

Accepted 9/13/12

## **Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD)**

Minutes for Thursday, July 12, 2012

51 Inman Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room, Cambridge, MA 02139

Meeting was called to order at 5:40pm

### **Present:**

Members: Elizabeth Dean-Clover, Sandy Durmaskin, JoAnn Haas, Alissa Land, Naomi Pinson, and Dave Wood.

Alternates: Don Summerfield

Staff: Michael Muehe and Kate Thurman

Absent: Miriam Cooper, Eileen Keegan Bongiorno, Bet MacArthur, Rachel Tanenhaus, and Kathy Watkins.

Guests: Oscar Anderson, Cambridge Resident; Chris Burke, Cambridge Police Department; Kara McSweeney, Department of Public Works; and Allegra Stout, Boston Center for Independent Living.

### **Documents Used:**

- Minutes from June 14, 2012 CCPD Meeting
- 2012 Employment Event Sub-Committee Meeting Notes from June 11, 2012
- CCPD October Employment Events Through the Years
- *Lives Worth Living* flyer
- List of Mini-Grants Awarded from NOD Award Money

**Minutes:** A motion to amend the June 14, 2012 minutes to add “perspective” to the following bullet regarding the October event was passed:

- Having a balance of employer and employee *perspective*

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was seconded and passed.

**Chair’s Report:** Elizabeth Dean-Clover announced that CCPD will not be meeting during the month of August.

### October Employment Event Planning:

Elizabeth Dean-Clover reported that the event planning sub-committee has met and is having difficulty figuring out how to maintain cross-disability relevance. She noted that the committee particularly wants to be sure that psychiatric and other hidden disabilities

are addressed. She said that the committee has discussed focusing on practical solutions and reasonable accommodations for different disabilities and employment situations.

There was some discussion about the goals for the event, including having employers attend.

Kate Thurman said that she is hoping to put together a booklet of materials and resources for people to take with them, including fact sheets, websites, etc. She asked those in attendance to email her [kthurman@cambridgema.gov] with any such employment resources they recommend.

#### Ballot Question/Update from Law Department

Ms. Dean-Clover reported receiving a letter from Nancy Glowa, City Solicitor, stating that Commission members are considered policy makers with respect to the assisted suicide ballot question, thereby permitting CCPD to take a position on it.

There was discussion about whether or not CCPD should take a position, but it was ultimately tabled and no motion was made. However, it was decided that a short article flagging the upcoming ballot initiatives for both assisted suicide and legalizing medical marijuana would be added to the August-September issue of the *AccessLetter*.

**Public Works:** Kara McSweeney said that there is a lot of construction doing on in the City this summer, including the underpasses near Harvard and Kendall Square. She asked people to let DPW know if they see a construction site that is lacking an accessible alternate route of travel. Contractors are instructed to provide one at all times.

JoAnn Haas requested that the signs reading “share roads with bicycles” that are often put up in construction zones not be located on disability parking poles.

**Police Community Liaison Update:** Superintendent Chris Burke reported meeting with Laura Brelsford, former Commission member and current Deputy Director of the MBTA’s Office on System-Wide Accessibility. He said that Ms. Brelsford is looking into devising a training for MBTA police officers regarding disability issues and she wanted to see what similar type of training Cambridge has in place. They spoke about in-service training that Michael Muehe provided several years ago, as well as about responding to issues within the disability community and how to conduct interviews. They hope to collaborate in putting together a training for their respective police academies.

Superintendent Burke also said that he spoke with Commissioner Haas about the possibility of having police officers assist with enforcement of bicycle parking regulations. Commissioner Haas said that parking control officers would be in a better position to make observations of illegally parked bicycles. Superintendent Burke will speak with DPW

Commissioner Lisa Peterson about it. He also hopes to speak with the director of the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department at some point.

**Update on Sidewalk Obstruction Issues:** Joann Haas reported distributing bicycle flyers to local bike shops to raise awareness of the importance of keeping the sidewalks abutting disability parking spaces clear.

Superintendent Burke said that the Police Department has a bicycle community relations division and can help with community outreach.

Kara McSweeney noted that the Cambridge Twitter community is really strong, making it a good medium for public awareness campaigns.

**Disability Reframed:** Michael Muehe said that the *Lives Worth Living* screening had the biggest turnout ever for the film series and that it went very well. He also reported meeting with Bet MacArthur and Kristin McCosh of the Boston Commission for PWD (BCPD), who had expressed interested in collaborating on the film series. He said that the two Commissions would take turns hosting the film series. There is a facility in Dudley Square that is fully accessible and is eager to host community events. The BCPD would like to make an official announcement about the collaboration on July 26 at ADA Day.

**Executive Director's Report:** Michael Muehe said that CCPD will be hosting a Community Access Monitor Training, offered by the MA Office on Disability, on September 11&12 at City Hall Annex. The training covers all aspects of the ADA and how to conduct accessibility surveys.

Mr. Muehe said that the office is moving forward with producing a PSA and that the two topics that received the most votes were, in order:

1. Service animals and educating business owners about their obligations to accommodate people with service animals
2. How to make a request for reasonable accommodation

Mr. Muehe reported attending hearings at the MA Architectural Access Board on June 25 regarding variance applications from the Sinclair Music Club and Lesley University's Founders Hall. He said that the Sinclair hearing went very well and that the Lesley hearing was continued.

**Project Coordinator's Report:** Kate Thurman reported attending the Annual Taxicab Medallion Owner's Meeting, where she spoke about serving customers with disabilities, with a focus on those who use service animals. She discussed the change in the ADA's definition of service animal, situations in which service animals may be refused (i.e., when the animal is being a direct threat and is not under the control of its handler), and allergies

(i.e., drivers with allergies to dogs must provide medical documentation to the License Commission as soon as the allergy is diagnosed *and* are required to drive a cab with a partition. Thus, drivers are not permitted to refuse a ride to an individual with a service animal due to an allergy).

**Public Input:** Allegra Stout just started working at the Boston Center for Independent Living, where she is doing community organizing around healthcare, helping consumers have a voice in healthcare politics. She can be reached at <astout@bostoncil.org> or 617-338-6665.

Meeting adjourned at 7:22pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kate Thurman, Disability Project Coordinator