

Minutes from Wednesday, January 11, 2012 Commission on
Disability Meeting
Worcester Public Library – Banx Room
4:30PM

Attendance:

Members: Rachel Shannon Brown, Herbert Cremer, Deborah Malone, David Perry, Steve Stolberg,

Members of the Public: Jackie Norton, Apollo Mukasa

Staff: Derek Brindisi, Dawn E. Clark

The meeting began with welcome from the chairperson and around the room introductions.

Minutes: Mr. Cremer pointed out several grammatical errors to the November minutes. Mr. Cremer raised questions and concerns and asked to be given credit for them.

Staff mentioned that there will be attachments to the minutes. Anything that is distributed to commission members at a meeting must be attached to the minutes.

A motion was made by David Perry and seconded by Steve Stolberg to approve the November minutes as amended. One abstention; Motion carried.

Announcement by the Chair: City of Worcester is moving forward with hiring the position of Human Rights and Disabilities Director. This will be a part-time position. The chairs of the Human Rights Commission and the Commission on Disability have been invited to participate in the second round of interviews for this position. These interviews have been conducted. The recommendations will go to the City Manager for final selection.

Communications and Reports

- a. Intake Update – Summary sheet presented. A question was raised about non-disability related concerns. Staff refers people to appropriate departments and agencies. Mr. Cremer requested a copy of research about advocates and lawyers recently completed be sent to him. Mr. Brindisi will forward this information to him.
- b. John Street Church – Staff described a summary of the history of the complaint regarding the sidewalk in front of John Street Church. Mr. Brindisi summarized the city's procedure for street and sidewalk repairs. Jackie Norton provided more of a history. Commissioner Perry will inspect the location before the next meeting.
- c. Commission Training on Open Meeting law and the responsibilities of boards and commissions – The chair reminded the commission members of the responsibility to complete the appropriate online conflict of interest training and to submit the appropriate forms regarding the training to the office.
- d. Disability Commission Contact List – discussion ensued. Voluntary sign-up sheet distributed amongst members.
- e. Elections Commission/Anna Maria College Location – Derek Brindisi provided a summary of the history of the ramp situation at 88 Prescott Street. Discussion ensued. Motion made and seconded for the commission to write a letter in support of a variance for Anna Maria College polling location; motion carried
- f. Handicapped Parking fine Increase – A report summarizing the HP parking tickets and revenues for years 2009, 2010 and 2011 was reviewed. It was decided not to pursue the increase in fines at this time. Mr. Cremer summarized the fact that there are two problems with regard to handicapped parking. One problem is that people are illegally using expired or other people's

placards. The second is that people park in HP parking spots without HP placards or plates. He also discussed the difference between local and state fines. Debbie Malone will write a letter to the police department, explaining the importance of tickets for HP parking violations, what it does for the community, and to encourage the continue and increase enforcement of the HP parking laws.

- g. Bullying Project Update – Mr. Cremer described the Worcester Mediation Center and the work being done in Worcester Public Schools as presented at the Human Rights Commission. He also described the benefit of students being bullied having a mentor or a buddy as an ally. A little was discussed about bullying of people with disabilities and the elderly. Ms. Norton provided more details. The chair mentioned that there may be future opportunities for the Commission on Disability to be involved in the bullying project particularly regarding education of bullying of people with disabilities.
- h. Service Animal/Companion Animal Ordinance – Discussion occurred regarding the proposed letter to this City Manager recommending amendment of the free dog licensing ordinance to include all types of service dogs, including companion dogs. The chairperson will research the fair housing definition of companion animals. Motion made and seconded to submit the ordinance edited with the updated companion animal language. The motion carried.
- i. Emergency Management Task Force Update – Members of the Task Force visited three potential shelter sites at Worcester schools on December 28th. The findings were discussed. The Task force is planning to issues a report in the next month or two.
- j. WRTA Functional Assessment Letter – The Chairperson read the contents of the proposed letter to the WRTA supporting the use of functional assessments in the para-transit application process. Some discussion ensued. The Commission agreed that the letter should be sent to WRTA/PBSI.

Member Updates and New Business

- a. The chairperson recommended we invite the new City Mayor and city counselors to future commission meetings. The Chairperson will invite the City Counselors. Staff will coordinate the invitation to the Mayor.
- b. The chairperson requested each commission member read the proposed accessibility policy included in the packet and be prepared to discuss it at the next commission meeting.

Motion to adjourn Meeting was adjourned at 6:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Malone, Secretary

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
Wednesday, January 11, 2012
4:30 PM – 6:30 PM
Worcester Public Library, Banx Room (1st Floor)

MEETING AGENDA

1. **Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions** 4:30
2. **Acceptance of November Minutes** 4:35
3. **Communications and Reports: Chairperson and Staff**
 - a. Intake Update/John Street Church 4:45
 - b. Commission Training 4:55
 - c. Commission Contact List 5:05
4. **Old Business and Updates**
 - a. Anna Maria College Polling Location 5:10
 - b. HP Fine Increase 5:20
 - c. Bullying Project Update 5:40
 - d. Service Animal/Companion Animal Ordinance 5:50
 - e. Emergency Management Taskforce Update 6:10
 - f. Functional Needs Assessment Letter 6:20
5. **Member Update and New Business**
6. **Announcements and Adjournment** 6:30
7. **Items For Future Discussion:**
 - a. Snow Removal
 - b. Temporary Event Accessibility Policy
 - c. Friends of the Commission
 - d. AAB Updates
 - e. Transportation and TPAG
 - f. Transition Plan Update
 - g. Construction Project Wish List