



Boston Disability Commission Advisory Board

BOSTON CITY HALL | ONE CITY HALL PLACE | 9th FLOOR | ROOM 967 | BOSTON MA, 02201
617.635.3682 | fax 617.635.2726 | TTY 617.635.2541 | www.cityofboston.gov/boardsandcommissions

Minutes for Thursday April 28th, 2016
9th Floor BRA Board Room 900, Boston City Hall, 5:30 – 7:30 PM

KRISTEN MCCOSH
Commissioner

Commission Members

Heather Watkins
Chairperson

Allegra Stout
Vice Chairperson

John Winske
Secretary

Marc (Moses) Mallard
Treasurer

Zary Amirhosseini

Kimyatta Campbell

Carl Richardson

Kyle Robidoux

Present:	Staff Present:
(AS) Allegra Stout (HW) Heather Watkins (JW) John Winske (KR) Kyle Robidoux (MM) Marc (Moses) Mallard	(KMC) Kristen McCosh, Commissioner (JD) Jessica Doonan (CM) Chris Morawski
Not Present: (CR) Carl Richardson (KC) Kimyatta Campbell (ZA) Zary Amirhosseini	
Guests: Judy Brewer, World Wide Web Consortium	

March Meeting Minutes:

Allegra Stout (AS) noted in Public Input in the March minutes that Olivia Richard does not have an s at the end. Kyle Robidoux (KR) made a motion to approve the March minutes which were seconded by Marc Mallard (MM) and unanimously approved by all present.

Chair Report: Heather Watkins

Heather Watkins (HW) announced that after seven years she will be stepping down from the Board after the June or July meeting depending on elections. Commissioner Kristen McCosh (KMC) thanked HW for her dedication to the Board and noted that she has been on the Board since its inception in 2009. Due to the limited number of filled Board seats at this time, the election will be held after the Board seats are filled.

Commissioner Report: Kristen McCosh

KMC opened her report acknowledging the reflective armbands handed out to Board members. These armbands are a result of the Vision Zero task force in order to allow for pedestrians to be seen at night. The goal of Vision Zero is to try and bring the number of pedestrian deaths to zero both across the country and specifically in Boston. KMC then noted that she recently conducted a site visit to the Boston Home, which is a home in Dorchester for individuals with neuromuscular disorders, most commonly MS. The organization is in the process of getting approval for building a new multi-use building on their grounds for both people with and without disabilities. KMC will continue to update the Board on the process. In regards to Beacon Hill, the City is currently waiting for an injunction to be lifted so that curb cut construction can continue. The case is currently under review by the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Agency. KMC hopes a decision will be made in the coming weeks and the City will be able to move forward.

KMC then recognized KR who ran and finished the Boston marathon. KMC, Mayor Martin J. Walsh, Carl Richardson and KR all attended a brunch the day before the marathon for Massachusetts Association for the Blind to honor blind runners and their guides. KMC also attended a Rev Up the Vote event which discusses the barriers to voting and civic engagement for people with disabilities. partnership with the Elections Commission. Related to voting, the Commission will also be hosting a civic engagement event September 27th. The Annual community forum will occur in June and details will be announced when solidified. ADA Day will also happen in July with more info to come.

KMC provided an update regarding an accident in the City Council chambers and the Commission is working to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. A short update was also provided regarding taxis and Uber/Lyft accessibility. KMC is working internally to see how the gap in access can be bridge and John Winske (JW) noted that pilot programs in other cities are being looked at such as funding renting accessible vehicles through enterprise rental car. There is a still a lot of work to do but there appears to be positive movement forward.

KMC then announced that a New Architectural Access Specialist, Patricia Mendez, will be starting May 9th. She is an architect who has been in the field over the last 20 years and has most recently been working for the State. One of her tasks will be to assist in getting the Board information regarding public comments periods for new developments.

Architectural Access Report: Kristen McCosh

KMC recapped some of the initiative that Vision Zero will be taking in the upcoming months including lowering the speed limit in the City and moving parking spaces away from crosswalks to allow for better visibility. KMC and Sarah Leung are working closely with the City on the redesign of Dorchester Ave. Marc Mallard asked for an update on the gaps related to Commonwealth Ave and KMC noted that while she has been a part of the long term planning she will look into short term solutions.

Old Business

Related to the letter being sent regarding House Bill 1991 the last sentence in the second paragraph will be modified to read: "Instead of being offered a way to end their lives, people with disabilities should be offered medical treatment, long-term supports and services, and full and equal access to all aspects of community life." The letter was voted to be sent as amended by AS which was seconded by KR and approved by all present. AS will email the updates to Jessica Doonan (JD) who will mail out the letter.

KMC noted that JD is currently attending a tax volunteer appreciation event where she and the rest of the ASL Task force are being honored for their work. The task force will also be presenting at the National Association of the Deaf Biannual conference in July in Arizona. This year the task force double the amount of tax returns completed for the Deaf community.

KMC then provided follow up regarding other room options for the Board meetings. The only other option in City hall is a 801 which acoustically and lighting wise may be more difficult than the current room used. An automatic door for the current room may be able to be added to next year's budget but in the meantime other options for lessening the weight of the door will be looked into.

Old Action Items

The letter regarding Boston Housing Voucher Program has been sent to City Council Committee on Housing and Community Development through Intergovernmental Relations. The letter regarding Alternative Housing Voucher Program has been sent to Chairs of Joint Ways and Means and copies were sent to chairs of Joint Housing Committee as well.

New Business

On Wednesday May 4th there is a Council Hearing regarding City partnerships in the fight against substance use disorders and there is also a Deaf Grassroots Movement rally near the statehouse. On May 10th there will also be a City Council hearing related to communication access for City services. KMC will be testifying in support.

AS provided an update regarding the Alternative Voucher Housing Program. The house budget approved an increase of five hundred thousand dollars which is a great success since the House has not previously approved an increase. AS also noted that Boston Center for Independent Living is hiring a second Community Organizer which is the position she currently holds.

Guest Presentation: Judy Brewer from *World Wide Web Consortium*

Judy Brewer (JB) provided the Board with an overview as to the work that the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) does. The World Wide Web Consortium works to provide web content accessibility guidelines and educational resources for web design which have been used by many organizations and governments both in the United States and abroad. KMC noted to JB that the City is doing a complete redesign of the City website and that the W3C guidelines have been encouraged by the Commission.

After no public input HW adjourned the meeting.



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KRISTEN MCCOSH
Commissioner

DISABILITY COMMISSION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Boston City Hall, Room 900, 9th Floor

Thursday April 28th, 2016

5:30-7:30 p.m.

Commission Members

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REVISED AGENDA

- Call to Order
- Introductions
- Approval of Minutes
- Guest Presenter: Judy Brewer - Director, W3C Web Accessibility Initiative
- Chair's Report – *Heather Watkins*
- Commissioner's Report – *Kristen McCosh*
- Architectural Access Update - *Kristen McCosh*
- Old Business
- Old Action Items
- New Business
- New Action Items
- Public Input
- Adjournment

Next meeting: May 26th, 5:30-7:30pm

MEETING ACCOMMODATION NOTICE

All meetings held by the City of Boston are required to be accessible for persons with disabilities under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Accommodations are available upon request to any person who requires alternately formatted materials, auxiliary aids, or another accommodation to ensure effective communication and access to attend meetings held by City departments and programs.

Please allow at least 2 weeks to arrange for accommodations. Requests for accommodations may be sent to the contact person for the meeting, or may be forwarded to: Kristen McCosh, City of Boston Disability Commissioner and ADA Coordinator, at kristen.mccosh@cityofboston.gov or 617-635-3682 (voice) or 617-635-2541 (TTY).

To participate in this meeting by phone please dial:

Conference Phone Number: 1-888-322-7166

Participant Code: 4074173#