

**BRAINTREE COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES**  
**Meeting Held Via Zoom**  
**Monday, October 6, 2025, 6:30 p.m.**

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Crystal Evans, Treasurer  
Robin Torpey, Member  
Mary Russo, Member  
Scott Lamphere, Member  
Kelly Ormsby, Member

**NOT PRESENT:** Marybeth McGrath, Director of ML & I

**ALSO PRESENT:** Kristina Ziniti, ADA Coordinator

**Call to Order:**

Kelly Ormsby served as Acting Chairperson for this meeting.

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by roll call vote: Crystal Evans-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes; Kelly Ormsby-yes; Mary Russo-yes

**Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes of September 8, 2025 were reviewed.

*Motion made by Scott Lamphere to approve the meeting minutes of September 8, 2025.  
Motion seconded by Crystal Evans. No vote taken.*

**Updates:**

**Audible Crosswalk Signals:** Ms. Ziniti stated a concern was raised at a previous meeting that some of the audible crosswalk signals were not loud enough. She brought this issue to the town engineer who responded in writing. She read the response to the members, which indicated that the audible push buttons are set to a dynamic volume mode so they become loud or quiet based on ambient noise. They do not routinely do maintenance on the push buttons but depend on the public to notify them if there is a concern. Ms. Evans stated the signals at the intersections near Washington and Union Streets, as well as South Braintree Square and at Shaw's are too quiet, they cannot be heard over the traffic. She stated it may be that the speakers need to be cleaned, as they should be maintained every six months. Ms. Ziniti stated she will pass this information on to the town engineer.

**Continued Discussions:**

Handicapped Funds/Potential Items to Purchase: Ms. Ziniti stated she sent the members an estimate for three four-foot benches, similar to the eight-foot benches the Commission purchased for Elder Services. She stated DPW has just completed an inventory of benches in town and found a lot of them have to be repaired or replaced. Furlong Park has just been refurbished and DPW asked if the Commission would consider purchasing three four-foot handicapped accessible benches to replace the three benches closest to Sunset Lake.

Ms. Evans expressed concern with the incline in that location and stated she would like to check the area to see what work has been done. Mr. Lamphere stated it appears the incline problem in that area has been resolved at the Washington Street entrance, however, the Pond Street entrance is still very steep. He stated the benches do look awful. Ms. Ziniti stated she will pass this feedback along to the DPW.

Ms. Russo stated Pond Meadow could use some new benches. Ms. Ziniti stated she will look into this as the area is shared with Weymouth.

Ms. Evans gave a presentation on how to officially form a subcommittee so members could potentially break out into small groups to work on some of the items being discussed. She stated the subcommittee they discussed forming would be on community planning. She reviewed the responsibilities of the subcommittee.

*Motion made by Kelly Ormsby to form a Community Planning Subcommittee. Motion seconded by Robin Torpey. No vote taken.*

*Kelly Ormsby, Acting Chairperson, appointed Kelly Ormsby and Crystal Evans to the Community Planning Subcommittee.*

Ms. Evans gave a presentation on potential purchases which had been discussed at prior meetings. She reviewed several bus stops for potential benches/shelters. She stated there may be another funding source for the South Braintree Square bus stop and the other locations needs further review, so she recommended not voting on this at this time.

Ms. Evans presented locations previously discussed where benches could be installed: two along the Monatiquot Riverwalk and at the bus stop in front of Thayer Library. Regarding the AAC/Communication Boards, she found the Doug Flutie Foundation has a grant available for these devices for playgrounds. She recommend this be discussed in subcommittee.

Ms. Evans recommended that discussion of bike rack locations be moved to the Community Planning Subcommittee as they need to work with other town departments on this. Proposed locations include town hall and 74 Pond Street. Mary Russo questioned if bike racks are a top necessity. She stated she does not see a lot of bikes around town. She also expressed concern with the expense involved. Ms. Evans stated

she spoke with Mike Ford from BELD about potential funding for bike racks as bikes contribute to energy efficiency.

Mr. Lamphere asked if the bench at the library is going to be replaced by the town. Ms. Evans replied this is a town bench that is heavily utilized. Mr. Lamphere asked if this bench is on the town's priority list. Ms. Ziniti stated she has not seen the DPW list yet, but will ask if it can be made available. She stated they surveyed the benches and will prioritize them based on the highest need. Ms. Torpey asked what other towns do when benches need to be replaced, are they paid through the town budget or does the Commission on Disabilities fund them. Ms. Ziniti stated she does not know how other towns pay for benches. Ms. Evans stated cities like Quincy and Weymouth have most of their park renovations funded through community development block grants (CDBG) however, Braintree does not qualify for this due to being behind in affordable housing requirements. Ms. Torpey recommended looking into alternate funding to alleviate expenditures from the Commission.

*Motion made by Mary Russo to approve the purchase of three eight foot benches from Commission on Disabilities funds. Locations to be the library and Riverwalk pending further information. Motion seconded by Robin Torpey. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Crystal Evans-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes; Kelly Ormsby-yes*

Ms. Evans asked if members want to vote on a budget for bike racks or wait for more information. Ms. Russo recommended waiting. Ms. Ormsby suggested voting for a \$2000 budget. Mr. Lamphere recommended approving up to \$3000.

*Motion made by Kelly Ormsby to approve spending up to \$3000 for the purchase of bike racks from Commission on Disabilities funds. Motion seconded by Crystal Evans. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Robin Torpey-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes; Crystal Evans-yes; Kelly Ormsby-yes*

Ms. Evans recommended moving discussion of the AAC/Communication Boards to the subcommittee to explore alternative funding. Commission members were in agreement. She also recommended moving discussion of benches, bike racks, and patio access for South Braintree square to the subcommittee, along with bus stop benches.

*Motion made by Kelly Ormsby to move discussion of the previously discussed items to the Community Planning Subcommittee. Motion seconded by Robin Torpey. No vote was taken.*

Ms. Evans stated she would also like the subcommittee to draft a letter for businesses/commercial properties which may be in need of bike racks.

*Motion made by Kelly Ormsby to have the Community Planning Subcommittee work on commercial property letters. Motion seconded by Robin Torpey. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Scott Lamphere-yes; Crystal Evans-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Kelly Ormsby-yes*

MassDOT: Ms. Evans gave a presentation on MassDOT funding. She outlined the steps needed to work toward funding, which include: determining access barriers in Braintree; working with elected officials Senators Keenan and Driscoll and Representative Cusack; getting support from the community and strategizing with stakeholders. At the last Commission meeting it was agreed that she, along with Ms. Ormsby, would draft a letter to the elected officials, which they have done and provided to Commission members for their review. There were no edits to the letter proposed by the members.

*Motion made by Kelly Ormsby to approve the letter be sent to the Senators and Representative to engage with MassDOT funding for accessibility. Motion seconded by Crystal Evans. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Scott Lamphere-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Crystal Evans-yes; Kelly Ormsby-yes*

Ms. Evans stated a next step would be for the Commission to go before the Town Council to get their support.

*Motion made by Kelly Ormsby to approve the Commission giving a presentation to the Town Council on MassDOT funding to garner their support. Motion seconded by Crystal Evans. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Crystal Evans-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Kelly Ormsby-yes*

Ms. Evans asked the members to consider voting to move ongoing work around MassDOT issues to the Community Planning Subcommittee.

*A roll call vote was taken, but there was no motion or second. Crystal Evans-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes; Kelly Ormsby-yes.*

### **Handicapped Parking Fund Account Update:**

Ms. Ziniti reported the total amount in the handicapped parking fund is \$50,925.78.

### **Other Business:**

Ms. Ziniti stated she will get a quote for three eight foot benches from the company they work with and provide an update at the next meeting.

Ms. Evans asked that an update be provided at the next meeting regarding the sidewalks at the Olympian Diner, Dunkin and Richardi's, as well as several gas stations who are blocking sidewalks with cars. She stated the sidewalk at McDonald's is chronically blocked with cars waiting for the drive-thru.

**Next Meeting:** November 3, 2025

### **Adjournment:**

*Motion made by Kelly Ormsby to adjourn the Commission on Disabilities meeting at 7:53 p.m. Motion seconded by Robin Torpey. No vote was taken.*