



Commission for Citizens with Disabilities

September 24, 2015 – 6:38 PM – **Minutes**
133 William Street, City Hall, Ashley Room

Members Present

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

Members Excused

Josh Amaral

Member Absent

Gloria Hill

Others in Attendance

Andre Faria, La Bella Vide
Dennis Houtman, MCB Advisory Bd.
Mark Mahoney, Emerg. Management
Liz Myska, Worcester CCWD
Jack Peacock, Peacock Communications
BG Shanklin, Architect
Eva Tejada
Cynthia Wallquist, Exec. Director

Kim Bettencourt, Chair, called the meeting of the Commission for Citizens with Disabilities to order @ 6:38PM.

Approval of Minutes

Martha Bouchard moved to accept the August 11, 2015 minutes; seconded by Dennis DeMarinis. Motion carried.

Guests

Andre Faria & Eva Tejada from La Bella Vida (Adult Day Health Services) came to explain what they do for the community; the focus is on bi-lingual consumers (Portuguese/Spanish) They currently have 85 residents registered and are welcoming more each week.

Mark Mahoney from Emergency Management told the Commission that disaster preparedness has been sidetracked because of blizzards from 2014 & 2015 and Superstorm Sandy and that the playground swings funding has not yet been received. He realizes that more outreach is needed in the community -- especially hurricane evacuation plans. The question on the table is how can the city communicate with the special populations for such information; Kim explained that we are trying to have someone do a training for the city.

Mark explained the plan for Mass Care Sheltering Plane. Keith Middle School is a primary shelter. They are in the process of building up what they need for the shelter. Shelter planning committee is needed. Mark is adamant about getting this done.

BG asked if there is a special needs registry. Mark stated that they are trying to come up with various plans to make this work and asked the Commission for help enrolling residents in the Special Needs Registry.

Jack Peacock & Elizabeth Myska talked about their meeting with Anne Eades from Friends of Buttonwood and that Mary Rapoza from Parks & Recreation was involved. Mary had shared the Commission's concerns about the proposed auditory devices with them. Jack informed the Commission that he wants to do a field trip to the sensory garden. Vandalism in other areas is being addressed as well as the durability issue.

New Business

Chairperson's Report

Kim reported that the pool at the HS has been completed and is certified ADA-compliant. She is unsure of the locker renovations as well as other items we have been awaiting updates. BG will be calling AI for an update. Brooke advised that the items she brought to the Commission more than a year ago -- including the elevator access -- have not yet been addressed.

Architect's Report

BG has advised the following:

- Capital needs assessments for the Commission was done
- The proposed accessible Hillman Street COA cost is \$25K
- Ken Blanchard and Nick Perieira asked for design of a new ramp into the front of the Wilks Library
- There is no accessible path from library to the Brooklawn Park playground.
- Brooklawn Senior Center was reviewed; having a ramp to the back deck would allow a second means of egress. It would serve to replace an old ramp in place that could cause a wheelchair to get stuck in the pathway. The Center is missing two Code-required bathroom stalls handrails
- Ashley Square and Clasky Commons slides are missing
- A visit to Congdon School is on the radar

- A vote from Union Baptist has not been taken
- Bethel's new minister has not reached out
- North Baptist Church has not followed up with him

John Tyson moved to accept the Architect's report; seconded by Martha Bouchard. Motion carried.

Executive Director's Report

Cynthia advised that:

- Letters for the snow removal have gone out; there are only 30 slots are available this year (versus 64 2014-15). Recipients need to be on dialysis, chemo., attend adult day care or have regularly scheduled personal aides, nursing care or other medical services
- Congdon School is interested in raising money and installing an accessible playground.

Old Business

- **Buttonwood Park Sensory Garden.** A motion made by Martha Bouchard was placed on the floor "to advise the New Bedford Park Board that the Commission for Citizens with Disabilities does not endorse the installation of the launch pad/launch guide being offered at the Sensory Garden located at Buttonwood Park as discussed by Jack Peacock. While the Commission supports the concept of assistive technology it suggests that other products should be reviewed for the differing ability community."

The motion was seconded by Dennis DeMarinis. A roll call of all commissioners in attendance was made:

Martha Bouchard	Yes
John Tyson	Yes
Brooke Miller	Yes
Marsha Fernandes	Yes
Pam Cole	Yes
Dennis DeMarinis	Yes
Kimberli Bettencourt	Yes
Motion Carried:	7-0

- Members of the Commission attended the August 20th Council Meeting to accept a proclamation offered by Councillor Martins celebrating the **25th anniversary of the ADA.**
- The **Beach wheelchair** is in use but there is a need for a ramp/boardwalk to/at the water's edge
- **Trash Barrels.** Martha advised that her barrels have not been taken care of yet. John Lobo will follow up to get her the size and sensory tape needed.
- **City Hall So. Sixth entrance** will be done in July of 2016 vs. the July 2015 date that had been provided.

Announcements

The next meeting will be held October 20, 2015; David Sykes from Mass. Rehab Commission will be the guest speaker.

Adjourn

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

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis DeMarinis, Jr.", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dennis DeMarinis, Jr.
Secretary