

**Harvard Commission on Disabilities
Meeting Minutes
9/17/20**

Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83825398852?pwd=K0Z5bm5EZTNDSDdEaDNIYm1scDgxUT09>

Meeting ID: 838 2539 8852; Passcode: 544683

Called to Order at 10:05 by Davida Bagatelle

Present: Davida Bagatelle,Carolynn Luescher, Toni Spacciapoli, and Brian Wickman

Absent: Laurie Bridges

Invited Guest: Stu Skalar

Motion made to approve the August 31, 2020 Meeting Minutes

This motion was seconded and the Minutes were unanimously approved by those present.

Old Business

- By-laws draft was reviewed and adopted.
 - Minor editing related to use of inclusive pronouns and the term, Board of Selectmen
 - Article I approved
 - Article II, Sec 3 - changed wording to include “advise”; approved
 - Article III:
 - Discussion to include Devens, but decision made was not at this point in time;
 - Sec 2 - Discussion about Term Limit ranges. Determined a question for the Select Board
 - Article IV approved
 - Article V approved
 - Article VI approved
- Municipal ADA Improvement Grant Program Application
 - Town is considering applying for MDA grant money to renovate the ramp at middle school and high school.
 - The Commission continues to recommend applying for grant money associated with Town upgrade on website accessibility. Carolynn Luescher would like to work on this and will submit a letter to Assistant Town Administrator, Marie Sobalvarro, identifying why this project should be a priority. She also suggested sending out a survey to identify needs among Town residents.

New Business

- Stu Skalar, SelectBoard Liaison to CoD
 - Discussed role of commission and Commission’s question regarding membership terms
 - CoD membership terms decision was tabled until later
 - Discussion of proposals to be brought to Select Board for grant proposal
 - Update Self Evaluation/Transition Plan, including community

- needs survey.
- Stu Skalar commented that the Commission does not require approval from the Board to apply for a grant, but Assistant Town Administrator would be involved in completing applications and coordinating projects with the Commission.
- If a grant is awarded, then the Commission can oversee completion of the proposal.
- Additional proposals for the MoD grant are: Bromfield Middle School ramp, which is on town meeting agenda; website accessibility; and Town beach house accessibility
- Ch 40 Sec 22g - Section 22g indicates that handicap parking fines are funding source for commission
 - Carolyn Luescher provided data regarding Town parking fines. In 2018 only 2 violations for parking/handicap and 3 in 2019.
 - Davida Bagatelle asked about budget allocation for the Commission. Stu Skalar explained no money has been set aside due to not knowing the Commission's focus; however, the Commission can approach the Board.
 - Stu Skalar recommended that a presentation to the Select Board is in order to add Sec 22g. He will inform the Select Board that the Commission may want to make a proposal to the Board.
 - Residents should contact the police non-emergency number to report violations. The parking lot in front of the General Store is municipal parking. Stu Skalar will inform the police chief that enforcement of the violation is requested by the Commission. He also suggested that the Commission identify a liaison on NextDoor.
- Grievance Protocol/Procedure discussion.
 - Discussion of citizen concern versus a grievance
 - Discussion around developing and implementing a survey of community concerns and needs and Commission action to inform the public of our role in the community.

Other

- Davida Bagatelle informed the Commission of the upcoming MOD summit on October 29 and encouraged members to register.
- Davida Bagatelle contacted Valeri Fletcher from the Institute for Human-Centered Design, a non-profit organization assisting municipalities in developing a self-evaluation plan. She indicated that they provide an extensive and exhaustive approach to developing Self-Evaluations and Transition Plans for town disability plans.
 - Davida sent her information regarding town facilities and grounds. The Institute for Human-Centered Design can submit a proposal, which in turn, will be included in the MoD grant proposal.
 - In line with moving forward with a self-evaluation, a proposal was made by Davida to include a residential open comment survey, i.e., thought exchange. Davida approached a consultant, who has designed other surveys for the Town. This consultant estimated a survey cost of approximately \$2000. This can also be added to the MoD grant proposal for planning purposes along with the estimate for a Town self-evaluation and transition plan.
 - Brian Wickman suggested that the survey include information gathering in

- relation to accessibility and options for communication.
 - Carolyn Luescher suggested that other survey consultants be investigated as well.
- MoD Grant Proposal recommendations
 - Davida Bagatelle will send an email to Assistant Town Administrator with a recommendation from the Commission to submit a proposal for grant funding for a Town self-evaluation and transition plan, community survey of needs, and improvement in website accessibility for the disabled. The Self-evaluation and Transition Plan will be considered a priority.
 - Carolyn Luescher will send a list of areas that should be addressed with regard to website accessibility to Davida Bagatelle, who will include in the email to Assistant Town Administrator.
- Discussed the need to open communication with Town boards, committees, and commissions regarding the presence of a Commission on Disabilities and the Commission's mandate. The Commission will: post the Commission's Gmail and add to the Town Website Page, including access for uploads, grievance protocol, and other relevant document links.
- A proposal was made to change the standard monthly Commission meeting date to accommodate all members to Wednesdays from 4:00-5:30pm. The motion was second and unanimously approved.
- **Action Items:** Davida Bagatelle will forward information on Sec 22g to the Select Board and Carolyn will forward information regarding handicap parking fine collections over the last 2 years to Stu Skalar.
- **Agenda Items for the next meeting:** Select a liaison for NextDoor; inform public of protocol for concerns and grievances.

Next monthly meeting scheduled for October 21, 2020

ADJOURNMENT- Motion to adjourn at 12:04 pm; It was seconded. All members were in favor by roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Spacciapoli, Commission Secretary