

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

May 7, 2018

Johnson Chambers

6:30 pm

IN ATTENDANCE: Crystal Evans, Meredith Lincoln, Lynn Vaillancourt

ALSO PRESENT: Kristen Zechello, ADA Coordinator
Andrew Marron, Constituent Services Coordinator
Marybeth McGrath, Director Municipal Licenses & Inspections

MINUTES: Motion to approve April 2, 2018 meeting minutes by L. Vaillancourt and seconded by M. Lincoln (approval vote was unanimous).

Call to Order:

- Meeting was called to order by the Chair at 6:35 P.M.

Current:

- Update on Action items from April meeting:
 - Original Charter for COD distributed for members to think about the mission of the Commission on Disabilities and to develop a mission statement.
 - Mission Statement development will be tabled until next meeting.
 - ADA Coordinator salary issue was discussed. Board reiterated that the first half year salary was voted on and approved and then one additional year voted on and approved to be funded by the COD (18 months total). K. Zechello reported to the board that the second vote was not recorded in the meeting minutes so C. Evans as Treasurer, will inquire with E. Spellman, Municipal Finance.
 - Purchase of videos “The Great Fight for Disability Rights” and “Lives Worth Living” was voted on, however, the purchase is not yet completed by ADA Coordinator. The hope is to have them for the upcoming Global Accessibility Awareness day next week.
 - GAAD Global Accessibility Awareness Day will be 5/16/18 and Andrew Marron from the Mayor’s office described that the Town wants to celebrate this day to recognize and communicate the digital access improvements that have been and are being made in Braintree. The COD and special needs parent advocacy groups and possibly school staff will be invited. K. Zechello will reach out to members when details are finalized.
 - At this meeting there is no update on possible purchase of benches for South Braintree square at bus stops. C. Evans still working on this initiative – she will gather information from examples in Somerville, Concord, NH and Quincy Center. Member Evans will compile the detailed information and the Commission discussed the possibility of applying for Community Preservation Funding for this project.
 - Members still having town email issues with password resets, K. Zechello will work with IT for a resolution.

- C. Evans still needs to talk to Bob James with BEMA about Portlight training previously discussed; this issue will remain open until next month.
- Senior Center ramp reported at last month's meeting to be in disrepair. K. Zechello reported to DPW and it is on their list for mitigation this spring.
- There was discussion about using CART for meetings and information has been sent to ADA Coordinator. C. Evans is on a state board on communication improvements that is working with MA Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- John McCosh, photographer is able to participate in the campaign however the cost for his services is unknown. Member Evans will follow up with John about coming to a meeting.
- COD's goals of furthering Education and Communication will be part of the proposed photo campaign for access issues.

Old Business: *Update from ADA Coordinator on current projects*

- *Town Buildings* - Update on CPC Funding, Town Hall/OTL project. ADA Coordinator shared lift specifications for COD to review. Concerns for concept plans that were developed several years ago were reviewed and the group discussed the COD and Braintree Historic Commission meeting next month to discuss the plan and related concerns. All members will be prepared at June meeting to ask questions, etc.
- *Parks & Recreation* – No update at this meeting
- *Dept. of Public Works* - No update at this meeting
- *Transition Planning* - ADA Coordinator continues to work on this plan for the Town with various departments and staff.

New Business:

- Braintree Day 6/30/18
 - COD has been registered by Ed Kelly (parade organizer).
 - Signage for parade is already available from last year.
 - Discussed having some kind of transportation for people with mobility challenges and possible fatigue, etc.
 - K. Zechello to investigate golf cart usage for possible transport. C. Evans is going to check with area vendors to see if they would be interested in transporting folks from T station to parade start at the Registry of Motor Vehicles and back after the end at the Hollis School.
 - Food Truck festival after the parade will have temporary access paths set at BHS for the activities.
 - Farmer's Market available date for a COD table to distribute information will be on July 14th. M. Lincoln motioned to approve the COD having a table, L. Vaillancourt seconded. Member Evans will sign up for the July 14th date.
 - Discussed having the "Water Wheels" beach chair at Farmer's Market for advertising of COD funds used to purchase.
- Discussed several MA Communities have adopted an initiative to work with their police departments and their Commissions in some cases funding police overtime or additional

staff to enforce HC parking violations. Burlington was an example of a city that brought in revenue with this initiative.

- L. Vaillancourt described the possibility of having “Ambassadors” with educational tickets with information for putting on windshields. Discussed her concerns and reluctance to have COD funds used to pay for the police wages for extra enforcement.
- Having an installment in Braintree Forum about access in the community, with pictures, etc. “Disability Corner”, will need a commitment of having topics and photos and will likely get more education and awareness

Information:

- M. Lincoln will be attending RevUp Campaign next week on 5/18/18 and share with the group.
- MAAB Variance review Training workshop will be held Friday 5/18/18. K. Zechello encouraged COD members to attend if possible.
- Next Meeting June 4, 2018 6:30pm in Johnson Chambers.

Public Comment (items discussed that were not on the meeting agenda):

- Resident attendee shared some input regarding using CART and other assistive devices and services at public meetings for not only people with hearing impairments but also processing challenges, and other disabilities.
- Member Evans brought up the Architectural Access code and how it is being looked at by the AAB to more closely align it with the ADA regulations. In MA some areas are more stringent while others are less than the ADA. One area is with elevator requirements. Member Evans discussed a complaint ongoing with the South Shore Plaza and her experiences with frequent elevator issues.
- Member Evans made a proposal for next month’s meeting that the COD discuss purchasing books on Disability topics for Thayer Library.
- A resident attendee made comments about the RevUp Campaign and her desire to see events on this topic in more accessible locations in other parts of the state that are on public transit.
- Don Summerfield, COD member for the City of Cambridge, discussed the fact that the Architectural Access Board (AAB) doesn’t protect or enforce “employee only” areas in buildings however, the ADA protects employees to have access in their work environments.
- Mr. Summerfield also mentioned that the Architectural Access Board is part of the Office of Public Safety because building code and HC access is a safety issue.

Adjourn

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 P.M.
 - Motioned by M. Lincoln, seconded by L. Vaillancourt.

5/19/2018 (KMZ)