

City of Cambridge

Commission for Persons with Disabilities

51 Inman Street · Cambridge, MA · 02139-1732

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Elizabeth Dean-Clower
Chair

Bet MacArthur
Secretary

Miriam Cooper
Sandy Durmaskin
Kara Falise
Avner Fink
Nicole Horton-Stimpson
Naomi Pinson

Michael Muehe
*Executive Director/
ADA Coordinator*

Kate Thurman
Disability Project Coordinator

Katie Ashwill
Pro Bono Associate

The next meeting of the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities will be held in the 2nd Floor Conference Room at 51 Inman Street on Thursday, June 11, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.

PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ARRIVE BY 5:30 PM

AGENDA

Please turn OFF your cell phones before the meeting begins. Thank you.

NOTE: CCPD meetings may be audio recorded for the purpose of taking minutes.

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| 1. Introductions | 2 min. | |
| 2. Approval of May 14 Minutes | 5 min. | |
| 3. Announcements | 2 min. | CCPD staff / board |
| 4. Chair's Report | 5 min. | Elizabeth Dean-Clower |
| 5. Nominations and Elections for CCPD
Chair and Secretary | 5 min. | |
| 6. Public Works Update | 10 min. | Debbie Cheng |
| 7. Police Community Liaison Update | 5 min. | Jack Albert |
| 8. Executive Director's Report | 10 min. | Michael Muehe |
| 9. Project Coordinator's Report | 5 min. | Kate Thurman |
| 10. Public Input | 3 min. | general public |
| 11. Old Business | 2 min. | |
| 12. New Business | 2 min. | |

This is a scent-free meeting. In consideration of individuals with environmental illness and/or multiple chemical sensitivity, please refrain from wearing perfume, after-shave or any other scented products to our meetings. Thank you for your consideration.

The City of Cambridge, Commission for Persons with Disabilities, does not discriminate on the basis of disability. The Commission for Persons with Disabilities will provide auxiliary aids and services, written materials in alternative formats, and reasonable modifications in policies and procedures to persons with disabilities upon request.



Approved July 9, 2015

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD)

Minutes for Thursday June 11, 2015

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

Meeting was called to order at 5:40PM

Present

Members: Debbie Cheng, Sandy Durmaskin (by phone), Avner Fink, Nicole Horton-Stimpson, Bet MacArthur (by phone), and Naomi Pinson.

Absent: Elizabeth Dean-Clower

Alternates: Donald Summerfield

Guests: Jack Albert, Matthew Page Lieberman and Gary Dmytryk

Staff: Michael Muehe and Kate Thurman

Documents/Materials Used:

- Minutes from May 14, 2015

Minutes:

A motion to approve the May 14, 2015 minutes was seconded and passed.

Reminder: There will be a public celebration of the ADA's 25th Anniversary on the Boston Common from 11am-3pm on Wednesday, July 22. See www.ada25boston.org for more information.

Police Community Liaison Update: Deputy Superintendent Jack Albert reported on July 4 festivities. Specifically, parking will open up to people with disability parking plates or placards on Cambridge Parkway along the backside of the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Cambridge at 3pm on July 4. The Galleria Mall is designated as the evacuation place for that zone.

Nominations & Elections for Chair, Secretary:

At the May 14 Commission meeting, Nicole Horton-Stimpson was nominated for Chair and Avner Fink was nominated for Secretary. No further nominations were made on June 11.

Nicole was unanimously elected as Chair. Avner was unanimously elected as Secretary.

Although she was unable to attend the meeting, members thanked Elizabeth Dean-Clower for her service as Chair of CCPD.

Summer Schedule: Members voted to take the month of August off, so there will be no Commission meeting that month.

Public Works Update: Debbie Cheng reported in response to concerns about bicycles on sidewalks that Kathy Watkins recommended having Joe Barr, new Director of the Department of Traffic, Parking & Transportation (TPT), speak at a CCPD meeting. Jack Albert added that about 8 years ago, the City audited all the “no bicycles on sidewalks” painted signs and found that many of the signs on curbs had worn off or were not big enough. He also said that while the bicycle regulations are issued by TPT, only the Police Department can do enforcement.

Executive Director’s Report: Michael Muehe reported that the City is allocating \$500,000 for the participatory budget again this year. One of the projects funded in this year’s participatory budget is an accessible public toilet in Central Square. [Editor’s note: the City has allocated \$600,000 for the participatory budget in fiscal year 2016, an increase from last year’s \$500,000.]

Mr. Muehe reported receiving a total of nine applicants for four vacancies on the CCPD Board. The Interview Committee’s recommendations went up to the City Manager’s office earlier in the week.

He said that people often come to the Commission with ideas on legislation and that CCPD can and ought to be working on state and local legislation. There are at least three laws and bills that are of importance right now: the proposed Murphy Bill, which would change the conditions under which people with mental health disabilities are treated; it supports assistive outpatient commitment, forcing people into services. Naomi Pinson said that, if the Murphy Bill passes, people with mental health disabilities will lose a lot of rights. There is an effort to make psychiatric records available to friends and family members. Ms. Pinson said there is also a move to diminish protection and advocacy funding for the legal rights of persons with mental health disabilities and to demolish the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA). She said that on a state level, Massachusetts has voted against assistive outpatient commitment, but the Murphy Bill is federal.

Mr. Muehe said another area of focus could be advocating for the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) rules and regulations to be updated to brought up to federal standards. For example, MAAB rules and regulations currently do not apply to employee-only areas in buildings, but the Americans with Disabilities Act does. The scope of the MAAB needs to be increased to close this loophole in the law.

Additionally, although the law allowing remote participation by members of commissions on disability was recently updated, it still requires that a quorum be present in the room. The intention was to allow a quorum to be met via remote participation, but the Attorney General’s Office has come to the determination that the Open Meeting Law still requires a quorum of members in the room in order to allow remote participation. They concluded that there needs to be some further tweaking of the law in order to allow for a quorum to be met via remote participation.

Debbie Cheng, Sandy Durmaskin, Avner Fink, Nicole Horton-Stimpson, Bet MacArthur, Naomi Pinson and Don Summerfield all expressed an interest in working on legislative initiatives.

Project Coordinator’s Report: Kate Thurman said that the 2015 National ADA Symposium was very informative. There was a lot of talk about the first 25 years of the ADA being focused on enforcement and acknowledgement of the tremendous strides our country has made in terms of inclusion for people with disabilities. Clearly, there is still a lot of work to do. Both attendees and presenters at the Symposium talked a lot about changing the conversation – to get buy-in from above, help people understand that accessibility benefits everyone, etc.

She also live Tweeted the event. See www.twitter.com/CambCPD to view the Tweets.

She reminded folks of the ADA celebration on the Boston Common on July 22 and encouraged everyone to visit www.adaanniversary.org to sign the pledge to celebrate and recommit to the full implementation of the ADA.

Ms. Thurman also reported that the 2015 theme for National Disability Employment Awareness Month (October) was recently announced by the Office of Disability Employment Policy: “My Disability is One Part of Who I Am”

Old Business: Don Summerfield said that the fire call box in Central Square next to Starbucks was removed during construction, but never replaced, although the pedestal is still there. Michael Muehe said that he would look into it and explained that the Electrical Department started replacing the City’s roughly 300 fire call boxes with accessible call boxes a few years ago. They are replacing about 50 each fiscal year.

Mr. Summerfield also reported that Eversource recently reconstructed an electrical vault under the sidewalk on Green Street because the pavement was caving in, but that the new construction exceeds permissible slopes so must be redone.

Debbie Cheng said that DPW does work with Eversource to ensure that work is being done in a timely manner and that DPW has language in contracts requiring accessibility, but that they do not contract with private utility companies. Ms. Cheng will check to see what the process is when utility companies replace these vaults.

The meeting adjourned at 6:32PM

Respectfully submitted by Kate Thurman