



City of New Bedford Commission for Citizens with Disabilities

**Minutes
Commission for Citizens with Disabilities
September 26, 2019**

Members Present

Susan Bewsher
Melissa Branco
Linda Carreiro
Pam Cole
Dennis DeMarinis, Jr.
Marsha Fernandes
George Smith

Others in Attendance

BG Shanklin, Architect
Manny Silva, DPI
Cynthia Wallquist, Exec. Dir.

Members Excused

Members Absent

Herb Eddleston

Dennis DeMarinis, Jr., Chair, called the meeting to order @ 6:31 PM.

Approval of Minutes

George Smith moved to approve the June 20, 2019 minutes, seconded by Linda Carreiro. The motion carried.

Guest

Manny Silva represented DPI and discussed his meeting with Julie Boren from the Mass. Commission for the Blind and their tour of downtown intersections.

- Union & Pleasant are “ok”
- Union & Purchase are “ok”
- Union & County have old signals that will be upgraded as will Union-Cove; Allen & County; Union & County-Rivet.
- New sidewalks are part of the 2022-23 plans
- Braille Signal Panels are @ County & Kempton Sts.

Architect B.G. Shanklin pointed out that there are several crosswalks with objects blocking clear access and provided photos of those locations. He also visited intersections with audible signals during rain storms and could barely hear them. Mr. Silva said they are being addressed.

A constituent's complaint about the inaccessible parking in the "International Plaza" lot were discussed. The van space has to be relocated 2 ft. Architect Shanklin had brought this to the attention of DPI several years ago but it was still an issue. Mr. Silva said it would be taken care of.

Old Business

- **Buttonwood Park Storm Damage/FEMA funds**
Parks & Rec. submitted plans with Emergency Management to repair the damaged equipment at the park. FEMA disallowed using the funds to provide additional accessible equipment and there were not enough funds to correct conditions at in the parking lot in front of the Senior Center. Mary Rapoza applied for funding but did not receive it.
- **Buttonwood Senior Center**
George Smith asked if the outstanding ADA-related items had been corrected. Mr. Shanklin replied that they had not. Mr. Smith moved to send the list to Inspectional Services; Pam Cole seconded. Motion carried.
- **Hazelwood Bathrooms**
B.G. Shanklin reported that the Men's Room is not finished and that the State will be coming on 10/15 to do a site visit.
- **Ward One Polling Location**
Notices went out to all voters who used to vote at Station 5 (and subsequently Bedford Gardens) that their new location is @ Vibra Hospital. Mr. Shanklin said it is van-accessible but needs signage directing voters to the "P/T" entrance where voting will take place.

Architects Report

- **Transition Plan**
George Smith moved to accept the Transition Plan; Linda Carreiro seconded. Motion carried. Mr. Smith also moved to sever the school buildings so they appear in their own document as requested by Mr. Shanklin due to the size of the document; Melissa Branco seconded. Motion carried.

Mr. Smith asked that Mr. Shanklin bring 4 copies of the document (hard copy) with several on flash drives for the various departments to the office on October 1.

- **Café Italia**
Mr. Shanklin will provide the info. to Cynthia Wallquist re: what needs to be done to make be ADA-compliant so the Chair can write to the business owner.
- **Rachael's Lakeside**
None of the suggested parking lot improvements have been made to date.

- **MOD Grant**

Because DFFM is not interested in partnering with the Commission on future submissions, no proposal will be put forth for this year's funding round.

George Smith moved to accept the Architect's Report; Melissa Branco seconded. Motion carried.

New Business:

- **Ratify and Affirm the August Proxy Vote**

George Smith moved to ratify the action taken by the commission via proxy to amend and approve the grant amount (reduce from \$780 to \$450) and program dates (extend the program through October 2019) as requested by NB Wheelchair Success. Susan Bewsher seconded. Motion carried.

- **United Way Kick-off/Allendale Country Club**

George Smith stated that his high school, class reunion was scheduled to be at Allendale County Club on June. He reported that guests in wheelchairs (who had paid to attend) could not get into the building. He further reported that there was no "disclaimer" on the website that the facility is NOT ADA compliant. Fay's Restaurant has the catering contract and did nothing to let the event planners know that the facility would not be accessible. B.G. Shanklin had visited the site previously and stated that nothing on the club's premises is accessible.

United Way also recently scheduled its Annual Kick-off at that location with no mention that the facility does not accommodate persons in wheelchairs or mobility disabilities.

Pam Cole asked that the Commission send a letter to the Town Administrator/ Building Department as well as the club and caterer about these concerns; Linda Carreiro seconded. Motion carried. The Chair suggested that a letter go to United Way expressing concerns about holding events in inaccessible locations.

- **Unexcused Member Absences.** George Smith moved to remove Herbert Eddleston from the Commission due to three (or 25%) unexcused absences from regularly scheduled meetings during the year; Melissa Branco seconded. Motion carried.

- **New Buttonwood Playground Equipment**

The Commission briefly discussed using its funds and raising additional monies to purchase a new piece of accessible equipment.

In the interest of time, both the Chair's and Executive Directors Reports were tabled.

Announcements

- The next meeting will be October 24th at 6:30 PM.

Adjourn

Melissa Branco moved to adjourn at 7:55 PM; seconded by Pam Cole. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Bewsher".

Susan Bewsher
Clerk