



# Disability Commission Advisory Board

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KRISTEN MCCOSH  
*Commissioner*

## Commission Members

Heather Watkins  
*Chairperson*

Allegra Stout  
*Vice Chairperson*

John Winske  
*Secretary*

Zary Amirhosseini

Marc (Moses) Mallard

Carl Richardson

Kyle Robidoux

Ruben Roux

## ANNUAL REPORT 2014

The Boston Commission for Persons with Disabilities is a nine-member advisory board enabled by MGL Chapter 40, Section 8J. Members are appointed by the Mayor and serve terms of three years. The Commission was formed in 2009, adopted bylaws in January 2010, and elected officers in February, 2010. In 2014 three new board members were appointed, and one officer is expected to be appointed in 2015.

The purpose of the Commission is to address issues of concern to individuals with disabilities and promote the full integration of people with disabilities into all aspects of community life. Since its formation, the Commission has served as a resource for people with disabilities, and has worked with city departments such as Neighborhood Services, Public Works, Hackney Division, Boston Transportation Department, and Parks Department to improve policies and procedures that impact people with disabilities. It has also worked with the Massachusetts Office on Disability, the Architectural Access Board (AAB), the MBTA, and MassDOT as well. The board has received training in the ADA, ethics and open meeting law regulations.

### **Commission Activities in 2014 included the following:**

- Held nine (9) Advisory Board monthly meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month in the BRA Boardroom (room 900) of Boston City Hall. Additionally, these monthly meetings began being recorded by the City Cable office. All recordings are captioned and available online.
- Wrote and approved a statement regarding the Accessible Icon Project and support for the current International Symbol of Access.
- Submitted comments to Parks Commissioner regarding inclusive language and programming in the Open Space Plan Proposal (2015-2021).
- Submitted comments concerned with the proposed decrease in disabled housing associated with the allocation plan by BHA for HUD funded developments.
- Sent introductory letters to Governor Baker and Boston 2024 staff and offered assistance on any access or disability-related questions that may come up.
- Commended Mayor Walsh for his continued usage of ASL Interpretation for Emergency Press conferences.
- Offered support and concern for displaced long island shelter residents and offered assistance to Mayor Walsh and stressed the importance of access to mental health services for residents.

- Advocated and supported accessibility improvements in the Beacon Hill neighborhood
  
- Sent formal comments on several Architectural Access Board (AAB) Variance application requests.
  
- Advocated for improved accessibility standards to Wheelchair Accessible Taxis in Boston in collaboration with BPD Hackney Division.
  
- Presented at community meetings and disability-related events in the community, such as the City of Boston ADA Day and Disability Community Forum.
  
- Revitalized Commission Committees, adding an additional Committee which will focus on legislative advocacy and education issues.

The Commission for Persons with Disabilities meets at Boston City Hall on the fourth Thursday of every month in the evening. All meetings are open to the public and attendance by individuals interested in disability issues is encouraged. Specific meeting dates, times, room location, agendas and meeting minutes are posted at Boston City Hall, City Clerk's office or [www.cityofboston.gov/disability](http://www.cityofboston.gov/disability)