

**Harvard Commission on Disabilities
Meeting Minutes
10/21/20**

Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82716605975?pwd=NEVTK3J4WG1mZlZlMmlRUGhEMVl1dz09>

Meeting ID: 827 1660 5975

Passcode: 668539

Called to Order at 4:00 pm by Davida Bagatelle

Present: Davida Bagatelle, Carolyn Luescher, Toni Spacciapoli

Absent: Laurie Bridges, Brian Wickman

Approval of August 31, 2020 Meeting Minutes

- Davida Bagatelle suggested a change in wording from “sister committees” to “other Town boards, committees, and commissions”.
- Motion made by Carolyn Luescher to accept meeting minutes as amended. This motion was seconded by Toni Spacciapoli and the minutes were unanimously approved by those present.

Old Business:

- Update on Grant application
 - Davida Bagatelle gave update on grant proposal
 - Three grant applications were submitted by Marie Sobalvarro to the Massachusetts Commission on Disabilities. They included a technology planning grant for Town website accessibility, a project grant by the School Committee for the renovation of the ramp at the Middle School, and a planning grant for Self Evaluation and Transition Plan and Survey to assess the needs and programing that our disabled community finds are lacking in our Town. Grants will be awarded in December 2020
 - Davida Bagatelle thanked Carolyn Luescher for her support and the work she did to help Marie complete the grant applications. In addition, Davida Bagatelle made calls to other towns for guidance in the grant application process. She mentioned how she reached out to a vendor for an approximation of the cost in conducting the Self-Evaluation and survey, and she used their figures as an example of cost, but we are not obligated to use this vendor.
 - Carolyn Luescher reported she spoke to Marie Sobalvarro, who mentioned that an application was made to invest in the Town’s website accessibility. Carolyn Luescher suggested to Marie that we conduct a “proof of concept” evaluation. She also suggested that we reach out to the vendor companies that offer this service. Carolyn Luescher offered her services to evaluate the vendor products to assure that they work as described. She would compare the options, write an assessment to assure the product satisfies the Town’s needs and is compatible with the tools available in Town, and help the Town determine the best vendor. Carolyn Luescher suggested we could implement a soft launch, and then submit to Marie and the Town. She proposed that the Council on Aging might be used

for the soft launch since it may be the best example of a service in Town where the needs are greatest. Davida Bagatelle will share her research on this matter. *(While discussing the work completed for the grant application by Commission members, Davida Bagatelle informed the community watching this meeting that there are only 3 members left on the Commission. Two members recently resigned. Davida Bagatelle encouraged town residents with interest in the Commission to consider completing an application for appointment to the Commission.)*

- Davida Bagatelle appointed Carolynn Luescher to spearhead the investigation into vetting various vendors for website accessibility. Davida Bagatelle noted that Jeff Dougan can be a good resource.
 - Carolynn Luescher will provide an update regarding this evaluation at the next meeting.
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- Approval of ByLaws
 - A discussion regarding Term Limits was discussed concerning the number of members on the Commission and member term limits. Davida Bagatelle voiced the need for continuity and institutional history and suggested that the number of 1-year terms be limited.
 - Davida Bagatelle suggested that the Commission make a recommendation to the Board regarding Term Limits for the Bylaws. It was suggested that the following wording to the bylaw should read: "All members initially appointed in 2020 will serve one year term. At the end of the first year of service, all appointed members will serve as follows: a) Two members shall serve one-year terms, b) Three members shall serve two-year terms, and c) Terms will commence after Town Elections."
 - Davida Bagatelle will present this recommendation to Stu Skalar to share with the Select Board on the Commission's behalf.
 - A motion made by Toni Spacciapoli to move forward with the Bylaws as amended. Carolynn Luescher Leuscher seconded the motion.
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- Report on Ch. 40-Sec. 22g- Parking Fees Allocation
 - Davida has not heard back from Stu Skalar regarding allocation of parking fines to the Commission. She will follow up with Stu Skalar for the next meeting.
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- Update on Town website and Gmail posting
 - Julie Doucet set up an email site for the Commission on the Town website. She also provided login information, so that Commission members can post on the website.
 - Davida Bagatelle requested members to review the current list of documents in the Commission drive to determine which documents should be posted as resources on the Commission landing page.
 - In a conversation with Civic+, it was pointed out to Davida Bagatelle that the Town website does not have an ADA statement on the landing page.
 - Davida Bagatelle will invite Stu Skalar and Tim Bragan to attend the Commission's next meeting to discuss ADA information that should be on the Town's website. She has requested the members to research what other

documents that should be posted and to send her a list of our recommendations. She will compile this information and send a list to Stu Skalar and Tim Bragana ahead of their attendance at the next Commission meeting.

- Davida Bagatelle mentioned receiving an email in which the individual was requesting the Commission's advice. She said the outcome was positive and viewed this as a learning experience. As a result of this experience, Davida Bagatelle suggested that the Commission organize a general informative meeting to invite chairs of town commissions, boards and committees to an open forum discussion around ADA and the needs of our residents.
- The Committee members discussed when would be the best time to hold such a meeting. It was decided that such a meeting will be held at the start of 2021. In the meantime, Committee members will reflect on issues to consider and seek suggestions from Stu Skalar and Tim Bragan concerning the manner in which members can communicate the Commission's role to those attending the forum.

New Business:

- Resignations and filling seats on the Commission
 - The Commission has received two resignations due to personal reasons.
 - Members discussed the process for recruiting new members.
 - Davida Bagatelle will contact Julie Doucet and request a posting.

Next Steps:

- Carolyn requested Davida Bagatelle forward contact information of an individual connected with Civics+ to assist in "proof of concept" assessment.
- Davida Bagatelle will follow-up with Stu Skalar concerning Chapter 40, Sec. 22g, invite him and Tim Bragan to the next monthly meeting, and file a request with Julie Doucet to post for new Commission members.

Next monthly meeting scheduled for November 18, 2020 at 4:00pm

ADJOURNMENT- Motion to adjourn at 5:08 pm; It was seconded. All members were in favor by roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Spacciapoli, Commission Secretary