

Commission on Disabilities (COD)

Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2020
11:30 am

Zoom link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87160485050?pwd=QTdKVGNIU0xqaklsdmlkUXRKG42Zz09> Dial by your location +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Present:

Full Members: Ann Corcoran (Chair), Joan Burrows, Lisa Franklin, Franny Osman

Associate Member: Pesha Kokis

Others: Visiting Residents; Director of Governmental Affairs Austin Cyganiewicz

1. Opening

Chair Corcoran opened the meeting at 11:30 am.

2. Regular Business

- A. Shared Concerns (timely issues not on the agenda, formerly “Citizens Concerns”)
– none
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes – none reviewed
- C. Announcements – none
- D. Selectmen Liaison Report – none
- E. Report from Austin Cyganiewicz, Director of Governmental Affairs – Discussion of the Massachusetts disabilities grant. We applied last year for money to install a restroom adjacent to room 204 in Town Hall for accessibility and for staff, as the Informational Technology department is now on that floor. We didn’t receive that grant but the Town is still working on the project with Fiscal Year 21 funding. Now we are discussing if the same grant opportunity can fund other needs: perhaps improvements needed for the now-approved Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan, such as automatic door openers for all publicly-used doors in Town Halls. Mr. Cyganiewicz asks for other ideas from COD. One suggestion was include (Communication Access Real-time Translation) closed captioning for zoom meetings, for both committee meetings and presentations such as Acton at a Glance.

The COD filing cabinet that had been in the kitchen on the second floor of Town Hall is now in Austin’s office.

3. New Business

- A. Discussion of how to achieve accessibility through closed captioning, including mention of which staff should be involved; sources of advice on the matter such as Easter Seals; and choices of software such as zoom vs. google meet software. Ms. Franklin moved that COD investigates a change to Google Meet or otherwise make our meetings accessible to the Deaf community, and ask Austin to meet with the Information Technology staff on this matter. The motion was seconded by Ms. Osman. The Commission voted 4-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.
- B. Adaptive Bikes – Access Sports America comes Tuesdays and Thursdays to Teamworks. So far, funds the COD gave to the Recreation Department gift account last year to allow people with disabilities to ride a bike at a reduced or no cost, have not been used to help people use Access Sports bikes. Ms. Corcoran reports that Health Director Sheryl Ball is going to talk to Recreation Director Melissa Rier to see what the status is.
- C. The Council on Aging and Health Department have instituted a Trailblazer program. Residents get a certificate if they walk all the trails that are part of the program. There will be a kickoff at NARA Park, date to be announced. This program helps people find walking partners, increasing safety and decreasing isolation, and encourages exercise.
<https://actoncoa.com/DocumentCenter/View/1058/Trail-Blazers-2020>
- D. On September 14, there was a Presentation on Loneliness and Isolation During the Pandemic, hosted by Carolyn Melbye from Lahey Hospital and Medical Center. More than thirty people attended the Zoom event. It was recorded and is available at <http://actontv.org/on-demand/post-video/a-discussion-on-loneliness-isolation> .
- E. Member Recruitment - New members are needed. Ms. Franklin sent a notice to Action Unlimited and it wasn't published. She sent a copy to Ms. Osman to try again. Ms. Burrows will share the correct email address with Ms. Osman. Ms. Franklin wrote to Acton-Boxborough Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) asking if any parents or students are interested. Mr. Snyder-Grant said he has been in touch with the Volunteer Coordinating Committee about advertising for members. Ms. Osman offered to take the job of chair as a way to start annual turnover of that position. Ms. Corcoran made a motion that Ms. Osman would be chair for one year. Ms. Franklin seconded the motion. The Commission voted in favor of the motion 4-0 by roll call vote. The motion passed.

4. Adjournment

At approximately 12:30, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.