

Commission on Disability Meeting  
Minutes for August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016, 4:30PM  
Worcester City Hall, Levi Lincoln Chamber, Room 309, 3<sup>rd</sup> Flr.

**Attendance:**

**Members Present:** Francesca Abbey, Robert Bilotta, Robert Bureau, Herbert Cremer, Nancy Garr-Colzie, Paul Keister, Elizabeth Myska, Joseph Prochilo, Douglas Russell, Jr., Lindsey Silva

**Staff:** Jayna Turchek, Dawn E. Clark

**Welcome, Call to Order & Introductions**

Chairperson Commission Garr-Colzie called meeting to order and Commissioners introduced themselves.

**Approval of July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Minutes**

July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 minutes were tabled to next month.

**Office Announcements: We have moved to Room 101 (Director Turchek)**

Director Turchek announced that the Office on Disability is no longer on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, but now is located on the first floor of City Hall in room 101 along with the Veterans Services office. The sign on the door says Health and Human Services. Both offices share a single reception area.

There are changes in the works related to office staffing. She is currently seeking to fill the position of Housing Discrimination Worker formerly filled by Anthony Ortiz who has taken a position with Inspectional Services. She announced that a new program called the Local Consumer Aid Program would be started this Fall. This program will provide consumer rights aid to residents and businesses in the city to mediate cases involving fraud, scams, and identity theft. She hopes and expects to hire the staff person for this program soon. When this is accomplished, information about the program will be provided.

We are pleased to announce this growth in the office and to be able to respond with services that are sorely needed.

**Request for the Use of Union Station: Aids Project Worcester**

Lamer Brown, Chairperson of World AIDS Day Committee, from AIDS Project Worcester presented information about the agency and gave packet of information to each Commissioner. AIDS Project Worcester establish in 1987, provides services to people with HIV/AIDS and educating the community on the risk of sexually transmitted infections. He explained that the agency's clients are people with disabilities. The Commission unanimously agreed to provide APD with the use of Union Station's Grand Hall for their December World Aids Day event.

**Notice: Temporary pedestrian walkway to be constructed on Front Street during Fall construction**

Director Turchek report that the Public Works Department established a temporary walkway on the north side of Front Street while construction is being done this Fall.

**Announcement: FY17 Sidewalk Improvement Recommendations**

The Commission received information on the process for requesting side walk improvement recommendations. Yearly in October the City Council provides the Dept. of Public Works with a list of sidewalk priorities to be repaired. At the September Commission meeting the Commission has the opportunity to make recommendations to the City Manager that will go to City Council for consideration.

**Request for access review of Shore Park (Robert Bilotta)**

Commissioner Bilotta noted that the HP signs were unreadable, etc. Director Turchek, City ADA Coordinator will bring this to the attention of the DPW&P.

**Announcement: Transportation Assistance Event, August 24<sup>th</sup>**

On August 24<sup>th</sup> there will be an opportunity to apply for WRTA reduce bus fare and MBTA Blind and Senior Charlie card. The event will be held at the Senior Center from 9:00AM to 11:30AM.

**Announcement: September Emergency Preparedness Event**

Director Turchek reminded the Committee that next month, September, is Emergency Preparedness Month. She has spoken with the Mass. Office on Disability (MOD) about the availability of “Go Paks”. They have all been spoken for, however, additional funding is hoped for by the end of September early October. Worcester’s request for “Go Paks” has been registered with MOD. The office expects a public event for Emergency Preparedness will take place soon.

**Planning for White Cane Day Awareness Event (Liz Myska)**

Commissioner Myska will work with Director Turchek as to the appropriate people to be part of this learning experience. Date in October to be determined.

**Planning for Fall Downtown Wheelchair Stroll (Joe Prochillo)**

Commissioner Prochillo is mapping out a route near City Hall for a wheelchair stroll to give city officials an idea of what it is like to use a wheelchair. The suggestion was made to include using other mobility devices such as walkers.

**Planning for October Disability Employment Awareness Month**

Director Turchek asked the Commission for ideas for Disability Employment Awareness month. Last year a very successful multi-informational panel presentation was co-sponsored with the office on Disabilities. Commissioner Bureau suggested the possibility of working with Assumption College Rehabilitation students.

**Review of AAB notices and applications: None received**

### **Suggestions for upcoming agenda items**

- Safety In The Streets From Predators
- Driving Safety For The Elderly and Disabled
- Fall Risks for Seniors
- Early Voting Discussion and Request that the City Clerk come to speak to the COD before the November election
- Diversity in City Employment – invite Dr. Carter, Worcester’s Chief Diversity Officer
- Raising the amount of full members from seven to nine
- Invite the Quality of Life Team for a presentation
- Video surveillance CCTV cameras in city parks
- Disability Expo on September 16th, 17th & 18th Report
- Curb Cuts on Front Street near City Hall

### **Announcements:**

- **WRTA Transportation Planning Advisory Meeting**  
September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016, 1-2:30pm, WRTA HUB, 50 Foster Street
- **REDD (Rights, Equality and Dignity for the Disabled)**  
September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016, 4:00 – 5:30PM, YWCA, Members Lounge
- **Audio Journal, Accent on Ability Radio Program:** September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016, 5-6pm, <http://www.audiojournal.net/>
- **Next Commission on Disability meeting:** September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 4:30pm.
- **Emergency Preparedness Meeting:** November TBD 2016 at 8:30 am, Parks Department, 50 Skyline Drive or if Department

is moved meeting will be at 2 Coppage Drive.

**Emergency Preparedness Tips:** Pack an emergency “Go Pack” with essential life-saving items and store several gallons of water/person at home. Click here for a list of items and other helpful tips: <https://www.ready.gov/>

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned.