



Commission for Citizens with Disabilities

January 11, 2015 – 6:40 PM – **Minutes**
133 William Street, City Hall, Ashley Room

Members Present

Josh Amaral
Kim Bettencourt
Martha Bouchard
Rev. Pam Cole
Dennis DeMarinis
Marsha Fernandes
Gloria Hill
Brooke Miller
John Tyson

Members Absent

Members Excused

Others in Attendance:

John Costa, MIS
Maria Pina-Rocha, MIS
Al Oliveira, NBPS
BG Shanklin, Architect
Cynthia Wallquist, Exec. Director
Phil Zukas

The meeting of the Commission for Citizens with Disabilities was called to order @ 6:40 PM by Kim Bettencourt, Chair. She introduced the newest member of the Commission, Josh Amaral.

Guest Presentation

• **MIS/City Website**

Phil Zukas shared his concerns and suggestions about website access with the Commission. Maria Pina-Rocha and John Costa spoke about the steps their department has taken to be in compliance and asked that the blind/visually impaired community stay in touch with them about ideas to improve the site.

• **Al Oliveira, NBPS**

Mr. Oliveira reported on general school improvements that have been made since his last appearance, including curb cut at Pulaski and NBHS security cameras. Issues yet to be addressed include: Rodman railings, Winslow's handicapped parking spaces, NBHS elevator, Hay-Mac doesn't have an accessible bathroom and the only accessible restroom for staff @ NBHS continues to be at the Nurse's Office.

Architect's Report

BG Shanklin reported on his work from November – January to date on the following projects:

- Braz Bean
- North Baptist Church
- South Baptist Church
- Southcoast Legal Options
- St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

He has not heard back re:

- Bethel AME since the letter requesting handicapped spaces on the street was sent to Councillor Carney
- Hillman Street entrance (Building 9)
- Union Baptist Church (Pam Cole will follow up with the church leaders)

He reported that Whaler's Cove did not correct the initial parking space issues but created 4 additional "handicapped" spaces that are not ADA-compliant. The information will be provided to the Building Department for follow up. The Edge paring issues are pending.

Brooke Miller moved to accept Mr. Shanklin's report; John Tyson seconded. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Martha Bouchard moved to accept the November 12, 2014 minutes; seconded. Dennis DeMarinis seconded. Motion carried.

Executive Director's Report

Cynthia Wallquist reported that:

- The FEMA money still hasn't been received to replace the swings.
- 64 homeowners are enrolled in the Clear Path Program; 32 are charged to the Commission
- Attendance has been steady in all the exercise programs funded by the Commission, but Larry Bigos and Zumba Gold have room for more.
- All Commission members must take the Ethics Test. Anyone who needs assistance should cal Pauline before the next Commission meeting to set up a time to use her computer.
- The wheelchair lights ordinance amendment was filed. The Council approved it and it has been passed to a second reading.
- The South Sixth Street side door/entrance accessibility issues will be addressed when City Hall improvements are made in the next fiscal year.
- Small(er) trash and recycling barrels are available upon request to Ken Blanchard's office

John Tyson moved to accept the Executive Director's report; Pam Cole seconded. Motion carried.

Chairperson's Report

Kim Bettencourt reported on her work with the elementary schools re: accessibility. No improvements or modifications have been made since the November meeting. In her new position, Kim has be working extensively with parents and teachers to address special needs students concerns and issues.

Martha Bouchard moved to accept the Chair's report; Marsha Fernandes seconded. Motion carried.

New Business

The Mass Office on Disability (MOD) forwarded information on S1985, an Act relative to Local Commissions on Disability that was signed by Gov. Patrick. Section 20(e) reads: *A local commission on disability may by majority vote of the commissioners at a regular meeting permit remote participation applicable to a specific meeting or generally to all of the commission's meetings; provided, however, that the commission shall comply with all other requirements of law and regulation.*

Martha Bouchard moved to send a request to the City Council to amend the local ordinance to reflect Section 20(e). Dennis DeMarinis seconded. Motion carried 9-0.

Old Business

All "Old Business" items" were addressed in individual reports

Announcements

Former Commission member, Lorraine Phenix, has returned to work at the MA Commission for the Blind.

The meeting schedule is:

- Wednesday, February 11
- Wednesday, March 11
- Monday, April 13
- Wednesday, May 13
- Monday, June 29

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn was made by Martha Bouchard and seconded by Dennis DeMarinis. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Brooke Miller
Secretary