



**City of Melrose Commission on Disability (MCOB)
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: June 11, 2025

Commissioners Present:

Garin Boyd (Secretary)
Alaine Breen
Gary Hale (Commission Chair)
Margaret Sheets
Matthew Travers

1. Call to Order

Commission Chair Hale called to order the regular meeting of the Commission on Disability at 7:02 PM.

2. Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

3. Approval of minutes from the May 14th meeting

A motion to approve the minutes from the May 14th meeting was made by Commissioner Sheets and seconded by Commissioner Breen. Motion passed unanimously.

4. CODA/State Update

Commission Chair Hale attended the state CODA meeting. Newburyport COD has set up and awarded a scholarship for a graduating senior. Newton is having an event called "Demystifying Disability" which will take place July 9, 2025. The City of Boston is planning a march celebrating Disability Pride Month and the 35th anniversary of the ADA that will be on July 23rd. They are looking for support sponsors. The Paul Spooner Leadership summit is accepting applications and will be held September 29th-October 1st 2025.

5. Community Education Guide Update

The Community guide is not yet ready for distribution.

6. SEPAC

The school year has ended. We may not see an update from SEPAC until fall.

7. Disability Pride 2025 plans

Commissioners Sheets, Breen and Boyd are planning Disability Pride month events. The Disability Pride/ADA Celebration mural should be completed during the end of June, beginning of July. Story time for kids is still being planned but will happen Tuesday, July 22nd at the Melrose Public Library. The disability panel is set to happen July 23rd at the library. ASL interpreters need to be secured for this event. Space is limited to 60 people. Plans are to have a Disability Art show in September 2025. The YMCA is receptive to having an accessible workout class. Commissioner Sheets has created multiple flyers.

8. MOD grant application

There has been a lot of communication between MCOB chair, Hale, the Melrose ADA coordinator, Polina Latta and the Director of DPW, Elena Proakis Ellis in developing a Mass. Office on Disability grant request. The application for the MOD grant has been completed and is ready for submission. The grant request is for automatic doors at the Winthrop, Hoover and Horace Mann schools. In addition, the grant requests a stage lift for Horace Mann and other accessibility items. The Commission will be notified as soon as the application is submitted. .

9. Guidelines for use of COD funds

The Guidelines were submitted to the City solicitor for review and were significantly edited. The discussion was tabled to the next Commission meeting to allow sufficient time to compare the guideline as approved by the Commission with the suggested revisions and consider necessary amendments.

10. MCOB general outreach

Commissioner Hale introduced a discussion on the MCOB work plan. He noted the comprehensive content of the plan and that the Commission has taken action on many of the goals and objectives. But some of the plan has seen little or no activity. Should the Commission focus on these areas, delete them from the plan or keep them in the plan for future consideration. Commissioner Hale's primary concerns related to the outreach goal, the general outreach and social media objectives in particular. There was a discussion about the viability of maintaining a social media effort and concern about the visibility of the Commission within the city. Generally, it was felt that more discussion is needed and that the absent Commissioners, Hoff and Heyneman would have much to add. Commissioner Travers will help connect with Tom Dalton, communications director for the city of Melrose to determine how the MCOB web page on the city website might be more effectively utilized. Commission chair Hale indicated that it might be good to check and see what other municipalities' commissions are doing about outreach and social media. It might be useful to establish a sub-committee to work on outreach and communication. There have been a few people who have reached out to the Commission. It would be good to have a protocol in place when commissioners are working with the general public. It was mentioned that reigniting the work done to create a city wide survey might be considered.

11. Other business:

Meaghan Smith, reporter at WGBH, has shared information about a discussion entitled, **“Disability Reframed: A Growing Community** happening in person at WGBH in Boston on June 26th, from 6 pm to 9 pm. Commissioner Breen will be attending.

Commission Chair Hale and Commission Secretary Boyd met with a Melrose resident with disabilities. The resident wanted to discuss the playground/ball field on the corner of Lebanon and Sylvan Streets. During baseball games, people are parking on the sidewalks on both sides of Lebanon Street and creating a narrowed street space for cars and bicycles, and minimal pedestrian space on the sidewalks. In discussion, those present were in favor of pursuing the matter.

12. Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Sheets, seconded by Commissioner Breen. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Meeting minutes submitted by Garin Boyd, Melrose Commission