

Commission for Citizens with Disabilities
September 26, 2023

Meeting Minutes

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WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

The regular meeting of the Commission for Citizens with Disabilities of Tuesday, September 26, 2023, was held in City Hall, Room 315, Westfield, MA. Norm Smith III, Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Commission Members in Attendance: J.Tirrell, A.Pianka, J.Gosselin, N.Smith III, T.Johnson, A.Larkham

Public Participation: None

Motion made by Commissioner N.Smith III, Chair to Approve the Minutes of the Meeting of August 15, 2023, seconded by Commissioner J.Tirrell; all in favor; 6/0; Motion passes.

Fine & Forfeits Update:

The update was submitted by Kim Kolek, Asst. Auditor by email on September 15, 2023. Commissioner J.Gosselin, Secretary read the update: Our balance is at 39,560. Playground All/Access Cross St. is at 59,000 (project completed). The Transition Plan Resolution is at 20,000. Traffic Crosswalk signal is at 2,500. Our balance would be at 17,060.

Old Business:

Commissioner N.Smith III, Chair, shared that he is working on setting up an appointment to meet with the Off-Street Parking Commission to discuss and obtain data on parking fines. Commissioner N.Smith III, Chair asked for any new updates on the new "Informational Brochure" project. Commissioner A.Larkham shared that she looked up past practice and noted that the work was done by Puffer Printing in 2019 and the cost was \$200. Does not know the quantity or number we had printed. Commissioner N.Smith III, Chair recalled that it was 1,000 printed. Commissioner A.Larkham will get a new quote and report back at our next meeting.

Commissioner J.Gosselin shared that he received an email on September 6, 2023 from Anna Boutin-Cooper, sent the dates and times for the upcoming Zines workshops: WSU-Ely Library, Oct. 18 from 3-5:30pm; WSU-Ely Library, Nov. 17 from 10am-12:30pm; WOW center, Oct. 28 from 10am-12pm; Westfield Athenaeum, Nov. 18 from 3pm-5pm. For more information contact: aboutincooper@westfield.ma.edu. Or call 413-572-5300, ext 4763.

New Business:

Commissioner N.Smith III, Chair shared that Special Olympics Day is being held at the Big E, West Springfield, MA on October 1. Special Olympics athletes, coaches, and staff will be marching.

Commissioner A.Larkham shared that she has been meeting with all the various department heads in the city in regards to the Transition Plan project presently being worked on and updated. She shared that each department has its own items to work on, for example, ADA staff trainings, etc. She mentioned that Mr. Peter Miller discussed the implementation of new written policy and the steps for using funds for projects. Commissioner N.Smith III, Chair requested to have any proposals sent to our commission for a vote. General agreement by the commission to follow the

Chair's recommendation. Commissioner J.Gosselin asked about the creation of a small expense account set aside for our commission in the city FY budget.

Commissioner N.Smith III, Chair stressed that most of our funding comes directly from the Fine & Forfeits account from parking ticket fines. Commissioner A.Pianka asked if any of those funds are restricted. Commissioner N.Smith III, Chair shared that the funds have to be used for a public purpose, such as to educate the public on certain topics, or ADA requirements, or to plan a project or public event.

Commissioner A.Pianka recalled when we had a higher budget, and is concerned about usage issues. Commissioner N.Smith III, Chair reminded the commission that other area cities and towns have actually lowered funding or have used it for other projects. Here in Westfield, the All/Access Playground on Cross Street the past couple of years has been a very big project, and we used a very large portion of our funding for this project.

Commissioner J.Gosselin shared a newspaper article from September 15, 2023 in the Westfield News. The article is titled: State grant supports WSU students with intellectual disabilities. He read: WSU has been awarded a \$145,012 grant by the Mass Department of Higher Education to enhance and continue its support of students with intellectual disabilities. The grant will continue to benefit student participants in WSU's Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative, or MAICEI. Commissioner J.Gosselin shared that this is great news for young adults with disabilities.

Commissioner N.Smith III, Chair shared that his daughter was a past student in the ICE program and truly appreciated the program funding and help in her college experience. It is a great program and this is really great news.

Commissioner A.Larkham shared a letter she received from Naomi Ruth Pinson. She wrote to the commission to help a friend in need of a kidney. Commissioner N.Smith, Chair welcomed the commission members to reach out any way they can.

Commissioner A.Pianka suggested a posting at the library.

Next meeting planned will be October 17, 2023. *Always check the city website and calendar in case of changes.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner N.Smith III, Chair motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner J.Tirrell; all in favor. Commissioner N.Smith III, Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Jeffrey Gosselin, Secretary