

DISABILITY COMMISSION ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Boston City Hall, Piemonte Room, 5th Floor

October 9, 2013

5:30-7:30 p.m.

AGENDA- REVISED

- Call to Order
- Introductions
- Approval of September Minutes
- Commissioner's Report – *Kristen McCosh*
- Chair's Report – *Ben Roux*
- Architectural Access Updates – *Kathryn Aldrich*
- Survey for Mayoral Candidates – *Carl Richardson & Ben Roux*
- Standing Committees – Information Access, Community Access
- Old Business
- New Business
- Public Input
- Adjournment

Boston Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Minutes for Wednesday, October 9, 2013

5th Floor Piemonte Room, Boston City Hall, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Present: (AS) Allegra Stout (BR) Ben Roux (CR) Carl Richardson (RN) Raine Newman	Staff Present: (KMC) Kristen McCosh, Commissioner (KA) Kathryn Aldrich (JH) Jesse Holm
Not Present: (HW) Heather Watkins (JW) John Winske (PH) Paulette Houston (SL) Suzanne Leveille (TTH) Tee Thach-Hasan	
Guest: No Guest.	

September Meeting Minutes: Not reviewed.**Commissioner's Report: Kristen McCosh**

Kristen McCosh (KMC) stated that National Disability Employment Awareness Month is every October. KMC discussed what the Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CPWD) is doing to raise awareness for this campaign. KMC discussed planning for the third annual Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) at Boston City Hall. KMC stated that staff at Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) will be choosing ten participants who will be matched with City of Boston Employees in a variety of City departments for job shadowing. Mentees will learn about what Mentors do on a daily basis in their respective departments. All Mentees are Boston residents who have various disabilities. Additionally, KMC stated that 2013 MRC summer interns will be returning for the afternoon portion of Disability Mentoring Day to receive awards of recognition for their work this summer with the City of Boston.

KMC stated that a report on the Hackney Division will be published soon. In this report, data collected by the CPWD on the accessibility of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs). KMC stated that when the report is published she will send out information to the Advisory Board regarding the findings.

KMC stated that the Mayoral election will take place on Tuesday, November 5th. KMC reminded the Advisory Board that Ben Roux received a response from John Connolly addressing the

specific questions that were drafted by the Advisory Board and Marty Walsh submitted a Policy statement which detailed his specific thoughts on disability issues.

KMC stated that there are two staff positions that will be opening up soon. One will be for a consultant who will research the Disability History Walking Tour. The Deputy Commissioner position is still pending as well.

KMC stated that Mike Lynch from the Cable office has updated her on the timeline of closed captioning for City Council Hearings; the hope is that closed captioning will begin in either November or December.

KMC reminded the Advisory Board that there will be a public meeting regarding access in Beacon Hill on October 17th at 4:00 p.m. in room 801 of Boston City Hall.

KMC discussed the Abilities Expo that CPWD staff attended at the end September for three days. At the event, staff talked to residents, gave information on programs run through the office, and held a film screening of "The Sessions" in one of the break out rooms at the Convention Center. KMC noted that a large number of complaints about taxi accessibility and curb cuts on city streets were discussed with staff during these three days. The event was a large success, with over four thousand individuals attending.

Chair's Report: Ben Roux

Ben Roux (BR) stated that Suzanne Leveille (SL) will no longer serve on the Disability Commission Advisory Board. BR stated that he spoke to SL and while she had hoped to attend one more meeting to say goodbye, she is unable to as she is busy with a personal situation at the moment. KMC stated that she will post an announcement on the website stating that there is an opening on the Advisory Board. Individuals must submit a letter of interest and a resume to KMC. KMC will review volunteers and make the decision based on who is the best fit.

BR discussed his concerns about the Federal government being shut down and if the shutdown affects the Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities in any way. BR stated that October 17th is the deadline and he is worried. KMC stated that the Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities does not receive federal funding, therefore would not be directly influenced by the shutdown. However, KMC stated that the Office of Civil Rights, the Elderly Commission, and Veterans' Services have lost some funding.

Architectural Access Update: Kathryn Aldrich

KA reiterated that the Beacon Hill Commission Meeting will take place on October 17th at 4:00 p.m. in room 801 of Boston City Hall and that attendance is encouraged. The Public Works Department will be presenting on improving access on Beacon Hill.

KA discussed the Federal Highway Administration Tiger Grant that was awarded to the City of Boston for \$15.5 million as a Transportation investment, generating economic recovery. KA stated that this initiative is between the National Parks Service and Boston Transportation Department to make walking, biking and taking the T easy and fun. The interagency group and consultants have a kick off meeting soon for this, as the schedule for the project is aggressive. The CPWD's role in this project will be looking at four historic sites the improvement of accessibility. The four sites are Blackstone Block, Causeway Street, Joy Street, and Constitution Road. The timeline for the design and review phase is set to be completed by December 2013. The project is set to be completed by May 2014.

KA and KMC participated in a meeting with the Elderly Commission regarding the Senior Shuttle and accessibility. Currently, the Senior Shuttle has twenty-five vans total and four of them are wheelchair accessible. The CPWD is working with the Elderly Commission to determine what models of accessible vans are ideal for the Senior Shuttle program.

BR stated that he is not getting hard copies of the Variance Reports from the AAB. KA stated that she would speak with Tom Hopkins about this.

Survey of Mayoral Candidates: Carl Richardson

KMC mentioned to the Advisory Board that the current administration is preparing to transition to the new Mayor and part of that process is trying to be transparent through the whole process. There is a blog called "Next.gov" that is aiding in that process. Each post describes another department and/or their functions and primary duties.

BR requested that all Advisory Board members come up with some thoughts about what they hope to see in a new Mayor. BR said it is important to have an idea of what is important to the disability community before a new Mayor comes in in January.

Standing Committees: Information Access

No Updates.

Standing Committees: Community Access

No Updates.

Old Business

No Updates.

New Business

AS stated that the Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL) is hiring for several positions, including a Disability Peer Advocate, a Director of Services, RN Consultant, and Youth Transition Advocate. AS will send out the information to the Advisory Board and asked that all help to spread the word about these positions.

Public Input

Kevin Heaton (KH) described a situation he recently had in his home, stating that there was a gas issue that he believes was not dealt with appropriately. BR suggested he contact the State Fire Marshal if he was concerned, and that the Advisory Board couldn't directly advocate on his behalf.

Adjourned at 6:46 p.m.