

# COMMISSION ON DISABILITY'S RECORD

June 11, 2024

Approved 8/13/24

## ATTENDANCE AND CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rania Kelly called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. via Zoom webinar. The following Commission members were present: MaryAnne Carty, Stephanie Finegold, Rania Kelly, Missy O'Regan, Elizabeth Polin, Connie Rizoli, and Marianne LeBlanc Cummings, Select Board Liaison. Absent: Mary Sethna. 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.*

## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **Accept Meeting Minutes of February 13, 2024**

*Upon a motion by C. Rizoli and seconded by E. Polin, Commission members voted unanimously in favor of approving the minutes as written via a roll call vote: M. Carty, (yes), S. Finegold, (yes), R. Kelly (yes), M. O'Regan (yes), E. Polin (yes), C. Rizoli, (yes).*

## NEW BUSINESS

- **Acknowledge Commission Members' Resignations and Expiring Appointments as of 6/30/24**

*Ch. R. Kelly asked Janice to review the list. Janice reported that the Select Board received resignation letters from Michelle Fiola Reidy, Frances MacQueen, and Connie Rizoli. These resignations are effective June 30, 2024.*

- **Appoint New Chair and Co-Chair**

*Ch. R. Kelly asked for volunteers. There was no response. Ch. R. Kelly asked Janice if M. Sethna had confirmed her interest in being nominated as a co-chair. Janice said she had not.*

*Ch. R. Kelly reminded the Commission members that her term as chair ends on June 30, 2024. She also expressed her willingness to support and assist anyone who steps forward to serve as a co-chair.*

*Janice offered her support as well. S. Finegold nominated M. O'Regan to be co-chair. M. LeBlanc Cummings said she agreed with this nomination. M. O'Regan said that she would consider it.*

- **Thank you to Long-Time Commission Member Connie Rizoli**

*Ch. R. Kelly thanked Connie Rizoli for her passion and for being a true advocate for equity and inclusion, always adding value to every conversation she participates in. She thanked Ms. Rizoli for her long-term commitment to the Commission and said that Connie is welcome at our meetings anytime. M. LeBlanc Cummings added that Connie was so welcoming to her when she first became a member of the Commission. She expressed that it had been a pleasure serving with Connie, praising her wholehearted dedication to bringing people together, as well as her passion for both the community and the Commission. S. Finegold and others also thanked Connie for her assistance and presence on the Commission. Connie thanked everyone for the kind words and mentioned that she*

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would continue to serve on the Westwood Human Rights Committee and would be available to the Commission if needed.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- **Update on Newly Appointed Commission Members**

*Ch. R. Kelly, Human Services Director Danielle Sutton, and Christopher Coleman, Town Administrator interviewed and recommended residents Mike Curtin and Vicky Makrides for appointment to the Commission on Disability. The Select Board appointed both residents to the Commission, each for three-year terms beginning July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027. The Select Board also reappointed MaryAnne Carty and Mary Sethna each with terms effective July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027.*

- **Discussion - One-Year Appointment**

*Ch. R. Kelly asked why the Commission would consider a one-year term, doubted the value of having this type of appointment, and suggested appointing an associate member(s) instead. Ms. LeBlanc Cummings asked Janice what was stated in the Commission's Bylaws. Janice shared the following:*

#### Section 2 TERMS OF OFFICE

The terms of the first members shall be one, two, and three years.

The terms of office shall be arranged so that a term of office of one member expires each year.

After the initial terms of office, all members shall be appointed for a term of three years.

#### Section 4 ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Two associate members shall be appointed to two-year terms by the Select Board.

Associate members shall not have full voting power as commission members.

*Commission members discussed these two sections of the Bylaw. C. Rizoli suggested an amendment may be necessary regarding the "Terms of Office" and "Associate Members". M. LeBlanc Cummings said that if the Commission wants to change its Bylaws, it can vote to do so and then request that the Select Board consider approving the changes. Janice said she would consult with the Select Board's office and report back at the next meeting.*

*The Commission discussed ways to encourage a school-aged, younger person to volunteer to serve. C. Rizoli disagreed, stressing that the Commission should prioritize addressing the needs of*

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*the broader population, particularly those whose needs are not being met beyond school age. Ch. R. Kelly noted that requiring a written submission of interest or a resume might be prohibitive for some disabled individuals. She suggested that reasonable accommodations be made, such as allowing the application process to be completed orally. Others agreed.*

*This discussion will continue to the next meeting. For clarification, Janice said the Commission needs to appoint one more full member and potentially two associate members.*

### **REPORTS & FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

- **SEPAC Update** – *L. Polin said there have been several SEPAC coffee days and most recently held its quarterly meeting. Ms. Polin said SEPAC is transitioning to becoming a 501(c)(3) organization.*
- **Legislative Update** – *C. Rizoli said the legislative session will end in July. M. Carty inquired about the status of House Bill 535, submitted last July by S. Finegold. S. Finegold explained that Rep. McMurtry's office informed her the bill did not pass through the committee and must be refiled in January. C. Rizoli suggested reaching out to get a co-sponsor. S. Finegold mentioned that she contacted Leslie Leslie of the Federation for Children with Special Needs but found her response discouraging. Ch. R. Kelly said that she would email some helpful contacts to S. Finegold. M. Carty said the Bill was moved into a "Study" and C. Rizoli confirmed that means that the Bill would need to be re-filed.*
- **Distribute Comprehensive Plan Implementation Actions Information**  
*Janice will send the Commission a draft report in response to the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Actions for its review. The report to the Planning Board is due on July 23<sup>rd</sup> and needs to be presented at the Planning Board's meeting on August 6<sup>th</sup>. Ch. R. Kelly said that she could record something and send it to me to be presented to the Planning Board.*

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

#### **NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT**

- The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom webinar.
- Upon a motion by C. Rizoli and seconded by M. O'Regan the Commission voted unanimously in favor of adjourning the meeting at 8:00 p.m., via a roll call vote: M. Carty, (yes), S. Finegold, (yes) M. O'Regan (yes), E. Polin (yes), R. Kelly (yes), C. Rizoli, (yes).