

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
Policies and Procedures
Harvard MA

ARTICLE I: TITLE AND PURPOSE

1. The name of this commission is the Commission on Disabilities (hereafter referred to as the Commission).
2. The purpose of the Commission is to coordinate or carry out programs in coordination with programs of the Massachusetts Office on Disability in order to bring about full and equal participation in all aspects of life in the Town of Harvard to the disability community.
3. The purpose of these by-laws is to establish principles and procedures for the governance of this Commission.

ARTICLE II: POWERS AND DUTIES

1. Research local problems of people with disabilities.
2. Coordinate the activities of other local groups organized to meet the needs of people with disabilities.
3. Review, advise, and make recommendations about policies, procedures, services and activities of departments and agencies of the Town of Harvard as they affect people with disabilities.
4. Work in cooperation with the departments and agencies of the Town of Harvard to bring about maximum participation of people with disabilities.
5. Initiate, monitor, and promote legislation at the city, state and federal level which advances the equal status of people with disabilities and ensure that appropriate regulations are adopted and enforced pursuant to such legislation.
6. Encourage public awareness of disability issues.
7. Provide information, referral, guidance and advice to individuals, businesses, organizations and public agencies in all matters pertaining to disability.
8. Recruit and recommend prospective Commission members to the Select Board. At least one month prior to making recommendations, the Commission shall solicit nominations and ensure that said nominations reflect different disabilities.
9. File an annual report, which shall be printed in the Town report.
10. Receive gifts of property, both real and personal to the Town of Harvard, subject to the approval of the city council; such gifts to be managed and controlled by the Commission.
11. Take such action as the Commission considers appropriate to ensure the equal access status of persons with disabilities.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

1. The Commission shall consist of a minimum of five (5) members appointed by the Select Board. The majority of members shall consist of people with disabilities. One of the members may be a member of the immediate family of a person with a disability. One member shall be either an elected or appointed official of the Town of Harvard.
2. All members initially appointed in 2020 will serve one year terms. At the end of the first year of service, appointed members will serve as follows:

- a. Two members shall serve a one year term.
 - b. Three members shall serve two-year terms.
 - c. Appointments will be made in June for open CoD seats. Terms will commence in July.
3. Resignation shall be made via written notification to both the Chair and Town Hall. 4. If any member is absent from three regularly scheduled meetings in any one calendar year, a recommendation shall be made to the Select Board that they be removed from the Commission, unless any or all absences have been excused for good cause by the chairperson. Good cause shall include, but not limited to: illness, a death in the family, weather, and professional responsibilities.
5. The Select Board shall fill any vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner as an original appointment.
6. Any members of said Commission may, after a public hearing if so requested, be removed for cause by the appointing authority.
7. Members of the Commission shall get the approval of the Commission prior to making statements or joining activities on behalf of the body.
8. All members shall have full voting rights.

ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS

- 1. The officers shall include a Chair, Co-chair, Secretary and Treasurer.
- 2. Officers shall be elected annually by the majority vote of the Commission.
- 3. One member may hold more than one office.
- 4. Duties:
 - a. The Chair shall:
 - i. Develop the agenda in coordination with the other officers; prepare materials and packets for distribution.
 - ii. Submit notices and agenda of all meetings at least forty-eight (48) hours before the meeting date as per MA Open Meeting Law
 - iii. Preside over all meetings;
 - iv. Appoint subcommittees as needed;
 - v. Authorize expenditures as needed.
 - b. The Co-chair shall perform all the functions of the Chair in their absence.
 - c. The Secretary shall;
 - i. Keep records of all meetings attendance, minutes, and correspondence.
 - ii. Assist the Chair in preparing packets and materials for distribution.
 - ii. Send draft minutes of the monthly meeting to all members no later than one week after the meeting.
 - d. The Treasurer shall:
 - i. Keep records of all financial matters;
 - ii. Develop a budget in coordination with the Commission members.

iii. Prepare a financial statement for inclusion in the annual report.

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS

1. Regular meetings shall be held at least six (6) times a year.
2. A quorum shall consist of three (3) members.
3. Meeting minutes will be amended and approved at the next publicly-held meeting.
4. Special meetings may be called by the Chair, or by any three (3) members.
5. Decisions will be made by a majority of those members present, unless where otherwise noted in these by-laws.
6. Notice of meetings will be sent to the members at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.
7. Meeting notices and agenda must be submitted to Town Hall for posting at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting as per Open Meeting Law.
8. Materials and packets shall be distributed to members no later than four (4) days prior to a posted, scheduled meeting.
9. Meetings shall adhere to Robert's Rule of Order and MA Open Meeting Law.

ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended at any duly constituted meeting of the Commission by two-thirds vote of those members present provided written notice of the proposed amendment is distributed to each member at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.