City of Melrose Commission on Disability
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: September 11, 2023

Commissioners Present:
Garin Boyd
Alaine Breen
Judy Bushee
David Hoff
Erin Heyneman
Maggie Sheets

Commissioners Absent:
Margaret Sheets

1. **Call to Order**
Commission Chair Hoff called to order the regular meeting of the Commission on Disability at 6:02 PM.

2. Approval of minutes
Approval of July 17, 2023 minutes – unanimous.

3. Public Participation
- M. M. - Provided update on NEMT building accessibility issues.
- S. - Also expressed concern about children with anxiety and neurodivergence and impact of NEMT building construction.
- G.H. - Thanked Commissioner Heyneman for article in the Melrose Weekly News

4. Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SEPAC) Update
Meet the candidates for school committee and mayor and city council upcoming
Next meeting, Monday September 18th – High School Learning Commons 7pm. Upcoming proposed topics: November: mental health services; January - science of reading.

5. MOD Grant
City will be submitting a grant application to the MA Office on Disability to update the bathrooms at the Milano Center

6. Community Health Inclusion Project Update
Funding is available from the MA Department of Public Health for funding of accessibility for healthy activities. Commissioner Hoff will follow up with the Melrose Prevention and Wellness Coordinator, Kara Showers.

7. Victorian Fair Follow-Up
It was noted that our materials should be available in large print and other languages.

8. Social Media Intern Update

Working with the high school to recruit a social media intern. Applications will be emailed to the commission's email address.

9. Community Group Requests for Covering Cost of Accessibility

Issues have arisen regarding community groups asking if the commission can fund accessibility (CART, ASL, etc.). The commission does not have the funding availability, nor is it felt to be an appropriate role for the commission. However, the commission will work on groups on how to arrange for accommodations and incorporate costs within their budgets.

10. Annual Plan Update

The commission's annual plan was reviewed. The viability of a community survey was discussed, and consensus was that it wasn't necessary/feasible at this time, and that general outreach regarding issues would meet the need. The need to move forward on working with businesses to provide employment experiences for students transition from school was discussed, possibly working with the Chamber, SEPAC, and city's business liaison.

11. Community Organization Guide

Draft will be provided to commission at November meeting.

12. Other Business

- *NDEAM:* National Disability Employment Awareness Month is in October. Commissioner Heyneman will work on social media postings, etc.
- *NEMT Construction:* 2,000 trees have been taken down on the planned site. It was noted that while the new building will be technically accessible with the letter of the law, the accessibility issues are not in lined with the spirit of the law.
- *Cornhole Tournament:* The Bellum Family Cornhole Tournament for disability charities is October 14th. The commission will work on having members participate.

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Boyd, seconded by Commissioner Sheets. Unanimous approval. Adjourned at 7:36PM

Minutes submitted by Commission Secretary Erin Ryan Heyneman