

Remote Meeting via Zoom

In attendance: Chair, Diane DeNapoli; Vice-Chair, Stephanie Gertz; Secretary, Megan Baker; Member, Mike Clancy; Member, Maria OLaughlin; SCPO Keith Jermyn; Member-at-Large, Sharon Allen. **Absent:** None. **Guests in Attendance:** Assistant Town Administrator, Art Robert. **Participating Remotely:** Jane McGrath.

◆ **Call to Order**

At 7:00 p.m., Chair DeNapoli called the meeting to order and read the Open Meeting Law statement. The Town of Hingham is recording the meeting.

Opening Comments by Chair

"Someone struggled for your right to vote. Use it." Susan B. Anthony

◆ **Review and Accept Meeting Notes from March 2022**

MOTION: Sharon Allen motioned to approve the March 8, 2022 Meeting Minutes.

Seconded by Megan Baker.

Vote: All in favor: (Stephanie Gertz, aye; Sharon Allen, aye; Megan Baker, aye; Marie OLaughlin, aye; Mike Clancy, aye; Diane DeNapoli, aye; Keith Jermyn, aye). None opposed. Roll-Call-Vote: 7-0-0

◆ **What the news?**

- Art Robert, Assistant Town Administrator, will provide an update on April 30 Town Meeting and the ADA Survey and Transition Plan

ADA (American Disabilities Act) Self-Assessment & Transition Plan

ADA in local government focuses on Title II ensuring accessible services and programs, but has a much broader mandate covering all forms of employment, access to places of public accommodation, commercial facilities, telecommunications, etc. The Self-Assessment and Transition Plan is focused very much on Title II and our responsibilities.

He outlined the five ADA administrative requirements, fundamental goals, work scope and deliverables.

To do this work, the Town secured a \$45,000 grant from Mass. Office of Disabilities. We've identified a contractor, Institute for Human Centered Design IHCD.

Deliverables

- IHCD to write a report:
 - Look at policies/procedures of departments used to implement programs
 - Build a database that will prioritize recommendations
- At the Facility level:
 - IHCD team to take pictures, measurements of the sites (CoD may accompany consultant)
 - Improvement needs and costs to correct
 - Include costs to correct Town web site, social media to access government services
 - Develop a budget

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- Opportunities for community involvement
- Survey by June 30
- Public Hearing in the Fall
- Final report

Vice-Chair Gertz found the survey exhaustive and asked for other options. Mr. Roberts suggested make filling out the survey part of the CoD meeting. Ms. Gertz suggested a Zoom Focus Group discussion.

Chair DeNapoli asked are CoD and COA the only groups that will be part of the survey. We wouldn't want to leave out any of the other disability communities.

Mr. Roberts said yes. Through the public hearing, we'll have the opportunity to know where we're at and seek broader feedback. Let's first connect to the CoA, the Town, and consulting team.

◆ **Town Meeting**

Mr. Roberts showed a plan with accommodations, parking, shuttle buses. Warrant article mailed to your home and available on the web site.

- CoD table near Entrance B within the vicinity of handicapped parking
- Handicapped parking drop-off near Entrance B
- Handicapped portlets near Entrance A
- Aisle seats marked for those needing support
- Assisted listening devices
- Mobile microphones
- Large format Warrant books
- HPD comfort dog available, Opry

Officer Kilroy will have signs on the traffic courses to advertise location of handicapped parking.

Mike Clancy suggested each section have wheelchair access by removing chairs to accommodate a 3' x 5'-foot area. Seats in each section for a walker or a cane should be marked.

◆ **Public Comments**

Jane McGrath of 28 Tower Brook Road

Could a golf cart be used for transport to rest rooms for someone with mobility issues?

Mr. Roberts said the Town is using golf carts for Town Meeting; N/A as ADA accommodations.

◆ **COD Funding**

Chair DeNapoli:

- CoD is funded by handicapped parking fines in Town
- Traffic Committee two months ago increased fee from \$100 to \$150
- To date, over \$500 has been collected and transferred to the CoD fund
- At our last meeting, we had a \$50 balance
- We have \$200 in donations bringing the total fund balance up to \$750

- We will need a Treasurer to be voted in

◆ **Handicapped Spot near Brewed Awakening/ Next Steps**

Chair Gertz and Mr. Jermyn met with Town Administrator, Tom Mayo, to discuss a potential wheelchair accessible handicapped spot be added downtown.

Mr. Clancy described:

- Wheelchair accessible spots need access aisle for safe passage from car to aisle to ramp to sidewalk
- Many downtown h/c spots do not have access aisles
- Spot does not meet h/c architectural access code for measurements of the parking space
- He looked at all downtown h/c spots
- Recommended placing h/c spot between South and North St. on top of the tunnel cap on Main St.
- The handicapped wheelchair accessible spot will be finished by July 5, 2022

Ms. Gertz:

- Members discussed adding a "courtesy" parking spot in front of Brewed Awakenings
- "Courtesy" spot for elderly, expectant mothers, families with small children
- Safety hazard crossing the street with their circumstances
- Chair DeNapoli sent a letter of intent to the Select Board for their May meeting
- Ms. Gertz said the Downtown Association does not have a veto option with Select Board
- Huge benefit to businesses in adding a h/c spot and a "courtesy spot"
- Chair DeNapoli asked members to send her photos of "courtesy" signs

Ms. Baker:

- Drs. Vignes and Labillois comfortable loading the form to the school web site

Chair DeNapoli would like to see the form become part of the IEP process (mail home annually with Parental Rights).

Ms. OLaughlin thanked Mr. Clancy for whoever should receive credit for making accessible the pathway from the old bathhouse to where the statue is near Red Eye Roasters. It is beautiful. She noted that the crane that tipped over there due to mud proves that if a crane could not maintain mobility in mud, neither could someone with mobility issues. The CoD should not try to make that area accessible down to the body of water as the potential mud there would be treacherous.

Ms. OLaughlin asked about fireworks for July 4. Chair DeNapoli said she will find out information.

◆ **Trustees of the Bathing Beach Update**

Chair DeNapoli said there has not been a meeting. She will update members at the May meeting.

◆ **Exceptional Needs Registration Status**

Chair DeNapoli and Ms. Baker visited SHRECC South Shore Regional Emergency Communications Center to see the form in action. After meeting with a dispatcher, they tweaked the form.

- They put together a public relations piece which is for review before Liz Klein, Tom Mayo
- She encouraged anyone with unique situation to fill out the confidential form

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- Add a current photograph
 - When you call 911, dispatcher will see critical information about your loved one
 - Able to better serve and protect you and the responder
 - If you've filled out the database previously, update anyway
 - SSRECC system upgraded 2 years ago; some critical information may not have transferred
- Once blast goes out to Town citizens, send it to your family to fill out
- Moving forward, we could help members at the Senior Center to fill out the form
- Anyone can ask questions about the form at Town Meeting

Ms. OLaughlin suggested the form is critical since the pandemic:

- Mental health issues have risen dramatically
- Sixty to 70% of caregivers have left the profession never to return
- Families are struggling without respite
- The form is critical for first responders to be prepared to respond
- Hingham is one of the ONLY towns with a dedicated police officer for the disabled

Mr. Jermyn suggested Chair DeNapoli contact Hingham HCAM Harbor Media to advertise the form. They will put it on a live channel loop to Comcast and Verizon.

◆ **May election for COD leadership**

Chair DeNapoli encouraged members interested to contact her off-line to discuss their interest in roles of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary or Treasurer. Members will vote at the May 12 meeting.

◆ **Expense Report Approval (\$90.15) for supplies for the St. Patrick's Day Standout**

- Event to promote Exceptional Needs Registry form totaled \$90.15

Mr. Jermyn suggested securing the Tax Certificate form from the Town so when CoD makes a purchase of goods or supplies, we don't have to pay taxes that may not be reimbursed to the fund.

MOTION: Mike Clancy motioned to accept and approve the expense report of March 17, 2022 and pay \$90.15 for supplies. Seconded by Maria OLaughlin.

Vote: All in favor: (Stephanie Gertz, aye; Sharon Allen, aye; Megan Baker, aye; Marie OLaughlin, aye; Mike Clancy, aye; Diane DeNapoli, aye; Keith Jermyn, aye). None opposed. Roll-Call-Vote: 7-0-0

◆ **Clancy's Classroom**

He would like to discuss one section of the Architectural Access Rule book at monthly meeting.

- He will have copies of the book made for all members
- Two weeks prior to a meeting, he will provide the section to Secretary Baker for Agenda

World's End

Chair DeNapoli visited the site where she met State Rep, Joan Meschino and State Senator, Pat O'Connor who were being given a tour by the Trustees of Reservations. Ms. DeNapoli e-mailed them to make them aware there are potential ADA issues without sinks for handwashing in the bathroom. They were surprised and unaware.

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Mr. Clancy went on to discuss:

- Board of Health violations now in evidence in the site basement
- Site issues will be discussed at next Board of Health meeting
- ADA compliance issues that need addressing before a Certificate of Occupancy
- Issues were discussed in detail at the CoD March 8 meeting
- Letter sent in early March to Trustees, Plumbing Board, and builder noting problems
- To date, no response to his letter
- A Dedication Ceremony at the site is planned for the near future

Chair DeNapoli suggested:

- Mr. Clancy e-mail his March letter to Chair DeNapoli
- Mr. Clancy obtain a copy of the site plan for Chair DeNapoli
- She will consider sharing Mr. Clancy's letter with State Rep and Senator
- Bring the Open Meeting violation to Town Counsel
- CoD will walk the site with Mr. Clancy to document issues to be addressed for Occupancy Permit
- CoD will pen a letter to Trustees documenting issues to be addressed for Occupancy Permit

Ms. Allen suggested a CoD member should be present at the next Board of Health meeting. High basement water could now be an EPA Environmental Protection Agency issue.

◆ **Information not known 24 hours before the meeting**

Chair DeNapoli said the CoD has been invited to the May 5 ADU Study Committee meeting. Maureen Sullivan will attend on behalf of CoD. She is an ADU expert who advocates with ARC of the South Shore. She advocates at the State level. She will tailor the conversation to what ADU's will look like in Hingham for the CoD and COA. Ms. DeNapoli will share information with members.

The ADU Committee meeting in June will be with the Hingham Unity Council.

Chair DeNapoli said CoD members are invited to an annual dinner May 17 with the League of Women Voters. The focus is adding accessibility into voting and the Town Meeting.

Speakers include:

- Crystal Evans, advocate from Braintree, working in disability policy and health equity
- Christine Griffin, who has an extensive history of work in disability across public and private sectors including serving the Obama administration as the Deputy Director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management

◆ **Next Steps/ Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be Thursday, May 12, at the South Shore Country Club. Members will meet to conduct elections, recap the past 18 months, and bid farewell to outgoing members, and welcome incoming members.

Adjourn

MOTION: Sharon Allen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 pm. Seconded by Keith Jermyn.

Vote: All in favor: (Stephanie Gertz, aye; Sharon Allen, aye; Megan Baker, aye; Marie OLaughlin, aye; Mike Clancy, aye; Diane DeNapoli, aye; Keith Jermyn, aye). None opposed. Roll-Call-Vote: 7-0-0

Meeting Materials used:

ADA (American Disabilities Act) Self-Assessment & Transition Plan

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Michaud
Recording Secretary