

**City of Worcester  
Commission on Disabilities**

**Type of Meeting:** Regular  
**Date and Time Convened:** June 10, 2009  
**Place Where Convened:** Esther Howland City Council Chamber  
**Members Present:** Grace Clark, Jacqueline Norton, John Cronin, Rachel Brown, Dawn Clark, Joseph Sinasky  
  
**Associates Present:** Jill Swerzenski  
  
**Staff Present:** Fran Manocchio  
  
**Public Present:** Mike Kennedy, Mary Healy, Herb Cremer, Robin Miller  
  
**Guests:** Michael Gilleberto, Director of Operations, Office of City Manager

1. **Call to Order and Introductions.** Meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m.
2. **Acceptance of Minutes.** Motion to accept minutes for May by Grace Clark, seconded by Jacqueline Norton.
3. **Information and Education: City Manager’s Community Coalition on Bias and Hate.** Dawn recommended that periodically an informational session should occur in order to better educate the Commission on the different work areas in the City of Worcester. Dawn dispensed a packet which contained the following documents: History of the City Manager’s Community Coalition on Bias and Hate Crimes; Revised Statement of Intent and Mission. A discussion ensued.
4. **Guest: Michael Gilleberto.** Mr. Gilleberto introduced himself and dispersed a packet of information to the Commission for their review and consideration, which includes the organizational table for the Office on Disabilities, the City Manager’s Impact Statement, and the applicable ordinances. After the table has been reviewed, Mr. Gilleberto stated that he would welcome any concerns or questions the Commission may have. He then stated the ADA coordinator job search is still ongoing, which has been a slower process than originally expected. However, a meeting is scheduled for June 12, 2009 with the legal department for discussion. Mr. Gillberto stated that he would discuss a potential appointment with the Commission before the appointment is formally made in order to gather our input. In addition, per the recommendations set forth in our June 5, 2009 letter, the Esther Howland City Council Chamber will be the permanent location for the Commission’s meetings, unless the City Council needs the room. This room is booked through December 2009 and Grace Clark will call and confirm the availability of the meeting space prior to each meeting.
5. **Communications and Reports.**

- a. **Chairperson's Report.** Fran stated that unfortunately our previously scheduled guest, Stacey Luster, Human Resources Manager for Worcester Public Schools, could not be here today and will attempt to attend the next meeting. Fran then discussed the Accessibility Audits that herself, Mike Kennedy and the Elections Commission performed. They were seeking an alternative polling site to the Friendly House, as it was not handicapped accessible; however, after viewing other alternatives in the area, including a Worcester fire station, there were no feasible alternatives. Therefore, the polling site at the Friendly House will remain and they will try to modify the location as much as possible. Fran then discussed the flow of work her office has been handling for the past month for the Office on Disabilities, some of which included problems with utilities, injuries, community issues, transportation, and general inquiries.
  - b. **Director's Report.** Dawn discussed Information and Education: City Manager's Community Coalition on Bias and Hate as part of her report.
  - c. **Appointment Process for Commissioners.** Fran stated that the appointment process is now underway. Three names have been proposed: Mary Healy, David Perry, and Debbie Malone. Face to face interviews will begin next week and the appointments may be made as soon as July's City Council meeting. It was noted that there are five openings in the Commission.
6. **Transition Plan, Accessibility, and Access Board Issues.**
- a. **Updates on City and School Dept.** There were no updates to report.
  - b. **Sidewalks, Curb Cuts, and Chirpers.** There were no updates to report.
    - i. **List of Chirper Locations.** There were no updates to report, however Fran sent a memorandum to Joe Borbone, Director of Engineering for the Department of Public Works & Parks, regarding the list of the intersections that have chirpers. This information is still outstanding.
  - c. **HP Parking Fines.** There were no statistics to report; however, Fran sent a memorandum to Thomas Zidelis, the CFO and Acting Treasure for the City of Worcester, to request information regarding the annual collection of revenue generated through handicap parking violations. Fran stated she believes the funds the city collects needs to go into the general fund. This is a state statute. However, this is still being researched.
7. **Transportation and TPAG**
- a. **Buses and Para-transit.** On June 12, 2009 at 12:00 a.m. at the Worcester Public Library, there will be a public hearing regarding potential budget cuts as of July 1, 2009 and the proposed Saturday fare hike. The cost would be \$3.00 and \$4.50 for para-transit.
  - b. **WRTA Hearings and Results.** A hearing would be held in Boston on June 15, 2009 to discuss WRTA state funding. Originally, the state promised to reimburse WRTA 75%; however, it is only 69%. As a result, the WRTA is struggling financially and has no borrowing power. Fran stated that the WRTA Administrator Stephen F. O'Neil might be a future guest at our Commission meeting to discuss this issue in further detail.
  - c. **Taxicab Statistics.** There were no statistics to report.

## 8. Old Business

- a. **Worcester Public Library.** Mike Kennedy and Fran Manocchio conducted a site visit on May 18, 2008 at the Worcester Public Library to view potential handicap parking lots on Library Way and/or create a more accessible path of travel as requested by Lucy McGrath, Head Librarian. Mr. Kennedy subsequently drafted a report regarding reasonable recommendations. The Commission viewed this letter.
- b. **UMASS Valet Services.** UMASS has now complied with all of the Commission's recommendations, including a handicap accessibility specific lane, close captioned television sets, and TTY signage. In addition, all valet employees have been trained to manage the handicap accessibility lane effectively. It was also reported that the traffic is actually flowing more adequately in this new system.

## 9. New Business

- a. **Joint Fair Housing Training.** Fran reminded everyone that the Joint Fair Housing Training session would occur on June 24, 2009 at City Hall. This presentation is HUD funded and guests are welcome to attend. Fran requested that we e-mail her if we are able/unable to attend.
- b. **Accessibility Audits with Elections Office.** The accessibility audits were discussed during Fran's report.
- c. **Motion for Regularly Scheduled Meetings.** Rachel proposed that the Commission continue to meet during the month of August and not forego a meeting due to the many changes the Commission has undergone in recent months and the need for new members to become orientated. All members agreed with this motion.

## 10. Announcements and Adjournment.

- a. **Announcements.** Fran informed the Commission that the Office on Disabilities, Human Rights Commission, and Veteran Affairs would be moved to City Hall's fourth floor, which is an open vast area. There will be no offices, only cubicles. The Commission was concerned over the potential lack of privacy. A letter has also been sent to the City Manager regarding these concerns. A site visit may also be conducted.
- b. Jill Swerzenski announced her resignation from the Commission as she will be entering the Masters of Library and Information Sciences Program at Simmons College in August 2009 and unfortunately will be unable to balance both full-time employment, part-time schooling and a place on the Commission.
- c. Dawn announced that she has been recently appointed as a member of the Public Health Commission Task Force.
- d. **Adjournment.** Motion to adjourn at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ms. Jill A. Swerzenski  
Secretary

2009-6-10 Minutes