

**City of Worcester
Commission on Disability**

Type of Meeting: Regular
Date and Time Convened: May 13, 2009
Place Where Convened: 25 Meade Street, Conference Room 208
Members Present: Grace Clark, Jacqueline Norton, John Cronin, Rachel Brown, Dawn Clark, Joseph Sinasky
Associates Present: Jill Swerzenski
Staff Present: Fran Manocchio
Public Present: Larry Raymond, Michael Galvin, Mike Kennedy, Mary Healy, Herb Cremer
Guests: Michael Gilleberto, Director of Operations, Office of City Manager; Chris Montiverdi, Program Manager, Office of Health & Medical Preparedness, Worcester Division of Public Health; Kerri Clark, Region 2 Health Preparedness Coordinator, Office of Health & Medical Preparedness

1. **Call to Order and Introductions.** Meeting was called to order at 4:12 p.m. Introductions were made.
2. **Acceptance of Minutes.** Motion to accept minutes for April meeting by Jacqueline Norton, seconded by Rachel Brown.
3. **Communications and Reports.**
 - a. **Chairperson's Report.** Dawn recommended that we suspend the agenda so that Michael Gilleberto could speak to the Commission regarding the recent reorganization and the City of Worcester's fiscal situation.
 - b. **Director's Report.** Fran reported that since she assumed the responsibilities of the Office on Disabilities, she has been busy responding to inquiries. She noted that she would keep the main phone number for at least one year. She also recently met with Bob Moylan, Commission of DPW regarding the "ADA Fund." The DPW is currently repairing necessary curb cuts and sidewalks and has asked for additional requests from the Commission. Beginning July 1, 2009, the Commission will receive regular reports on how the funds are being spent. Fran also discussed items 9b-d in her report, as outlined below.
 - c. **Appointment Process for Commissioners.** It was noted by Mr. Gilleberto that the interviews for the different commissions and committees have started this week and appointments will be made before June 30, 2009. It was also noted that the interviews for the Commission on Disabilities would be prioritized because of our need for additional members.
4. **Michael Gilleberto, Director of Operations, Office of City Manager.** Mr. Gilleberto introduced himself to the Commission and thanked the Commission for having him. He apologized, as the City Manager was not able to attend. However, he will most likely be present at our next meeting. Mr. Gilleberto explained that the City of Worcester is facing a \$31 million deficit for FY 2010. The City also faces another \$7 million in reductions in local aid programs funded by the State. He stated that the City of Worcester eliminated 300 positions on March 31, 2009 and 100 staff lay-offs. Due to the elimination of these jobs and the reorganization that occurred, Health & Human Services was eliminated and is

now under the City Manager. Mr. Gilleberto stated that the city Manager intends to offer all the same services the department offered before and they are doing their best to sustain the services with the resources the City currently has. At this time, Mr. Gilleberto asked if the Commission had any questions. Questions were posed and answered, including whether an ADA coordinator has been hired as required by law. Mr. Gilleberto stated that this issue has been discussed with Fran and an appointment will be made as soon as reasonably possible. Mr. Gilleberto stated that he will seek the Commission's input before making the appointment. It was then asked whether the City has given any thought to earmarking the collection of handicap fines to go toward the Office on Disability. Mr. Gilleberto stated that the City could explore this further; however, there is state law, which governs how the fines are to be spent.

5. **Emergency Preparedness: Guests-Chris Montiverdi and Kerri Clark.** Kerri Clark presented the Special Needs Registry Sign Up. It was noted that they still need to fine-tune the form as their department is getting feedback that it is too lengthy. Mr. Clark passed out the sign-up sheet to the Commission and requested feedback once the Commission has had an opportunity to review it in further detail. He stated that the information that is gathered from the registry would be in a secured site. An implementation date is still unknown as the registry form needs to be vetted. They hope to have the registry in its next draft form by the summer. It is also being determined how his department will be communicating the registry to members of the community. Mr. Clark also requested the Commission's feedback and ideas on this issue as well. Dawn recommended that in our next meeting, we should discuss whether a subcommittee should be established to explore these issues further. It was also recommended that CLW, Elder Affairs, and similar agencies have input as well.
6. **Transition Plan, Accessibility and Access Board Issues.** A motion was made to hold these agenda items to the next meeting.

 - a. **Updates on City and Worcester Public Schools**
 - b. **Sidewalks, Curbcuts and Chirpers**

 - i. **List of Chirper Locations**
 - c. **HP Parking Fines**
7. **Transportation and TPAG.** A motion was made to hold the agenda items to the next meeting.

 - a. **Buses and Paratransit**
 - b. **WRTA Hearings**
 - c. **Taxicab Statistics**
8. **Old Business.**

 - a. **UMASS Valet Services.** A motion was made to hold this agenda item to the next meeting.
9. **New Business.**

 - a. **Future Meeting Place.** Rachel Brown recommended that the Commission switch meeting places in the future, as it is critical that the Commission meet in a handicap accessible place with public transportation. It was recommended that the Commission write a letter to the City Manager and the City Solicitor regarding the "reasonable accommodation" issue and that the Commission should be giving priority in choosing a meeting place.
 - b. **Joint Fair Housing Training with Human Rights Commission.** This training is through HUD and provides training for people who work with people with disabilities. This training is tentatively scheduled to occur for

members on the Commission on Disability on May 20th from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Legal Assistance (405 Main Street, Worcester MA). However, the Commission all agreed that this was short notice and some members would be unable to attend. Ms. Manocchio stated that she would reschedule and send the Commission a revised training date.

c. Request from Worcester Public Library. Fran brought to the Commission's attention a letter from Ms. Lucy Gangone, Head Librarian of Worcester Public Library, requesting the consideration of no accessible parking spaces on Library Lanes and welcomes our recommendations regarding this situation. It was recommended that the Commission and CLW review this situation further by going on a site visit.

d. Request made to Assumption College Rehab Graduate Program. Fran stated that she spoke with her alma mata, Assumption College, about having an intern from the Rehab Graduate Program work with the Human Rights & Disabilities Division during the fall for a twenty hour a week unpaid internship to assist in its day to day operations. The Commission agreed that this was a great idea.

10. Announcements and Adjournment.

a. Motion to adjourn at 5:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ms. Jill A. Swerzenski
Secretary

2009-5-13 Minutes