



Boston Disability Commission Advisory Board

BOSTON CITY HALL | ONE CITY HALL PLACE | 9th FLOOR | ROOM 967 | BOSTON MA, 02201
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Minutes for Monday January 27, 2017
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:
(CR) Carl Richardson (KC) Kimyatta Campbell (KR) Kyle Robidoux On Phone: (JW) John Winske Not Present: (MM) Marc (Moses) Mallard (ZA) Zary Amirhosseini	(KMC) Kristen McCosh, Commissioner (JD) Jessica Doonan (PM) Patricia Mendez (CM) Chris Morawski
Guests: Chief Felix Arroyo, Health and Human Services	

May meeting minutes: Due to lack of in person quorum no vote took place.

Guest speaker: Chief Felix Arroyo (FA)

Chief of Health and Human Services Felix Arroyo (FA) welcomed the Commission members to the new year and emphasized the Mayors commitment to the work that the Disability Commission and the Advisory Board does. FA mentioned that approval was received to expand the Board from 9 to 13 and noted the goal of diversifying the Board across race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, and skill. KMC reiterated the desire to diversify the Board and noted that ultimately the decision of Board appointment is up to Mayor Walsh.

Commissioner Report: Kristen McCosh (KMC) opened by providing updates to work that the Commission has been doing. KMC provided the history of the Disability Housing Task Force and noted that a list of policy recommendations have been created and will be submitted to Mayor Walsh in the coming week. One recommendation is to increase the number of built-out units in City funded housing projects from 5% to 10%, 8% of which will be built out for physical accessibility and 2% will be for auditory disabilities. It will also be required that some of these units be affordable. The task force has also created an interdepartmental guide which outlines resources for looking for accessible housing.

KMC then updated the Board on City Hall renovations. The third floor is being renovated to ease the flow of people going into the building and improve wayfinding. City Hall Chambers is undergoing renovations in the spring to raise the council chamber floors. This will allow for people to enter from all sides of the chamber without the use of a ramp. KMC also noted there will be new wheelchair accessible women's bathrooms on the 1st floor of City Hall on Congress Street side. A quick update was provided on the Winter Wonderland on City Hall Plaza and the issues related to accessibility. The process has been a learning experience and the hope is the issues will be resolved for next year's setup. One immediate issue that has been resolved is allowing wheelchair users on the current ice skating rink.

It was announced that Patricia Mendez (PM) now serves on the Architectural Access Board which is a nine member state board that oversees architecture projects all over the state. KMC and PM will be

sending accessibility information about new developments in the City to the Board members in hopes that they will provide input.

During the fall election the City of Boston hosted many early voting sites. These sites were all accessible and were open seven days a week during the day and at night depending on the site. The Commission participated with the Election Commission in training Disability Ambassadors. Disability Ambassadors are poll workers whose main responsibility was to ensure access at each site. 2017 is the deadline for full ADA compliance for Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle cab granted medallions through Hackney. As of right now 44 are A grade which is a big jump from only 1 in 2013.

In regards to events, KMC attended the Women's March with many other representatives of the City including Olivia Richards. The Commission also held a first annual Civic Engagement event which was attended by almost one hundred people and was a great platform to educate others about getting involved in City hall. The Annual Disability Forum will be held this spring hopefully at the newly renovated Copley Square Boston Public Library. The Annual Americans with Disabilities Act Celebration will be held in the afternoon on Tuesday July 25th.

Lastly, KMC laid out the timeline for Board changes. It is hoped that new Board appointments will occur in the next month or two and that elections for Chari, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer will occur in April.

Chief of Staff Report: Jessica Doonan

Jessica Doonan (JD) noted to the Board that the Communication Access Ordinance was signed by the Mayor in October and covers not only language but also communication in regards to accessible formats. As part of the Ordinance, a Communication Access Coordinator will be hired and the Commission will train that staff person on communication needs for people with disabilities. This year's dates for ASL Tax Days will be February 25th and March 4th at DEAF Inc. and April 1st at Urban Edge. In the fall the Deaf Tax Task Force held a workshop on reading Credit scores for Deaf community and a webinar/phone conference on the Task Force as a model which were both very successful and will hopefully lead the way to more workshops. The annual internship program with Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission was very successful this year with one of the interns gaining full time employment with the Veterans Commission.

Architectural Access Report: Patricia Mendez

Patricia Mendez (PM) gave updates on a few things that the Commission has been working on. Vision Zero Initiative just passed an ordinance to reduce the speed limit in the City to 25 MPH. South Boston Wayfinding project with MassDOT is ramping up and orange wayfinding signs are being installed near the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center. PM presented at Architecture Boston Exhibition (ABX) with Transportation, Parks, Boston Planning and Development Agency and the Landmarks Commission on how to approach the development approval process within the City of Boston. A similar presentation will be done for landscape architects in February as well as a lunch and learn for the Boston Society of Architects. PM then mentioned many different projects within the City that are in the process of being approved and are possible presenters for future Board meetings.

Old Business

No old business

Old Action Items

No Old Action Items

New Business

KMC mentioned that once new Board members are appointed adherence to Board regulations will be followed in regards to term limits and attendance.

Public Input

No public input

Kyle Robidoux made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Kimyatta Campbell and approved by all present.