



Commission on Disability Meeting
May 18, 2023
Minutes of Meeting

The meeting of the Commission on Disability was held at 4:00pm on Thursday, May 18, 2023, virtually using Google Meet Software. Attending the meeting were Sarah Quinn, Jim West, Marcy Rossi, Shiri Ronen-Attia, and Michelle Sweeney (arrived 4:11pm). Also in attendance were Michael Rosen and Police Chief Brooks.

The meeting was called to order at 4:01pm. Mr. West motioned to take the Police Chief out of order on the agenda, seconded by Ms. Ronen-Attia. Unanimous.

Agenda items for discussion were as follows:

1. The members of the Commission on Disability introduced themselves to Police Chief Brooks. Chief Brooks said that he was aware of the request from the past meeting for information related to handicap ticket violations. In Norwood last year, there were just 14 such violations, and just 6 to date this year thus far. Unlike the Town of Needham where this is much more common, this does not seem to be a steady revenue source for Norwood. Chief Brooks also discussed the blocking of Central Street, and potential Autism and Asperger's training that can be taught by a retired Police Lieutenant. The Chief also commented that members of the Police Department are trained in Mental Health First Aid, as well as 20% of the force is trained in Crisis Intervention Training (CIT). Ms. Ronen-Attia asked about a registry of families or populations in Town who might have autism, and the Chief commented that the Police Department does have such a document, and that the paperwork to register yourself or a family member to this database is available online or in-person. The COD will link to this paperwork on their website resources list.
2. The minutes of the April 20th meeting were moved for approval by Ms. Sweeney, seconded by Ms. Ronen-Attia. Unanimous.
3. Ms. Quinn introduced the discussion on COD mission and goals. At the April meeting, she asked that members begin thinking about where the COD should aim to go in the future, and what it should focus on. She proposes that Commission members are supposed to advise, review policies, provide information referrals, and coordinate activities on behalf of other groups. Lack of funding is also an issue for the COD. Ms. Sweeney said she would like to see an increase in participation from the disability community at Town Meeting. Ms. Quinn agreed, and added that she thought Town Meeting does not adhere to universal design. She would like access to slides ahead of time, closed captioning, electronic voting machines, and better communication. A meeting with a sub-quorum of the COD, the Town Manager, the Town Moderator, and the Town Clerk may be called to discuss these ideas.

4. In addition, Ms. Quinn would like to see the COD focus on workplace partnerships, and recreation.
5. Mr. West summarized his thoughts on responsibilities as Commission members. Members should become subject matter experts to be able to advise the Town on disability matters.
6. Mr. Rosen gave a breakdown of the MBTA “3A Housing” Zoning Law that passed last year. The Town Planner, Ms. Sarah Bouchard, has recommended a joint event with the COD and the MBTA Communities Task Force as part of the public information rollout and outreach throughout town. The COD members will be asked to disseminate the invite for this meeting out to their networks in hopes of a good response and attendance from the disability community.

Takeaways:

The COD would like an updated monthly list of ADA issues or complaints that are reported to the Town. Mr. Rosen said he will track down a few past months’ worth and begin the chart.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 15, 2023 at 4:00pm. This meeting will be co-hosted as an event between the Commission on Disability, and the MBTA Communities Task Force, and will be a hybrid meeting. The physical meeting location will be the FinCom Room of Norwood Town Hall. Google Meet software will also be utilized for remote participants. All members of the public are welcome to attend.

At 4:52 pm, Ms. Sweeney made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mr. West seconded the motion. The motion, through a rollcall, was approved unanimously.

Duly submitted by Michael Rosen, Assistant General Manager