

Marblehead Disabilities Commission  
Meeting Minutes – April 14, 2022

**Members Present:** Laurie Blaisdell, Amy Hirschcron, Katie Farrell, Rich Ramos, Ed Lang, and Samantha Marino

**Members Absent:** Andrea Mountain, Sue Harris, and Cheryl LaLonde

**Guests Present:** Donna Rice

Laurie called the meeting to order at 4:21 p.m.

1. Upon motion by Amy, seconded by Katie, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2022, meeting.
2. New Member Welcome. Welcome to Rich Ramos, our new Commission member, who was formally approved by the Selectmen. Sam will reach out to Andrea to see if she can update the Commission's website accordingly.
3. Donation Account Update. Selectmen voted in favor of setting up a donation account for the Disabilities Commission. Laurie has account information with deposit slips. This account (for donations only) will be separate from the handicap parking account the Commission has.
4. Guest Speaker Donna Rice re: Harbor Lift Fundraising & Harbor Planning Board Updates. The Commission has purchased the lift's base (\$519.00 by taking money from the handicap parking fund, which will be replenished with funds from future donations. Mark has received it and will be taking pictures of installation process. Guest to tonight's Commission meeting, Donna Rice, has been assisting Amy and Sue with the fundraising process. The Mariner was asked to cover the full expense of the harbor lift. Per Donna Rice, there are additional leads for fundraising opportunities, should we need more money to procure the lift. Once the lift is installed, there will be a log (Google Form) on the dock, for individual users to complete, noting who uses it and where they are from (this has already been created and Amy will email out a copy for the Commission to review). Once the lift user completes the Google Form, they will then receive the numeric code to open the lockbox where the seat sling will be stored. Additionally, instructions to use the lift will be available as well. Estimate for sign indicating donation made by The Mariner, written lift directions, and a marine-grade lock box will be approximately \$150; this will come out of the donations fund. Mark is aware of the need for a new transition plate and ramp; Amy recommended he speak to Rich for approval and next steps in potentially building a cement ramp to ADA specifications.

The commission is interested in doing a kickoff event in conjunction with the updated bathroom reveal in early July. To attain more visibility, the Commission may potentially reach out to the area yacht clubs, YMCA, and other entities, to come to the kickoff event, as well as make a donation and help support the maintenance fund.

5. Harbor Working Group Update: After sitting in on the two meetings thus far, Amy corresponded with the consultant for the harbor working group and explained that accessibility to most of the areas/projects that were discussed is minimal, with many of the areas around town being out of compliance. Per the consultant's request, Amy devised a list of questions to represent some of the interests/concerns that would impact the disabled community, to be included in the general survey that will be disseminated to inquire about harbor usage. Amy is going to reach out to the consultant to

see when the public will be allowed to go to future meetings. It may be helpful to have Commission representation at such meetings when the public is allowed.

6. Non-Discrimination Notice, Town Meeting, Website Updates. The Non-discrimination notice was posted on the town's website. It was reported that this notice is not easily found on the website, requiring a lot of navigation. To increase visibility, Commission members have posted about the notice on their personal social media pages, as well as some Town Facebook pages. The notice has additionally been posted on the Commission's new Instagram account and will be cross-posted to the Commission's Facebook page. Laurie will be providing Sam with access to the Commission's Facebook account to assist with social media outreach.
7. 139 Pleasant Street Update. It was recommended that a feasibility study is to be completed; however, there was no date given for when it is to be completed by. Laurie made an inquiry asking for clarification. The Board stated that there typically is not a specific date given; however, they retain the right to take action whether that be to deny, fine or cease and desist. The Disabilities Commission will continue to follow up.
8. Village Plaza Handicap Ramp. Andrea visited the ramp and took pictures. She reported that the door was unlocked, yet no signage was present/visible indicating the ramp is present and available for use. Laurie recommended that the Commission send a letter to The Village Plaza to ask for a decal on the door for increased visibility so individuals will know about the ramp providing access to the second floor of Village Plaza. Additionally, inquiry into whether the pPaza could install an automatic door opener will be included in the letter.
9. Town Map of Accessible Locations. The Disabilities Commission will continue to work on this. Laurie recommended that if you are unable to access the document, please email Sue. If technological problems persist, please email Sue any updates or information you would like to add to the document as you assess points of interest around town for handicap accessibility.
10. New Business.  
Social Media: Sam created a new Instagram account for the Commission and inquired about potential future postings. Ideas shared included: Spotlights on happenings around town that benefit the disabled community, the installation of the harbor Hoyer lift, upcoming meetings around town, reminders about ADA accommodations the town must provide for public meetings and how to attain them, a "Shout-out" and thank you to the Harbors and Water Board for allowing the Disabilities Commission to raise funds for the Hoyer lift, pictures of other towns (New Bedford, Salisbury) that have fully handicap accessible water access to start the conversation in Marblehead. Sam will be reaching out to Tammy Nohelty, an art teacher in the town, to see if she may be able to task her students with creating a logo for the Disabilities Commission to use in future correspondences, social media, swag (t-shirts, stickers), etc.

Visibility of the Commission: The idea of reaching out to the SEPAC, Family Fund and various Marblehead Parent's groups on Facebook to see if they would like to collaborate going forward. Donna inquired whether a group of students/children could represent the Disabilities Commission in The Horribles Parade. Additionally, attaining a presence at the farmers market to do some tabling one weekend was also mentioned. Sam will reach out to find out more information.

Dog Park: Donna Rice brought forth concern regarding no parking or handicap access to the town's dog park. Laurie will report to Kyle Wiley that the park is inaccessible currently. There was additional mention that the dog park will be undergoing renovations in the future and the Commission is recommending handicap accessibility be considered in these plans, including access and parking.

Parks and Rec: Ed brought forward concern regarding accessibility to various sports fields and public parks throughout the town. This will potentially be an area of focus once the current projects the Commission is working on have been completed.

Upon motion by Amy, seconded by Katie, the Disabilities Commission unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 12, 2022, at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Samantha Marino, Commission Member

Approved by unanimous vote of the Commission: 5/12/2022