



Commission on Disabilities

Minutes

Tuesday, December 20, 2022

10 am

Virtual Meeting

The meeting was virtual, at
<https://actonma.zoom.us/j/94313570425>

Attendees:

Members: Lisa Franklin, Chair; Pesha Kokis, Co-Chair; Franny Osman; Leslie Johnson.

Visitors: Nancy C., John G.

Select Board Liaison: Jim Snyder-Grant.

No public concerns.

Announcements:

Lisa reports from the CODA, that the Cambridge ADA Coordinator has a great powerpoint on snow removal. Franny will get the link and share with COA as well.

Jim Select Board update:

The SB saw the budget. Franny asked about the sidewalk debt. FY'25 is the planned time for that borrowing. The plan is that Engineering and Planning for the sidewalks will come first, in FY'24.

Minutes:

Lisa moves to accept the November 2022 minutes as is. Pesha seconds. Vote 4-0 to approve.

Accessibility issues:

Last month, the Housing Authority got new toilets from the state and replaced the toilets in the units with high efficiency toilets. Installation was paid by the state. There were some difficulties for some residents in using the toilets as installed.

Working with Businesses:

Julie Pierce, the Economic Development Director, is excited about doing something that educates and encourages local business to become more accessible. She will get back to Lisa next month.

Leslie suggests we not to re-do the entire dining guide. Lisa suggests wave a meeting with local businesses then Julie can encourage them to put a factual description on websites so we can visit and double check and verify. Franny suggests branding, TV spot, COD Award Plaque for Disability-Friendly businesses. It is noted that As Good as it Gets, which used to be Bickfords, has a lot of people with disabilities, using walkers and wheelchairs.

Lisa suggests cooperation between COD and Middlesex Chamber of Commerce, perhaps bring in the Economic Development Committee, Enterprise Bank, Rotary Club.

Registry of Motor Vehicles Bus trip:

There was a recent group bus trip to the Registry of Motor Vehicles. There were three windows reserved specifically for people coming from Acton. There was no waiting. Participants went right to the window, took photos for the Real ID, it took half an hour. There will soon be a requirement of everyone having the Real ID for use on buses, trains, and planes. The date for this Real ID use has changed from May 2023 to May 2025. John, Pasha, and Lisa were on the bus trip to the RMV. There wasn't much PR for this trip. It was a soft start.

Open Space and Recreation Plan :

Nancy Corcoran from Recreation Commission was at our COD meeting. She said that

The OSRP has a goal of being more inclusive. Draft wording (last year's) was "Improve recreational opportunities for everybody." "Improve recreation and expand." This wording was not in the updated OSRP. We at COD want to ask that the OSRP focus on being inclusive and accessible so this wording should be fixed. A meeting of the OSRP would be held soon where this would be addressed.

COD suggests that for any project, the Recreation Department do a check as to how this project could be open to people with a variety of limitations. We should come up with a checklist for them.

Nancy Corcoran says that resident participation is important to create goals for playgrounds. For example, Jeff Bergart of the Council on Aging spearheaded the planning for a senior park next to McManus Manor Housing Authority senior housing on Main St. that is being developed.

Follow-up on Town Emergency plans.

John suggests we invite Anita Arnum, Deputy Fire Chief, to speak to us at a meeting re: emergency planning, including fire safety.

Roles on COD:

Joan Burrows will soon change from full to associate member.

Melissa will soon change from associate to full.

When Franny Osman resigns in June 2023, John Gianetto will become a full member.

If Minhua Liu continues participating, she would start as an associate member. She was recommended by the Volunteer Coordinating Committee. Charles, who visited recently, decided not to apply.

No one's term ends in 2023. Lisa's ends in 2024. Pasha and Leslie's ends in 2025.

The process for new appointments is that the VCC recommends someone to be a member, Jim SG puts the appointment on the Select Board agenda. When unclear how to proceed, Jim would check with the COD chair or the entire committee.

Franny will bring flowers to Joan who is recovering from surgery.

Acronyms:

CODA Commission on Disabilities Association (Mass.)

COA Acton Council on Aging

TAC Acton Transportation Advisory Committee

SB Select Board

SMOC Southern Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc.

VCC Volunteer Coordinating Council

The listed agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair. *Not all items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. Reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities are available upon request. Please allow advance notice. Send an e-mail to manager@actonma.gov or call the Town Manager's Office, or contact the Chair Lisa Franklin, by emailing lisafranklin58@gmail.com.*