



# 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](http://www.cityofboston.gov/boardsandcommissions)

Minutes for Thursday March 24th, 2016  
9<sup>th</sup> 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

<b>Present:</b>	<b>Staff Present:</b>
(AS) Allegra Stout (CR) Carl Richardson (HW) Heather Watkins (JW) John Winske (On Phone) (KC) Kimyatta Campbell (KR) Kyle Robidoux (On Phone) (MM) Marc (Moses) Mallard	(KMC) Kristen McCosh, Commissioner (JD) Jessica Doonan (CM) Chris Morawski (SL) Sarah Leung
Not Present: (ZA) Zary Amirhosseini	
Guests: John Kelly, Second Thoughts	

### **January Meeting Minutes:**

Carl Richardson (CR) 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) mentioned that Board elections will be happening in the upcoming months and asked the Board to consider taking on an executive position if they are interested.

### **Commissioner Report: Kristen McCosh**

Commissioner Kristen McCosh (KMC) piggybacked on HW comment regarding elections and mentioned that the Commission's civic engagement event has been pushed to the fall closer to the Presidential election. KMC also sits on the early voting task force which will set up times in advance for people to vote. Once those dates and times are set up she will send them to the Board. KMC then provided an update on the City of Boston website redesign including a portion of the website called "City Score" which will provide real-time metrics data on City services. The Commission is working to make sure accessibility is focused on during this redesign. The Grand Prix is also coming to Boston and KMC has been in talks with them regarding accessibility. When more information is available she will provide it. There will be a City Council hearing regarding the Grand Prix on Tuesday April 5<sup>th</sup> at 3pm.

At the request of KMC Jessica Doonan (JD) provided a short update regarding the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Task Force and the success of the first ASL Tax Day of the year. The second day will take place April 2<sup>nd</sup> at Urban Edge near Jackson Square. The Task Force will also be presenting at the bi-annual National Association of the Deaf conference this summer in Phoenix Arizona.

### **Bill H. 1991: John Kelly from *Second Thoughts***

John Kelly (JK) spoke to the Board briefly regarding Massachusetts House Bill 1991. He spoke out against this bill stating that assisted suicide promotes the idea that a life lived with a disability is a second rate life and that sometimes those lives are not worth continuing. Currently the Bill is still in Committee and JK asked the Board to sign on in opposition of this Bill. Allegra stout made a motion to write a letter in opposition regarding this Bill. This motion was seconded by Carl Richardson and approved by all with the exception of Marc Mallard who abstained from the vote.

### **Architectural Access Report: Sarah Leung**

Sarah Leung provides a few updates on ongoing architecture projects including the Grand Prix, South Bay Commercial Center, and 32 Cambridge St in Charlestown. KMC mentioned that a feasibility study on Boston Common by the Shaw memorial has been approved and will begin. KMC also noted that the Boston Redevelopment Authority website was recently updated and is more user-friendly. KMC informed the Board that she was recently deposed in regards to the Beacon Hill injunction and that currently no work is being done on curb cuts in Beacon Hill.

MM voiced concerns regarding the gaps around the MBTA tracks on Commonwealth Ave at the intersection of Commonwealth and Harvard Ave. KMC and SL will look into the location.

### **Old Business**

JD updated the Board noting that the Alternative Housing Voucher letter will be sent to Intergovernmental Relations as soon as possible.

Allegra Stout asked KMC to provide an update on the working being done on the MeWe app. KMC noted that the designer has since moved away but that she will check the status of the app for the next Board meeting.

### **Old Action Items**

No Old Action Items.

### **New Business**

CR mentioned that the Boston Public School (BPS) budget cuts significantly impact students with special needs and he would like the Board to voice their concern. HW made a motion to have a letter written expressing concern surrounding the impact of the BPS budget cuts on students with special needs. This motion was seconded by MM and approved by all. CR will be writing the letter.

AS brought up a few access concerns regarding the space the Board meetings are held in including the weight of the door and the buzzing of the lights. HW echoed concerns noting that being on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor poses mobility concerns in an emergency. JD and KMC will look into these concerns. AS also spoke briefly about an incident that occurred in the City Council Chambers and KMC noted that she is working with Boston Emergency medical Services and City Council to improve access and support in the future.

AS mentioned that City Council is proposing creating a new housing voucher program that would be based off of the "Housing First" model. The issue was voted to committee during Wednesday March 23<sup>rd</sup> Council meeting. AS will send around the fact sheet regarding the program but noted that the vouchers will be restricted to Boston and the program would cost roughly five million a year. John Winske made a motion to write a letter supporting the City's efforts to make housing affordable and accessible and as well as efforts to reduce homelessness. This motion was seconded by MM and unanimously approved.

### **New Action Items**

No New Action

### **Public Input**

Olivia Richard opened her comments to the Board for their involvement in the improved access to the Government Center MBTA station. She then noted to the Board the lack of access getting to the State House, specifically the lack of a curb cut at the Shaw Memorial. This location is also a drop off location on the route 43 MBTA bus. KMC mentioned the approval of a Boston Common accessibility feasibility study and noted that she will look into that corner specifically. Olivia voiced her continual objection to the 2015 Boston Housing Authority elderly and non-elderly disabled housing plan and would like it looked into whether or not non-elderly disabled residents are being evicted from their housing at a higher rate as a result of this plan.

John Kelly voiced concerns regarding the accessibility of public parks. KMC will work to set up a meeting involving the Department of Parks and Recreation and John Kelly. It was also suggested that the Parks Department present to the Advisory Board which will be looked into.

HW adjourned the meeting.



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KRISTEN MCCOSH  
*Commissioner*

## DISABILITY COMMISSION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Boston City Hall, Room 900, 9th Floor

Thursday March 24th, 2016

5:30-7:30 p.m.

### Commission Members

Heather Watkins  
*Chair*

Allegra Stout  
*Vice Chair*

John Winske  
*Secretary*

Marc (Moses) Mallard  
*Treasurer*

Zary Amirhosseini

Kimyatta Campbell

Carl Richardson

Kyle Robidoux

## AGENDA

- Call to Order
- Introductions
- Approval of Minutes
- Guest Presenter- Bill H. 1991 - *John Kelly from Second Thoughts*
- 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: April 28th, 5:30-7:30pm**

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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](mailto: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#