



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

KRISTEN MCCOSH
Commissioner

DISABILITY COMMISSION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING Boston City Hall, Room 900, 9th Floor

**Thursday April 23rd, 2015
5:30-7:30 p.m.**

AGENDA-REVISED

Commission Members

Heather Watkins
Chairperson

Allegra Stout
Vice Chairperson

John Winske
Secretary

Zary Amirhosseini

Marc (Moses) Mallard

Carl Richardson

Kyle Robidoux

Ruben Roux

- Call to Order
- Introductions
- Approval of Minutes
- Chair's Report – *Heather Watkins*
- Commissioner's Report – *Kristen McCosh*
- Architectural Access Update – *Kathryn Quigley*
- Old Business
 - *HP Parking Issues*
- Old Action Items
- New Business
 - *Open Meeting Law Input*
 - *Discussion of Board Elections*
- New Action Items
- Public Input
- Adjournment

Next meeting: May 28, 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#



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

KRISTEN MCCOSH
Commissioner

Boston Disability Commission Advisory Board Meeting

Minutes for Thursday, April 23, 2015
9th Floor, Room 900, Boston City Hall, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Commission Members

Heather Watkins
Chairperson

Allegra Stout
Vice Chairperson

John Wnske
Secretary

Zary Amirhosseini

Marc (Moses) Mallard

Carl Richardson

Kyle Robidoux

Ruben Roux

Present:	Staff Present:
(AS) Allegra Stout (HW) Heather Watkins (ZA) Zary Amirhosseini (on phone) (MM) Marc (Moses) Mallard (CR) Carl Richardson (JW) John Winkse Not Present: (KR) Kyle Robidoux (BR) Ben Roux	(KMC) Kristen McCosh, Commissioner (JH) Jesse Holm (JD) Jessica Doonan
Presenters: Athena Laines, Archipelago Strategies/Boston Creates	

March Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve March minutes made by Carl Richardson (KR) and seconded by Allegra Stout (AS). Minutes approved by board.

AD HOC Parking Committee Minutes: Motion to approve AD HOC Parking Committee meeting minutes made by JW and seconded by CR and approved by the Board.

Guest Speaker: Athena Laines, Archipelago Strategies

Athena Laines (AL) introduced herself and explained that the Boston Creates is an initiative through the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture with the goal creating a ten year plan for arts and culture in Boston. AL stressed that the plan will be created through neighborhood discussions and 16 neighborhood teams are being formed to host these dialogues. The goal is to have teams reflect the diversity of the City of Boston and AL is looking for participation from the disability community as well. The website is Bostoncreates.org and application to be part of a team will be accepted through the summer. Commissioner Kristen McCosh asked Board to e-mail organizations or names of people who they think should be involved and MM suggested contacting the arts department within Boston Medical Center.

Chair's Report: Heather Watkins

Heather Watkins (HW) checked in with the Board as to whether or not the Community Forum was occurring this year. Commissioner Kristen McCosh (KMC) gave an update on the Community Forum which is scheduled for June 1st. Currently KMC is looking at locations which include District Hall and Suffolk Law School. Heather Watkins recommended the new Dudley building and the Mattapan Library. KMC also brought up the ADA 25 Celebration on July 22nd, citing that both the Governor and the Mayor will hopefully be speaking. HW asked the Board if the July meeting should be cancelled due to it being so close to the ADA 25 Celebration on July 22nd. John Wnske asked that the decision be held off till closer to the date.

Commissioner's Report: Kristen McCosh

Commissioner Kristen McCosh (KMC) provided an update regarding the Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV). Two years ago there was only one WAV with an A rating but as of the meeting there is 18 and by the end of the year there will be 6 more bringing the total up to 24 out of 100. By 2017 all WAVs will have an A rating. KMC will be giving out the medallion numbers of the WAV so that constituents can ask for the vehicles directly by medallion numbers.

KMC noted that the City of Boston was recognized by the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing during Deaf Day at the State House. The City of Boston was recognized for providing interpreters for all of the emergency announcements this winter.

KMC recently met with the City of Boston Chief Diversity Officer to discuss KMC goal of the City of Boston being a model employer. KMC is hoping to put together recommendations to present to the Mayor by the end of 2015. The Chief Diversity officer has created a report in regards to the diversity within City of Boston and KMC will send it out to the Advisory Board.

The Disability Housing Task Force has had one meeting so far. Allegra Stout (AS) provided an update regarding the task force. Seventy seven thousand resident of Boston are disabled so the task force is looking into both short term and long term housing solutions of the non-elderly disabled. The next meeting of the task force will be held next week April 30th. AS also gave an update on the Citizens' Housing and Planning Association meeting noting that the Alternative Voucher Housing Program is being looked at by the state budget and there is also an amendment being looked at that will bump the program up to five million dollars, allowing for one hundred fifty more vouchers.

KMC updated the Board on parking issues. Overall parking at meters with placards only applies when the individual with the placard is in the vehicle. As for enforcement there are three levels: Boston Transportation Department (BTD), Boston Police Department (BPD), and Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV). BTD can only issue \$25 "no pay meter" fines for any kind of HP placard violation. BTD cannot ask to see the placard picture, question the validity of a disability, or tow cars. KMC is looking into how to change the no towing policy. BPD can ask to see the placard photo but often do not ask. BPD can also issue \$500 tickets for any type of abuse and can suspend licenses for thirty days. BPD has done stings and have taken over 300 placards in the past but they are hard to conduct due to needing to catch people in the act. The RMV currently has no enforcement power but can revoke placards. KMC serves on the state task force to the RMV and enforcement to examine placard abuse. John Winske (JW) suggested that BTD fine up to \$500 for placard abuse which KMC will look into. MM noted that having law enforcement question people with mental illness about their placard may cause some issues in the community and suggested some kind of identification for those with hidden disabilities when dealing with law enforcement. HW suggested talking to BPD to see what their protocol is and how they handle situations involving people with disabilities. MM then asked where the money from these fines go which KMC explained the money goes into a Boston general fund. Zary Amirhosseini (ZA) suggested that the sleeve be taken off of the placards. KMC noted that she is looking into possibly adding an M or F to indicate gender or adding numbers to indicated date of birth to decrease placard abuse. AS voiced her concern adding gender identification to placards because some individuals do not identify as one specific gender. The next call regarding HP parking will be scheduled in the next few weeks.

Architecture Report: Kathryn Quigley

KMC gave the architecture report on behalf of Kathryn Quigley. The Sidewalk Café Design Guidelines Policy is currently in effect and if any Board member sees a café that is in violation of the policy to contact KMC, Kathryn Quigley, or the Department of Inspectional Services. KMC will send a link to the Board of both the Sidewalk Café Design Guidelines Policy and the Snow Ordinance.

Old Business

No updates

Old Action Items

No updates

New Business

ZA mentioned that she had tried to implement the new accessibility icon at Massachusetts General Hospital and ran into administrative concerns due to possible copyright issues and asked the Board if they had had similar problems. Jesse Holm (JH) noted that the Board discussed both the International Symbol of Access and the new icon and the Board voted in favor of the international symbol. JH explained that while the new access symbol is currently free there is a possibility that it could be charged for later. KMC pointed out that Boston Medical Center uses the new symbol but it was not in blue and white and therefore difficult to spot. JH will send to the Board the letter the Board wrote last year in support of the International Symbol of Access.

Carl Richardson (CR) noted to the Board that the City of Boston put out a call for proposals for a new website design. CR wanted to make sure that the KMC and the Disability Commission was involved in the process to make sure the new design is accessible.

AS then spoke to the Board regarding the new changes to the Open Meeting Law allowing remote participation for Disability Commission members. The Attorney General's office is looking for input regarding the change remote participation. AS read aloud the FAQ from the Attorney General, noting that the interpretation of the law states that quorum still needs to be achieved in person but that those who participate by remote participation can still vote. AS will write a letter to the Attorney General's office explaining the importance of including those on the phone as quorum. CR made a motion to give AS full authority to write and mail a letter to the Attorney General regarding the new remote participation portion Open Meeting Law on behalf of the Disability Commission. This motion was seconded by MM and unanimously approved by all.

Election Discussion

HW noted that elections are coming up and asked for nominations of positions. HW was nominated for the position of Chair and accepted. AS was nominated for the position of Vice Chair and accepted. JW was nominated for the position of Secretary and accepted. MM was nominated for the position of Treasurer and accepted. KMC will email out the nominations and encourage other members to nominate others or self-nominate for Board positions.

New Action Items

No Updates

Final Thoughts

KMC and Jessica Doonan will look into putting the Advisory Board letters on the Commissions website. MM would like to see more people at the Advisory board meetings and will start to talk about the Board when he presents through National Alliance on Mental Illness. CR announced to the Board that he has been asked to serve on the Federal Communication Commission Disability Advisory Committee. Not only will CR serve on the committee but he will also serve on the Video Programming Subcommittee and Relay Subcommittee. KMC spoke briefly about the language access working group that is working on breaking down language barriers in the City and ensuring access to services for all people. HW mentioned that she was part of a Twitter conversation regarding self-directed care as part of the Disability Visibility Project. HW will send out a link to the conversation to the Board.

Public Input

Dunusya Lyubouskaya thanked the Board for their work and informed them that the Roxbury YMCA may also have space for the Community Forum. She also asked the Board about the possibility of an additional form of identification for those with disabilities

Meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.