

Salem Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2021

Meeting held via zoom platform.

Commissioners present:

Debra Lobsitz, Chair
Kerry Neenan
David Moisan
Darren Black
Rebecca Christie
Kate Zuraw
Zeke Holt

Commissioners absent:

Maureen McKinnon

Also present:

City Council Liaison Meg Ricciardi
Lisa Cammarata, ADA Coordination Assistant
Alan Hanscom, SATv
Jenna Ide, Director Municipal Operations
Alyssa Doherty, Intern/ADA Coordination Assistant

Attendees:

Heather Famico
Steven Kapantais
Jeff Cohen

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:35PM. Each commissioner introduced him or herself. The Commission welcomed Jenna Ide and Alyssa Doherty.

2) **Approval of minutes from February 24, 2021 meeting.**

Motion made by Kerry Neenan, seconded by Kate Zuraw to accept the minutes from February meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

3) **Old Business:**

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

Lisa Cammarata (Cammarata) recognized Jenna Ide (Ide) and Alyssa Doherty (Doherty) relative to the ADA Transition Plan (Plan) Smartsheet/Dashboard and last month's presentation.

Ide reported that Doherty has been working on the tracking system and has updated the Smartsheet. There was discussion about embedding links in the Smartsheet and actual links for accessibility.

Ide mentioned accessibility barriers are sometimes very simple to resolve, ie, a table or chair left in a pathway, that can be resolved by moving the item, and following up with education on not repeating that accessibility barrier.

Ide asked about funding for accessible cafeteria tables in some of the schools, and she suggested the Commission may wish to purchase them. Pathways to the gardening area were discussed.

Deb Lobsitz (Lobsitz) asked Ide if the schools have budgeted for accessibility improvements, and she suggested that when their funds are exhausted, perhaps the Commission could look at assisting, depending upon the cost.

Kerry Neenan (Neenan) asked how the Commission learns of a request for money. Cammarata said the Project Funding Sub-Committee should develop guidelines for the funding's usage, keeping in mind that the funding is to be used to benefit all persons with disabilities. There was discussion on developing a form, in conjunction with the Smartsheet to address requests for funding from the Commission.

b. Variance request from John Seger (Seger Architects) for 129 Lafayette St. update:

Lobsitz reported the minutes from the MAAB 2/8/2021 meeting indicated that one unit in the rectory building will now be required to be constructed with an accessible bathroom. Lobsitz said it may still be necessary to install a lift if someone needed it.

c. Odd Meter Café:

Cammarata reported she will schedule a time for her and Zeke Holt (Holt) to meet with the owners to discuss accessibility; she suggested the matter be tabled.

d. Variance request, Salem Arts Council update.

Lobsitz reported she reached out to the Salem Arts Council, there is dialog with the group, and as they are closed, she expects to hear back from them as needed.

e. Sub-Committee reports and assignments:

Lobsitz named each subcommittee and the Commissioners who are on each.

Sub-Committees and current assignments are as follows:

- ADA Updates and Transition Plan
- Project Funding
- Social Media
- Pedestrian Safety

No Place For Hate (NPFH); Commissioner Neenan with alternates Becky Christie (Christie) and Maureen McKinnon (McKinnon) serves as Commission representative to this board.

Lobsitz and Cammarata explained what each Sub-Committee is responsible for, along with indicating some needed additional members and asked people to volunteer. Lobsitz suggested that Commissioner think about what Sub-Committee interested them and email Cammarata and her to let them know.

Attendee Heather Famico (Famico) asked if a non-Commissioner was able to participate in a Sub-Committee meeting. She said she is out a lot, sees things that she could bring to our attention, and she wants to help.

Attendee Jeff Cohen (Cohen) said that Neenan's attending the NPFH meetings has exceeded everyone's expectations by her attending those meetings, and that any Commissioner is welcome to attend at any time.

Kate Zuraw (Zuraw) asked how the public communicates issues to the Commission. Cammarata said that can happen in a variety of ways, i.e., email, verbal, and via telephone. Holt suggested an email address for a Sub-Committee might be a good way to receive that information. Cammarata said she would talk to the IT Department.

f. ALEC training update

Neenan reported she confirmed with Acting Chief Dennis King and Bill Cannata that ALEC training would take place for the Salem Police, 7 trainings, taking place in late March and early April. All Commission members were pleased that Neenan has brought this training to fruition. There was discussion about ALEC training having a presence at the National Night Out, if it is held, in August.

2) New Business:

a. None (typo in not using a instead of b)

b. Snow removal and accessibility discussion

Cammarata reported that during the February storms, the Building Department issues 38 snow tickets. She said she is hopeful that the snow season is over; however, the Commission should be mindful of next year.

Famico said she was pleased to hear that 38 tickets were written, yet she said there was need for improvement. She said she experienced crosswalks blocked by snow.

Holt suggested an educational type program whereby the Commission works with the Building Department regarding curb cuts and snow removal. Cammarata agreed stating that a program much like the 'shovel out your fire hydrant' notification on social media etc., might be a good idea.

c. Accessibility to COVID-19 vaccine sites.

Zuraw said she thought this was important due to the crashing vaccine websites, and to start a dialog about issues/transportation/access to the COVID-19 vaccine to educate the public.

Neenan said that Salem Skipper could be an option.

At 6:08PM, the Disabilities Commission meeting ended when another meeting started.

Cammarata notified the Commissioners, as well at the City's IT Department regarding notifying employees about scheduling conflicts.

LBC