

**Salem Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes**  
12/21/2021; Meeting held via zoom platform.

**Commissioners present:**

Debra Lobsitz, Chair  
Kerry Neenan  
David Moisan  
Kate Zuraw  
Rebecca Christie

**Commissioners absent:**

Zeke Holt  
Maureen McKinnon  
Darren Black

**Also present:**

Lisa Cammarata  
Alan Hanscom, SATv  
Amanda Chiancola, Deputy Planner  
Megan Riccardi, City Council Liaison  
Jeff Cohen

**1) Introductions/welcome/guests**

The Chair, Debra Lobsitz (Lobsitz) called the meeting to order at 4:37PM, and she extended warm holiday wishes to everyone. Each commissioner introduced him or herself.

***Motion made by David Moisan (Moisan) seconded by Kate Zuraw (Zuraw) to move two later agenda items to this spot. All in favor, motion carried.***

**3.c) Old Business**

**ADA Signage Project; Planning Department:**

Amanda Chiancola (Chiancola), Deputy Planner in the City's Planning Department told the group the ADA Signage Project, after careful consideration, will not be the project undertaken by the Department. Chiancola asked for commissioners to assist with choosing a project from the ADA Transition Plan (Plan), to be funded by CDBG funds of approximately \$25,000.00. She also suggested it could be a project not cited in the Plan that met the mission of the Commission. Lobsitz said that signage to inform where accessible entrances are in City buildings might be a good idea. Lobsitz suggested a subcommittee for this project; Neenan, Kate Zuraw (Zuraw) and Lobsitz offered to be on that subcommittee. Lisa Cammarata (Cammarata) will provide Chiancola with their contact information.

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

Chiancola told the group of the City's housing roadmap project, requiring a needs assessment and facilitations of meetings. Called a 'meeting in a box' this allows input without actually meeting in person or in homes or meeting rooms. The questions are open-ended for community members, and Chiancola wants the Commission's assistance in getting the word out. Chiancola will be on the meeting agenda for January 2022.

**2) Approval of minutes of October 2021 meeting:**

Motion made by Neenan, seconded by Zuraw; all in favor, motion carried.

### 3) Old Business continues

#### a. ADA Transition Plan Presentation by IHCD and PSHE Committee Meeting Update

No updates were reported.

#### b. Sub-Committee reports and assignments:

##### ADA Updates and Transition Plan:

Information was received from Mr. Bostick via email regarding the ramp at the Salem Arts Council that the ramp installation is delayed due to a drainage issue.

##### Project Funding

Cammarata outlined a vision for the subcommittee; ie, meet often and develop plans for future spending. Cammarata reported the funding would be discussed later in the meeting.

##### Social Media

There was no report made.

##### Pedestrian Safety

The update from Darren Black on his meeting with the City Electrician was tabled until the next meeting when Black is present.

The group discussed that there are many projects taking place, and the SCOD is an advisory group, rather than an enforcement group. The group discussed accessibility as it relates to historic preservation, and the group is looking forward to hearing from the Architectural Access Board (AAB) when they attend our meeting. The group also recognized that the SCOD is more prevalent than it used to be, in light of all of the projects. Neenan suggested the SCOD be a resource for business owners, along with the AAB.

No Place For Hate (NPFH); Commissioner Kerry Neenan (Neenan) with alternates Becky Christie (Christie) and Maureen McKinnon (McKinnon) serves as Commission representative to this board. Neenan reported that NPFH is has changed its name to Human Rights Coalition. Jeff Cohen (Cohen) added that Neenan attends their meetings, and she is amazing.

### 4) New Business

#### a. Construction Update; Jay Carroll, Roadway Project Manager

Jay Carroll (Carroll) (via email to Cammarata that she shared to the screen) provided a comprehensive update to the group regarding projects in process, and those on the horizon, which include sidewalks, curb cuts and paving.

b. Canal Street pathway; a request of using funds to add entrance/exit indicators for the visually impaired; Meg Riccardi

Having received communication from a resident, Riccardi talked about the new path from Dominos to Marblehead, and the concern of no indication of the entrances and exits on the path for visually impaired individuals. She said she contacted the City's Department of Public Services to see if they could address this matter and do it in house.

c. Discussion of Forest River Park; update/contribution by SCOD; Deb Lobsitz:

Lobsitz reported she attended the Open House at Forest River Park, and she was very pleased with the accessibility features, which she said, "...are great." She reported even the toilet paper holders are in the right place. She reported the pool is accessible, and another accessible beach chair has been donated. She suggested the lecture room could benefit from an assistive listening device.

d. Update on funding in handicap violations account.

Cammarata shared her screen with the group, indicating that since the Handicap Violation Fund's inception in FY'14, \$43,995.16 has been expended for purchases of goods or services to assist persons with disabilities.

Cammarata reported that \$74,107.84 is available, and that funds are deposited to the account on a quarterly basis from the receipts received by the City Collector and posted by the Treasurer.

Lobsitz reported the SCOD needs to be mindful of the cost to provide interpretive services can range from \$2000.00 to \$5000.00. Cammarata suggested that the Project Funding subcommittee meet and have a discussion on plans to use the money in the account, taking into consideration the need to research the reason for the expense to ensure the best use of the funding. Zuraw suggested closed captioning for the zoom meetings, and perhaps purchasing it if it is not already part of the zoom functionality.

- e. Future meetings through 3/2022 format

Motion made by Kerry Neenan to keep meetings remote through 3/2022, as allowed by the state of MA, seconded by Rebecca Christie (Christie), all in favor, motion carried.

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

- a. COVID – 19 updates; Lisa Cammarata

Cammarata reported the City's website has much information regarding COVID, testing, vaccinations and the most up to date data available. She suggested the item be on the agenda to keep up COVID awareness, and let people know of the resources available.

- b. Cammarata reported the City did not receive the MOD grant from the Massachusetts Office on Disability. The City had applied for funding to assist with accessibility features at the Mack Park Food Farm. Cammarata said she would reach out to MOD to see if there was any information about the denial.

- c. Zuraw reported that Andy LaPointe, a former member of the SCOD has started a support group for the visually challenged, and they meet at the Community Life Center, 401 Bridge Street, on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month, from 10:30AM – 12:30PM. Interested individuals can call 9780744-0924 for details and sign up information.

- d. David Moisan (Moisan) offered support to the City Council Liaison, Meg Riccardi, as the City prepared for an new Council in January 2022. Moisan said he has been pleased with Councillor Riccardi, and we as a Commission appreciate her openness and willingness to have important conversations.

There being no further business before the Commission the meeting was adjourned at 6:14PM.

LBC