the [ARC of MA](#) website which makes it easy to request Congress to take action on matters for people with disabilities.

OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION, NOT PREVIOUSLY ANTICIPATED BY THE CHAIR

- S. Finegold informed the members that she attended a community meet and greet with School Superintendent Pivowar on Tuesday, October 3rd at the Library. He discussed long-term goals and listened to the comments and suggestions of community members.
- Ellen Rollings of the Westwood Planning Board gave the Commission information on a special permit application before the Planning Board for the redevelopment of 22 Everett Street. The developer, Georgio Petruzzello, has proposed a mixed-use development, with housing and commercial uses, and a fully inclusive playground. The developer is working with the Flutie Foundation to accomplish this task. Mr. Petruzzello has expressed a desire to meet with the Commission and SEPAC about the playground plans. Ms. Rollings will follow up with the town planner and developer about arranging a meeting.
- C. Rizoli asked Commission members to think about strategies for reaching out to the community to encourage people with disabilities to consider becoming members of the Commission, noting that including people with disabilities in the composition of the Commission is a requirement of the Bylaws. R. Kelly asked Janice to look into this and to add this item to the next agenda. C. Rizoli said that she would also look for information from the state.

NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT

- The next meeting is scheduled for November 2, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom Webinar

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- Upon a motion by C. Rizoli and seconded by M. Carty the Commission voted unanimously in favor of adjourning the meeting at 2:00 p.m., via a roll call vote: S. Finegold (aye) M. Sethna (aye), R. Kelly (aye), M. O'Regan (aye), E. Polin (aye), and C. Rizoli (aye).