

Commission on Disability Meeting
Minutes for January 16th, 2018, 4:30PM
Worcester City Hall, Levi Lincoln Chamber,
Room 309, 3rd Flr.

Attendance:

Members Present: Robert Bureau, Nancy Garr-Colzie, John Gleason, Fitzroy Hall, D. Karuna, Paul Keister, Elizabeth Myska, Joseph Prochilo, Stephen Stolberg

Members Absent: Robert Bilotta, Douglas Russell, Jr., Lindsey Silva

Staff: Jayna Turchek, Dawn E. Clark, Jeanine Daley

Guests: Jonathan Church, WRTA Administrator

Welcome, Call to Order & Introductions

Chairperson Prochilo called the meeting to order. Commissioners introduced themselves. John Gleason was raised to full member for voting purposes this evening.

Approval of December 19th, 2017 Minutes

Commissioner Garr-Colzie moved approval and Commissioner Gleason seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously approved the December 19th, 2017 minutes as written.

Conversation with Jonathan Church, WRTA

The Commission conducted an unannounced visit to the WRTA Hub last summer with a letter sent in September relaying the tour findings. Mr. Church responded in letter provided to the Commission and appeared for further conversation at this meeting. Discussion reaffirmed the Commission's concerns. Mr. Church acknowledged these concerns by saying operationally, the WRTA cannot assign busses to specific bus bays. However, WRTA is currently looking at reassigning specific bus routes to specific sides of the bus platform.

As for the audio messages and electronic messaging signs, WRTA has been working with their contractor to conduct a series of audits on their accuracy syncing with audio announcements. The latest audit was conducted on December 12, 2017 and it showed that there was an 80% improvement over the previous audit conducted on November 30, 2017. The contractor was at the Hub last week working with the audio messaging and there are plans to do a staff audit next month to follow up.

The Commission members offered their help and Mr. Church welcomed the offer.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Church and looked forward to improvements for people with disabilities at the Hub.

Presentation on initial COD archival research (OHRD intern Jeanine Daley)

OHRD Intern Jeanine Daley was introduced. She is conducting archival research for the Commission on Disability's 40th Anniversary. She shared some of her preliminary findings related to timeline, former office directors and highlights of achievements. There will be more to come. Commissioner Gleason volunteered to assist her with the research.

Review and approval of proposal for COD 40th anniversary celebration

Last month's surveys revealed the choice of Union Station as the anniversary's venue to be held on a Saturday in October 2018. Other elements of the event need to be clarified. The Commission voted to share their ideas with staff by January 31th, 2018 so a clearer picture of the event can be presented at the February meeting.

Review draft restaurant questionnaire and discuss assessment timeline and participation

Chairperson Prochilo prepared and distributed restaurant assessment questionnaire for mobility and the visual access challenge type. He asked that members get back to staff with corrections/additions by January 31st. Once the category questions are as complete as possible, a determination of three to five restaurants will be chosen to do a test run of the combined (4) category questionnaires. (Cost of meals will be Commissioners responsibility.) The hope is to visit 2 or 3 restaurants of the 31 venues on Shrewsbury Street with report back to Commission at the February 20th Commission meeting.

Proposal to hold February commission meeting to the Worcester Historical Museum

The museum is working to include stories of experiences of persons with disabilities. They have in their archives an old typewriter used by blind persons. They are planning an event to gather the public to share how they communicate with each other today using this typewriter as a starting point.

In conversation with the Office the suggestion was made to hold this event on the same day as the Commission meeting if the Commission agreed to meet at the Museum. The Commission voted to meet at the Worcester Historical Museum at 30 Elm Street, Worcester for its February 20th meeting.

Review of AAB notices and applications: City properties in bold

Variance

- 551 Main Street, Docket # TBD
- 64-72 Water Street, Docket # TBD

Decisions

- **455 Main Street, Docket#V16-332 (plaza and sidewalks)**
- **120 Granite Street, Docket #V17-202 (Gerald Creamer Center)**
- **170 Belmont Street, Docket #V17-203 (Belmont Street Community School)**

Suggestions for upcoming agenda items None

Announcements

- **WRTA Transportation Planning Advisory Meeting:** January 16th, 2018, 1-2:30pm, WRTA HUB, 60 Foster Street
- **REDD (Rights, Equality and Dignity for the Disabled):** February 6th, 2018, 4:00 – 5:30PM, YWCA, Members Lounge
- **Audio Journal, Accent on Ability Radio Program:** February 8th, 2018, 5-6pm, <http://www.audiojournal.net/>
- **Emergency Preparedness Meeting:** February TBD, 2018 and May 8th, 2018, 9:00am at 2 Coppage Drive.
- **Next Commission on Disability meeting:** February 20th, 2018 4:30pm.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.