



City of New Bedford Commission for Citizens with Disabilities

Minutes Commission for Citizens with Disabilities May 10, 2017

Members Present

Jaunna Adesso
Josh Amaral
Kim Bettencourt
Martha Bouchard
Linda Carreiro
Pam Cole
Dennis DeMarinis
Marsha Fernandes

Others in Attendance

BG Shanklin, Architect
Cynthia Wallquist, Exec. Dir.

Dennis DeMarinis, Chair, called the meeting to order @ 6:35 PM.

Minutes

Martha Bouchard moved to accept the April 10, 2017 meeting minutes; seconded by Kim Bettencourt. Motion carried.

New Business

Nominees are being sought for the FY18 Executive Committee in anticipation of approving a slate of officers at the June 28 Annual Meeting. The Commission discussed what meeting night would be best for scheduling FY18 meetings, with several members indicating that Tuesdays and Wednesdays are preferable to Mondays. The next step will be to check to see what days our meeting room is available before bringing back to the group.

Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director's Report was presented out of order to accommodate her required attendance at a City Council Budget Presentation. Cynthia Wallquist reported that the Commission for Citizens with Disabilities budget should be level funded at \$15,000 and that she is anticipating the arrival of funds from FEMA reimburse the Commission for the swings that were replaced after Hurricane Sandy.

Cynthia provided an update on the Commission's previous recommendation regarding Handicapped Parking Violation Fees. The city's Traffic Commission will meet later in May to discuss raising the fees from \$100 to a minimum of \$200 in accordance with the CCWD's recommendation.

Kim Bettencourt moved to accept the Executive Director's Report; seconded by Martha Bouchard. Motion carried.

Chair's Report

Chairman Dennis DeMarinis read a letter of resignation submitted by Commission member Brooke Miller. He updated the Commission on the status of membership, noting that there are at least two candidates interested in applying for vacancies on the commission. He also noted that Kim Bettencourt has asked not to be reappointed (term expires 5/31/17) due to her heavy schedule, but that she will continue to be involved.

A letter was also received from Mary Rapoza, director of the Parks, Recreation and Beaches Department thanking the Commission for its collaboration on recent projects. She notes that new beach ramps have been added in addition to the amphibious chair that is available. Further, handicap parking has been established at the beach with room for a rear-entry wheelchair van to enter and exit safely. Jaunna Adesso asked that the Commission follow up to ensure our recommendation that at least West Beach be made fully accessible rather than implementing some accessibility fixes at both East and West Beach but neither being fully compliant. Dennis DeMarinis and Josh Amaral agreed.

The Commission discussed reviewing the Remote Participation Guidelines. The only member of the Commission who has utilized remote participation has submitted her resignation. Kim Bettencourt, who attended the MOD meeting where remote participation was discussed, suggested that the intent of remote participation is to allow members to participate when they are impeded by bad weather, illness or are, for example, away on a business trip. Kim Bettencourt suggested that a person who wishes to utilize remote participation should provide notice 48 hours in advance, not counting weekends or holidays. Dennis DeMarinis agreed and suggests we review the language in the Commission's by-laws and work to amend them so they include these suggestions.

Architect's Report

BG Shanklin received correspondence from Denis Keohane, the owner of 40-44 Union Street, who sought a variance that was granted by the MAAB. Mr. Keohane is improving the doorway and implementing features that would increase mobility in the bathroom.

The Commission was informed that the NBHA filed an MCAD complaint against the city related to handicapped parking space(s) on Hillman St. adjacent to Westlawn. The ADA Coordinator had previously submitted a response to the NBHA on this matter. Further, we were made aware there was an administrative meeting held in regards to a variance at NBHA's Parkdale residence and we submitted feedback. BG Shanklin reports it seems likely the variance will be granted.

BG Shanklin outlined MOD's Planning and Project Grants Program, which will provide \$10,000, \$50,000, or \$250,000 to communities in Massachusetts to either create or update their Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan or to fund projects that have "a real and tangible positive impact to persons with disabilities." Because FY17 Project Grants would only reimburse expenses incurred and invoiced by June 30, 2017, it seems unlikely we will be able to submit a Project Grant proposal this year. Josh Amaral suggested that the Commission instead submit a Planning Grant if possible, and then a Project Grant in FY18. The program will continue in 2018 but timelines are not established. The program is anticipated to continue beyond 2018 but funding has not yet been allocated. Den DeMarinis reports there is a meeting scheduled for next week in which city staff will discuss a joint effort to apply for funds.

Kim Bettencourt moved to accept the Architect's Report; seconded by Marsha Fernandes. Motion carried.

Old Business

- **Downtown Parking** – Downtown Parking situation is still ongoing, nothing new to report.
- **Fire Station #5/Polling Place** – No response to report. Maria Tomasia, who previously discussed this issue with the Commission in her role as New Bedford Election Commissioner, has retired. Pam Cole is going to again reach out to Our Lady of Fatima Church to see if they are interested in being the polling place in that precinct. BG Shanklin is willing to visit to assess accessibility.
- **Roosevelt Apartments Complaint** – BG Shanklin provided Roosevelt Apartments with feedback regarding the complaint received. No further action is necessary unless complainant or Roosevelt Apartments reaches back out to the Commission.

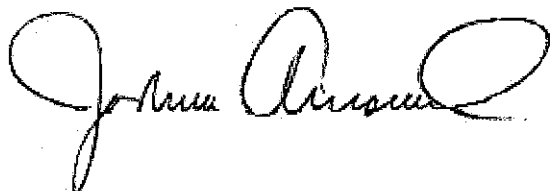
Announcements

Dennis DeMarinis reminded everyone that the next meeting will be our Annual Meeting, June 28 @ 6:30 PM.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Martha Bouchard and seconded by Den DeMarinis. The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Acting Clerk