



Robert K. McCarthy
Acting Mayor

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

CITY OF SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS
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MINUTES OF THE SALEM COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES JANUARY 17, 2023

A meeting of the Salem Commission on Disabilities was held on January 17, 2023, at 4:30 p.m., via ZOOM, an online video conference call system in accordance with Chapter 107 of the Act of 2022.

Present on call were: Chair Debra Lobsitz; Commissioners: Darren Black, Rebecca Christie, Ezekiel Holt, David Moisan, Maureen McKinnon, Kerry Neenan and Kate Zuraw; Lisa Cammarata, ADA Coordinator, HR Director, Alan Hanscom, SATv, Jeff Cohen, City Council Liaison and Acting Clerk Joanne Roomey (noted by last name in the minutes). Absent was Manda Spittle.

AGENDA

1) Introductions/welcome

Lobsitz called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. and she extended a welcome to everyone. Each commissioner and invited guest introduced themselves. The commission welcomed Councilor Jeff Cohen as the new Commission Liaison. Cohen said he was happy to be a part of the commission and is ready to assist in anyway needed.

The Commission also thanked Councilor Megan Stott (formally Riccardi) for the last three years of her support, helpfulness and open mindedness. Councilor Stott said it was a pleasure working with the commission and she would stay in touch.

2) Approval of Minutes of November 2022 meeting

Christie made a motion to approve the Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes of November 15, 2022. Seconded by Neenan. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

3) New Business

a. Construction update; Engineering Department

There are no updates. The Engineering Department is short staffed and are trying to fill Jay Carroll's position. Cammarata will keep the commission informed of any new information.

- b. Update on funding in handicap violations account; Lisa Cammarata

Cammarata said the city is looking for a new Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. In the meantime, there was a payment from the funding account to Share Contour in the amount of \$5,030.00 for t-shirts for the Unified Sports event at Salem High School. Cohen was at the Basketball Banquet for the Unified Sports Program and said it was a very gratifying experience. They had great participation for the program with a lot of teamwork and support of the coach. The event was a huge success.

- c. Mack Park Food Farm accessibility and picnic tables; Rebecca Christie

Christie is a volunteer for the Mack Park Food Farm and said it needs a lot of improvements, especially to the parking lot. The plan is to have the commission approve putting ground beds for folks using wheelchairs and to add accessible picnic tables. Christie explained what the tables would look like and the materials that would be used and suggested at least one or two. They cost between \$1,100 to \$1,200 each. Christie will contact Kerry Murphy and Pat Schultz to make sure those are the tables they want. The commission would like a list of picnic tables that the city has, the location and the condition of each one. Cammarata will get that inventory.

Moisan made a motion to approve the purchase of two new accessible picnic tables. Seconded by Zuraw. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

- d. Accessibility of trail at Forest River; Rebecca Christie

Christie said this is a work in progress and the access point from Harrison Street and the boardwalk off of the trail is very dangerous, no accessibility and is unusable. Any plans to repair moving forward should go through the Planning Department. Councilor Stott said she will look into this and will get the commission more information on who they should contact regarding repairs.

- e. MOD grant award; Lisa Cammarata

Cammarata had great news that the grant from the ADA was approved for \$71,712.00 to use for Mary Jane Lee Park for accessibility. Contracts will be signed by the mayor and that will get the ball rolling. Cammarata will keep the commission informed of the timeline/stages.

4) Old Business

- a. ADA Transition Plan: No new updates. Attention being paid to accessibility projects.

- b. Subcommittee reports and assignments:

- **ADA Updates and Transition Plan:** Debra Lobsitz, Darren Black, Maureen McKinnon.

Lobsitz updated the MOD newsletter and will forward to the commission. MOD focuses on all of their IT accessibility features used across the state.

- **Social Media:** No updates. Cammarata said Spittle is interested in handling the Facebook page.

- **Pedestrian Safety:** David Moisan/Darren Black

Moisan and Black spoke about holding a public quarterly meeting to get some activities and action going. They will get a list of names and contact people so they can invite them to the next meeting in February. Alan from SATV said the audible alert on Derby Street was not working. Black will follow-up with John Giardi, the city's electrician.

- **SCOD** representative to Salem Human Rights Coalitions/Kerry Neenan (alternates: McKinnon and Christie). Neenan gave an update.

- c. Wheelchair Rental Program; SCOD role; update/follow-up, if available

Neenan will reach out to Kate Fox regarding wheelchair rental and will update the commission.

- d. Canal St. pathway: a request of using funds to add entrance/exit indicators for the visually impaired; Meg Stott/Jeff Cohen, *follow-up, if needed*.

Councilor Cohen discussed the Canal Street development next to Bertinis regarding adding entrance and exit indicators for visually impaired folks. He said the Planning Board is having a meeting on February 2, 2023 regarding access to the pathway. Neenan said they should go with Group 2 and McKinnon agreed and said it is the law and should be Group 2 especially if it is federally funded.

- e. Advisory Group Open Space and Recreation Plan; Tom Devine; Senior Planner; (or Lobsitz)

Lobsitz said she could not make the meetings because of a scheduling conflict and asked if anyone could take this over. Christie said she would be willing to and will attend the next meeting on February 24, 2023. Christie will update the commission.

- f. Unified Sports Program SHS update; Kerry Neenan/group

The Group reiterated the value of this program, and our participation/support. Discussion on SCOD donation for t-shirts took place earlier. Neenan will keep the commission posted.

5) **Announcements/Questions/General discussion/Ideas for future meetings**

- The commission thanked Councilor Stott for her services. Councilor Stott said it was a pleasure and will stop in occasionally to say hello.

- Black is a volunteer coach for Adaptive Sports N.E. at the Perkins School for the Blind. They offer a variety of adaptive sports and gym classes. One of the sports offered is beep baseball, they get four strikes instead of three and they use a softball on a grassy field. He could do a presentation on sports offered in April or May.

6) **Next meeting:** February 21, 2023

7) **Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the Commission on Disabilities this evening, Zuraw moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Black. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Roomey
Acting Commission Clerk

**Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A §18-25
and City Ordinance Sections 2-2028 through 2-2033**