

## **DISABILITY COMMISSION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

Boston City Hall, Piemonte Room, 5th Floor

**Wednesday April 9, 2014**

**5:30-7:30 p.m.**

### **AGENDA- REVISED**

- Call to Order
- Introductions
- Approval of March Minutes
- Update on New Advisory Board Members
- Guest Presentation: Jack Boeson, PCA Workforce Council
- Commissioner's Report – *Kristen McCosh*
- Chair's Report – *Ben Roux*
- Architectural Access Updates – *Kathryn Aldrich*
- Standing Committees – Information Access, Community Access
- Review of Committees and Assignments- addition of "Legislative Advocacy Committee"
- Discussion of Advisory Board Elections
- Old Business
- New Business
- Public Input
- Adjournment

## **MEETING ACCOMMODATION NOTICE**

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## Boston Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Minutes for Wednesday, April 9, 2014  
 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Piemonte Room, Boston City Hall, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

<b>Present:</b> (AS) Allegra Stout (BR) Ben Roux (CR) Carl Richardson (HW) Heather Watkins (JW) John Winkse  <b>Not Present:</b> (TTH) Tee Thach-Hasan	<b>Staff Present:</b> (KMC) Kristen McCosh, Commissioner (KQ) Kathryn Quigley (JH) Jesse Holm (JD) Jessica Doonan
<b>Guest:</b> Jack Boeson (PCA Workforce Council), Edward Flynn, Kyle Robidoux & Zary Amirhousseini	

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

### **Update on New Advisory Board Members: Kristen McCosh**

Commissioner Kristen McCosh (KMC) welcomed the Commission members back and noted that there are now three openings on the Board due to Paulette Houston stepping down. She then introduced the three individuals that she will be recommending to Mayor Martin J. Walsh (MJW) to fill the openings on the Advisory Board, Edward Flynn (EF), Kyle Robidoux (KR), and Zary Amirhousseini (ZA). EF noted that he is a Navy veteran after 23 year of service and now works as a probation officer and as a member of the disabled veterans association. KR works at Massachusetts Association for the Blind and was strongly involved in community organizing prior to that. ZA currently serves as the Disability Program Manager for Massachusetts General Hospital.

### **PCA Workforce Council: Jack Boeson**

Jack Boeson (JB) presented on the PCA Workforce Council, a government body that works to strengthen and support the PCA Program. He outlined some of the successes of the council: granting PCAs paid time off, creating a PCA Training course, overall pay increases for PCAs, and extensive surveys/reviewing of PCAs and PCA users. JB asked the Advisory Board to support the Council in promoting and spreading the word about a Listening Tour they have developed. The listening tour was developed so the Council can listen to comments and concerns from the community regarding PCA services. JB noted that the date for the Boston meeting is not determined but once it is he will inform the Board of the date and time. He also noted that he will be at the Community Forum on May 14<sup>th</sup> in hopes of hearing any concerns regarding PCAs. ZA brought up the concern regarding PCA users when hospitalized and JB stated that the Council is working on this issue but that it is a much bigger issue that needs to be addressed on a federal level.

### **Commissioner's Report: Kristen McCosh**

KMC noted that for the May Advisory Board meeting there should be a conference line available for both the Board and the public to participate in the meeting. KMC is hoping to bring Advisory Board Recommendations to MJW in April in the hopes of having the individuals officially appointed by the May

meeting. The Advisory Board continues to be a nine-person board but KMC is working with MJW on a potential home rule petition to allow for up to thirteen board members. She stated that she will be sending out the 0-8J legislation as well as the bylaws before the next meeting in order to begin thinking about potential revisions to the bylaws.

KMC announced that there are changes in the Disabled parking Program, one of which is that the name of the program will now be Accessible Parking Program, to align our office with the positive language that is used by the community. The Accessible Parking program (APS) will also be split into two applications, one for passengers and one for drivers. The hope is that this may reduce abuse of accessible parking spaces and placards. KMC stated that MCPWD will launch the PCA Parking Permit Program, which will allow PCAs to park in residential areas of the city without Resident Parking Only stickers, in mid-April.

KMC stated she will be e-mailing out updates regarding captioning but as it stands it looks like there is some progress with captioning in the City Council meetings but online captioning is a work in progress.

KMC concluded her report by encouraging the Board members to come to the May 14<sup>th</sup> Community Forum from 2-4pm. KMC stated that the format will be a little different, with more of a focus on comments from the community. This year, less time will be spent on updates and reporting from the Commissioner and the Board.

#### **Chair's Report: Ben Roux**

BR thanked the Advisory Board for their support of his grant proposal to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), "Using IT to Improve Care for Patients with Disabilities". Although the project was not funded, the Board's support carried a lot of weight and BR will let the Board know of any future steps that are taken to push this project along.

#### **Architectural Access Update: Kathryn Quigley**

Kathryn Quigley (KQ) provided an update on the Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs), stating that the new Rating System (A-F) decals will be put on all WAV vehicles during the June 1<sup>st</sup> inspections. KQ stated that the updates to the webpage will happen once decals have been placed on WAVs to explain exactly what each letter means and the dimensions of the vehicles. The number of accessible cabs will continue to increase until the current 100 WAVs are in full compliance, which is required by 2017.

KQ stated that she is still working with the legal department and the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) on Article 80 language that will require a detailed accessibility study before developers can gain approval for projects. KQ is also currently drafting a City Policy on sidewalk cafes for developers. KQ emphasized the impact that the Advisory Board has on architectural access in the city, citing 131 State Street as a powerful example of the AAB taking guidance from the Board's opinion.

KQ reminded the Board that if temporary construction affects the public right of way, the construction company must provide an alternative accessible route around the construction area. If they do not provide access, the Mayors Hotline or KQ should be contacted to report this issue.

#### **Standing Subcommittees: Information Access, Community Access**

No Updates.

#### **Review of Subcommittees and Assignments**

Jesse Holm (JH) briefly went over each of the existing subcommittees and discussed the proposed subcommittee, Legislative Advocacy and Education. JH noted that the Community Access Subcommittee will now also encompass youth issues and programming. JH reinforced the importance of the subcommittees and the involvement of both staff and Board members, stating that most of the work will be accomplished gets done in these subcommittee meetings. Jessica Doonan (JD) will be following up with the Board to see which subcommittees each member plans to be a part of and to assist with organizing and facilitating these meetings.

#### **Discussion of Advisory Board Elections**

KMC noted that currently BR is the Chair of the Board and Heather Watkins (HW) is the Vice Chair. She suggested that the board hold off on elections until new members are officially appointed by MJW. John Winkse (JW) made a motion to hold Board nominations until May and elections held in June which was seconded by CR and approved by all present. KMC also informed BR that the annual report by the Board Chair should be given at the May meeting.

#### **Old Business**

Allegra Stout (AS) announced that the remote participation bill made it through the Senate and is now on its way to the Steering Policy and Procedures Committee in the House. Allegra noted that she drafted a letter to the House and sent it out to the Board prior to this meeting. It was suggested the letter be sent to the Governor as well as other Disability Commissions in the state. CR made a motion to accept the letter and allow Allegra to send the letter to those she deems appropriate which JW seconded and was approved by all present.

CR noted that he owes the Board a welcome letter to MJW and that he will try and get it sent around by Friday.

#### **New Business**

No Updates.

#### **Public Input**

No Public Input.

AS made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by CR and approved by all. Meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.