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**City of Melrose Commission on Disability
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: 02/14/24

Commissioners Present:

Garin Boyd
David Hoff
Erin Heyneman
Margaret Sheets

Commissioners Absent:

Alaine Breen

1. Call to Order

Commission Chair Hoff called to order the regular meeting of the Commission on Disability at 7:06PM.

2. Approval of minutes from last meeting

A motion to approve the minutes from the 01-08-2024 meeting was made by Commissioner Boyd and second by Commissioner Sheets. Passed unanimously.

3. Public Participation

- Gary Hale: Expressed his interest in joining the commission, and has submitted an application to the mayor's office. He also noted that in his comments on the community guide, he had listed some resources for Braille printing. He suggested changing the resources he suggested, to using Perkins School for the Blind.
- Meghan McDonough: Discussed her participation in the Disability Pride event committee. She also mentioned the national campaign to eliminate subminimum wage for people with disabilities. She also noted that the Healey administration has grants available on disability issues.

4. Statewide Update

The Massachusetts Office on Disability has a series of events coming. They were shared with commission members, and will be emailed to all commission members and individuals on the commission's mailing list.

5. School Interns

Commissioners Boyd and Heyneman recently met with the high school interns. They have been working on recruiting individuals to assist residents with snow shoveling.

Commissioner Hoff asked about increasing the work they are doing on social media, with at least 2 post per week on Facebook, Twitter (X), with additional postings on Instagram.

Commissioner will work with the city's IT director, Neil Ellis, about getting access to the commission's Facebook account.

6. Disability Pride Event planning

Commissioner Sheets reported that the committee met and is discussing a series of small events in July. They are also considering taking video from the story telling event last June, and using short clips as part of the July celebration. Commission Chair Hoff mentioned that the commission has funds available and that the committee should put together a budget. It was also suggested that there be at least one major community event focused on disability pride.

7. Community Education Guide

Commissioner Hoff is continuing to work on edits, and will have an updated version for the March meeting.

8. Meeting with Mayor

Commissioner's Hoff and Boyd will be meeting with Mayor Grigoraitas on Thursday 2/15. Items to be discussed were solicited from commission members. They included:

- Status of commissioner appointments, including filling the empty city official spot on the commission
- Moving forward on the ADA transition plan
- Support for July Disability Pride events
- Keeping the commission more in the loop on city events and activities, in order to provide input on disability issues
- Adding an individual with a disability onto the traffic commission

9. Friends of the Fells Request

An email from the Friends of the Middlesex Fells has been received, looking for support and assistance with accessibility issues in the Fells, and an accessible hike to be held in July.

Commission Chair Hoff will follow up with an invitation to the March meeting or holding a separate meeting with the Friends.

10. Other business:

- In response to an earlier public comment, Commissioner Hoff noted that the subminimum wage for people with disabilities still exists in Massachusetts, the Department of Developmental Services has announced that they will stop supporting programs that pay subminimum wage, effectively ending its use in Massachusetts.

There are bi-partisan bills in Congress to end the subminimum wage, and it is hoped they will be passed at some point to end subminimum wage nationally.

- The commission's web page needs to be updated. This will be discussed at the March meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:50. Motion made by Commissioner Boyd, seconded by Commissioner Sheets. Passed unanimously.

Meeting minutes submitted by Erin Heyneman, Commission Secretary.