



Dominick Pangallo
Mayor

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

CITY OF SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS
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MINUTES OF THE SALEM COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES JULY 18, 2023

A meeting of the Salem Commission on Disabilities was held on July 18, 2023, at 4:30 p.m., via ZOOM, an online video conference call system in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023.

Present on call were: Chair Debra Lobsitz; Commissioners: Darren Black, Rebecca Christie, Ezekiel Holt, David Moisan, Kerry Neenan and Kate Zuraw; Lisa Cammarata, ADA Coordinator, HR Director; Alan Hanscom, SATv; Jeff Cohen, City Council Liaison and Clerk Joanne Roomey. (noted by last name in the minutes). Absent were: Maureen McKinnon and Mandee Spittle.

1) Introductions/welcome

Lobsitz called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. and she extended a welcome to everyone. Each commissioner and invited guest introduced themselves. Cammarata introduced Morgan Sax who will be taking over the minutes for Roomey. She also thanked Roomey for helping the commission out until they got a permanent minute taker.

2) Approval of Meeting Minutes of May 16 and June 21, 2023 meetings

Moisan made a motion to approve the Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes of May 16, 2023. Seconded by Christie. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was carried unanimously.

Moisan made a motion to approve the Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes of June 21, 2023. Seconded by Black. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was carried unanimously.

3) New Business - None

4) Old Business

a. ADA Transition Plan:

The commission will have the tracking smart sheets available for the next meeting with the updates. They will get it ready for public review.

b. Project funding: Cammarata

The Commission purchased a third picnic table and Christie put it together. Neenan asked about getting a list of inventory equipment that is ADA approved. Cammarata will follow up with the Park and Recreation Department, Trish O'Brien to see if the inventory can be made into a link for the commission to access it. Also, Holt asked for a list or a contact name to see what needs to be fixed. Maybe someone could generate a list from SeeClickFix.

c. Social Media; David Moisan

Moisan said there have been a lot of changes around Twitter. He will see what policies are available for disabled folks and what is significant and share with the commission.

d. Pedestrian Safety

Moisan said they want to pick a sidewalk downtown to see how the signals worked and how congested the area is. He said there is a standing offer for Erin Turkowski from Salem Safe Walking Advocacy Group (SWAG) to come to a meeting. Whenever the commission wants to invite her, Moisan will ask her.

Councilor Cohen said he has been to a couple of meetings and spoke about how there could be a synergy with the commission and SWAG. Once the commission picks an intersection that is heavily traveled downtown, they will invite Erin to come in and work with the commission. The commission wanted to thank John Giardi, the city's electrician, for fixing a couple of problematic signals and the crosswalk ADA buttons.

e. SCOD representative to Salem Human Rights Coalitions/Kerry Neenan (alternates: McKinnon and Christie)

Neenan said they had a table at the Arts Festival and marched in the Pride Parade and also the Parade for Election Day at Salem Willows. They want to update their t-shirts and brochures. Neenan and Cammarata went to a social event with the Race Equity Commission for a barbeque and got to see people in person. Neenan said she is trying to get out more often and network.

f. Mack Park Food Farm accessibility and picnic tables; Rebecca Christie

Christie said folks should stop by and see the project, it is awesome. There are flourishing gardens which used to be a wasteland. Anyone can stop by on Saturdays, they open at 10:00 a.m. and have free fresh produce. Neighbors help with the watering. They had the high school kids harvest all the garlic. There were about 35 to 40 volunteers. There are only three people on the staff. The ADA picnic tables are set up and you should spread the word.

g. Wheelchair Rental Program; update/follow-up

Cammarata will follow up with the totals for the wheelchairs and with Destination Salem regarding the rental process. Also, she will follow up with Solicitor Rennard regarding insurance with MIIA. The commission will vote on a limit to spend on wheelchairs at the next meeting.

h. Canal St. pathway: a request of using funds to add entrance/exit indicators for the visually impaired; Jeff Cohen, *follow-up, if needed/clarification*

Councilor Cohen spoke with Brendan Linard, AICP Transportation Planner, to see if there were any updates. Mr. Linard said if they get any changes or updates, he will definitely let him know.

i. Advisory Group Open Space and Recreation Plan; Tom Devine; Senior Planner; (or Lobsitz)

No new updates

j. Beep Baseball update; Darren Black

Black said he was at the Boston Strong tournament in Woburn which consisted of five teams a couple of weeks ago. Once the commission creates a team, possibly city councilors and/or employees, finds a location, and a date, he will get a hold of Joe Quintanilla to set up a scrimmage with a couple of innings. The commission is thinking August or September.

Councillor Varela said that Joanne Roomey already approached him about Beep Baseball and he would be willing to try it. Councillor Cohen said he would also play. Steve Kapantais attended the meeting and said he would donate \$50 for each councilor that participated in Beep Baseball. Black said he would share information regarding Beep Baseball to the city's Facebook page. Cammarata will follow up with Black and Joe Quintanilla to friend request them.

5) Announcements/Questions/General discussion/ideas for future meetings

Lobsitz said the surveys of the outdoor dining are still ongoing. They split the list of restaurants and paired up to evaluate accessibility. Cammarata said they will regroup and see where everyone is at.

The commission educated the owners of the restaurants on exactly what Accessible Tables and Seating should be and most of them were up to code. Cammarata will give a list to the Building Department who were not up to code. Cohen worked with Spittle and Holt on the surveys. They commended Black about things they did not know when someone had low vision or hearing. They will update the survey accordingly. Steve Kapantais thanked the commission and employees for checking on the restaurant surveys. He said it was very much appreciative.

Neenan said registration for North Shore Rovers soccer has started. Please click on link for more information: <https://www.northshorerovers.com/>

6) **Next meeting:** August 15, 2023

7) **Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the Commission on Disabilities this evening, Moisan moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Neenan. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Roomey
Commission Clerk

**Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A §18-25
and City Ordinance Sections 2-2028 through 2-2033**