

**Commission on Disability Meeting**  
Minutes for August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018, 4:30PM  
Levi Lincoln Chamber (3<sup>rd</sup> fl.)  
Worcester City Hall

**Attendance:**

**Members Present:** Robert Bureau, Robert Bilotta, Nancy Garr-Colzie, Paul Keister (via phone-limited time), D. Karuna, Elizabeth Myska, Joseph Prochilo, Lindsey Silva, Stephen Stolberg

**Members Absent:** John Gleason, Fitzroy Hall

**Staff:** Dawn E. Clark

**Welcome, Call to Order & Introductions**

Chairperson Prochilo called the meeting to order. Commissioners introduced themselves.

**Approval of July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Minutes**

Commissioner Garr-Colzie moved approval and Commissioner Silva seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously approved the July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018 minutes. w

**Red Taxi: Accessible Cab Update**

Postponed

**Review FY'18 Annual Report**

Chairperson reviewed the accomplishments on the FY'18 goals.

Commissioner Bilotta gave an update on the Transportation Ride Sharing goal. Easter Seals of Massachusetts received a \$23,000 grant to hold a summit related to the needs of people with disabilities and their transportation needs including doing surveys. The Transportation Advocacy Group has been working with Uber, WRTA and other partners. There is now a steering Committee to provide guidance for the use of this grant. Uber is willing to encourage drivers to provide wheelchair accessible vehicles.

**Discussion on FY19 goals and annual agenda setting**

Upon reviewing the achievements in FY'19, the Commission looked forward to goals and agenda setting for FY'19. Chairperson Prochilo said that he had been contacted by Accessibility Navigator in New Hampshire who has been doing similar restaurant survey for mobility needs and were interested in what Worcester was doing related to the visually impaired and Deaf & Hard of Hearing categories with the goal of creating an app. He will keep the Commission informed of this progress.

Commissioner Garr-Colzie moved to carry over the goals to FY'19 that were completed in FY'18. Commissioner Bureau seconded. They were approved unanimously including

1. Parking Inventory
2. Accessible Housing
3. Disability Oppression Dialogues

Commissioner Bilotta moved an amendment to the goal to modify the FY'19 list of goals to include:

4. Monitor with presence at REDD, TAC etc. and promote information about Ride Sharing access development

Commissioner Garr-Colzie seconded the amendment. All approved.

The Commission officers will work with staff to update the final wording of the goals.

### **Election of Officers**

The Chairperson reminded the Commission that those who are full members could be nominated and vote for officers. Officers include Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary.

Commissioner Garr-Colzie nominated Commissioner Bilotta as Chairperson with Commissioner Myska seconding. Commissioner Bureau nominated himself for Vice Chairperson with Commissioner Myska seconding. Both candidates accepted their nomination. There were no nominations for Secretary.

The Commission voted unanimously (4 yeses) the officers for FY'19 Commissioner Robert Bilotta as Chairperson and Commissioner Bureau as Vice Chairperson. Congratulations!

## **Grafton Street Wheelchair Stroll debrief and Recommendations**

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, one of the hottest days so far this summer, the Grafton Street Wheelchair Stroll took place wheeling from St. Stephens Church to Union Station on both sides of the street. The Stoll was rated as excellent by the participants.

Comments on the challenges included:

Surprising how dangerous it could be to travel in a wheelchair.

Strain on the hands and physical demand

The smallest crack could be difficult to manage

Coming downhill: there were more bumps

Time to cross crosswalk signals (18 seconds)

Lack of Chirpers at crossings, one chirper was working

The Chairperson felt that a wheelchair Stroll should not take place on a day over 60 degrees or hotter /70 degrees humidity or over.

Commissioner Garr-Colzie made a motion to forward the issues of lack of Chirpers and pavement issues found on the Stroll to DPW for the repair list. Commissioner Silva seconded the motion. All approved.

A follow up question was asked as to the timing on a chirper, was the timing different depending of the width of a street? The Chairperson will research and report back.

## **Update on planning for COD 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Associate Commissioner Karuna thanked people for coming and welcomed back people who had been ill. She stated many n the Commission have been active in different ways in preparation for this event. She provided the Commission with an outline of the program.

## **Notice of opportunity: MOD FY19 Municipal ADA Grant**

Subm9ission dates are between August1st and October 1, 2018. The FY'18 city submission was not funded and is not slated to be resubmitted for this round of funding.

One idea was more accessible programing for disable youth, however if was noted this grant in specifically capital improvements. This ideas was programming rather than capital improvements.

## **Debrief on Participation in Emergency Sheltering Exercise**

On August 11<sup>th</sup> the City did an emergency shelter planning exercise with the local American Red Cross, State and City staff involved in emergency planning. The Chairperson attended and noted that he was impressed that it was noted service animals cannot be separated from its user. If someone had a problem with this this person needed to be separated. He also reported the difference between a regular cot and a “dis”cot (used by a person with a disability) has about a ¾ inch mattress on it. He raised the concern that these cots might not suit a person of heavy weight with Red Cross. They saw the concern. A commissioner asked what they would do about a situation like this. The Chairperson did not know, but trusted the Red Cross experience for now.

## **Review of AAB notices and applications: City properties in bold**

### Variance Application

- 37,45,49 Wellington, 97,91 Murray, 720 Main Streets, Docket # TBD
- 50 Franklin Street, Docket # TBD

### Decision of the Board

- **549 Lincoln Street, Docket # V18 126**
- **30 Thorndyke Street, Docket # V18 127**
- **170 Apricot Street, Docket # V18 186**

## **Suggestions for upcoming agenda items**

-The FY'19 MOD Grant is due October 1<sup>st</sup>, we might think of a project for submission. Call the office with the idea. The idea of submitting a proposal to install a small Bankshot playground unit in a vacant lot was raised. There was concern that this project would not be able to be actively used by people who were blind or visually impaired. For this reason, this proposal was not considered for submission. The Commission agreed to work on projects to submit next year should the grant be available for FY'20.

-Provide final 40<sup>th</sup> COD Anniversary Celebration Plan update in September

## **Announcements:**

- **REDD (Rights, Equality and Dignity for the Disabled)** September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 4:00 – 5:30pm, YWCA, Members Lounge
- **Wheeling Through Worcester Wheelchair Stroll** , Thursday September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2-4pm. Contact [disabilities@worcesterma.gov](mailto:disabilities@worcesterma.gov)
- **Audio Journal, Accent on Ability Radio Program:** September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 5-6pm, <http://www.audiojournal.net/>
- **Next Commission on Disability meeting:** September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018 4:30pm.
- **Transportation Travel Application Assistance (WRTA/MBTA):** September 19<sup>th</sup>, 10am-12noon, Worcester Senior Center
- **WRTA Transportation Planning Advisory Meeting:** September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 1-2:30pm, WRTA HUB, 60 Foster Street
- **Abilities Fest:** Sunday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018, 10am – 2pm, Institute Park, Salisbury Street, Worcester
- **Public Safety Day for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing:** Saturday September 29<sup>th</sup>, 10am-4pm, RSVP [jphilip@centerlw.org](mailto:jphilip@centerlw.org)
- **2018 Disability Summit:** Friday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 8am – 12:30pm, 399Revolution Drive, Somerville, Mass.
- **White Cane Awareness Day:** Wednesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 9am-12noon. Contact [disabilities@worcesterma.gov](mailto:disabilities@worcesterma.gov)
- **SAVE THE DATE:** Commission on Disability 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration - Tuesday October 16<sup>th</sup>, 4:30pm-6:30pm, Worcester City Hall, Levi Lincoln Chamber
- **Emergency Preparedness Meeting:** Nov 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 9:00am at 2 Coppage Drive.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned.