



Commission on Disabilities
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
January 5, 2022

This Commission on Disabilities meeting was held electronically via Webex due to the COVID-19 Emergency.

Commissioners:

Roberta Cich – P
Laurie Berner - P
Amanda Crosby - P
Ashlie Castaldo - P
Tom Furman - P
Heath Maki - A
Dianne Naus - P
Samantha Smingler – P
Allison Fochs - A

Also present: Carl Crawford, Mark Bauer, Laura Laaksonen.

Guests: Olivia Satterlee and Katelynn Rys-Access North Center for Independent Living

President Cich called the January, 2022 Commission on Disabilities meeting to order, there was a quorum.

Approval of current agenda: MS/C – (Smingler, Castaldo)

Approval of November minutes: MS/C – (Smingler, Castaldo)

Public Comment/Information: No public comment.

HCBS Access Grant- Commissioner Crosby introduced the Home and Community Based Services Access Grant to the commission. 1.2 million dollars in funding was awarded to the Centers for Independent Living (CILs) across the state to expand services to support persons with disabilities in underserved communities who are ineligible for Medicaid Waiver funding for FY22 and FY23. Olivia Satterlee and Katelynn Rys were hired to work under this grant and will be providing the following services; equity analysis of hiring practices and consumers served, community outreach, support groups and AT and home modification so individuals can stay in their homes and age in place. FY22 will be planning and engagement and FY23 will focus on enacting our workplan.

Commissioner Smingler suggested that take a look at our support groups, such as the BI group and consider breaking the group down into different levels. Commissioner Smingler shared her contact information for a further conversation.

Commissioner Berner suggested Access North connect to Arc Northland's team for future collaboration.

President Cich inquired if support groups and future classes are open to all, even if they do not necessarily identify with the specific group. The answer is yes, our groups will be free and open to all.

Accessible Parking Update:

Officer Mark Bauer provided an update for the Commission. The following addresses were approved for accessible parking signage at the December 2021 Parking Commission Meeting: 30 N 25th Ave West.

The Parking commission will be reviewing the following addresses at their January 2022 meeting. All of the following addresses will be recommended for approval:

317 E 6th Street

24 S 66th Ave West

329 N 47th Ave West – this address does have off street parking, including a garage but after further investigation the family has some acute medical needs and they need to be close to the door. An accessible parking stall will be recommended, installed and in place until the family reaches out for removal.

Officer Bauer shared the police departments collaboration with the Fire Departments Life Safety Division.

Parks and Rec Report:

There were no updates at this time.

Old Business:

Snow Removal Task Force-

Sammy's Pizza offered a free 14" pizza to all snow removal volunteers. After this was announced a couple more volunteers signed up over the weekend. We are continuing to seek volunteers so more individuals can be served.

Brochure-

The conversation and vote on the COD brochure were tabled for a future meeting. We are still waiting on feedback and finishing touches regarding the design.

New Business:

Elections-

The following slate of officers have been nominated.

Commissioner Berner-President/Chair

Commissioner Crosby: Vice Chair

Commissioner Cich- Secretary

President Cich took a call for nominations from the floor three times. There were no other nominations from the floor.

Commissioner Smingler voted to accept the slate of officers presented. Commissioner Castaldo seconded the vote. A roll call vote was conducted and the motion passes unanimously.
MS/C: (Smingler,Castaldo)

Current Disability Issues:

Snow Emergency Routes-

Since the last commission meeting the city of Duluth did call a Snow Emergency. Officer Bauer shared feedback from the After Action Meeting; the city determined that the snow emergency procedures went well and no one was towed from an accessible parking stall. Officer Bauer addressed a concern of cars parked on 4th St near the medical district. The city is working with Essentia Health on this parking issue and assured the commission that outreach on policy can be specific to neighborhoods.

Mr. Crawford noted that this snow event coincided with college break and many students were out of the city. Mr. Crawford also noted that the city is still looking to explore community owned amnesty lots to help provide off street parking during a declared snow emergency.

President Cich inquired if anyone parked in an ADA space was able to move their vehicles? The city is unable to gauge this information at this time.

Commissioner Berner brought a concern forward to the group regarding sidewalk accessibility during the winter. Commissioner Berner shared that the curb snowbanks were very high and covering the curb cuts from the plow and hoping to confirm who is responsible to clear snow. Mr. Crawford was able to confirm that it is the adjacent building owner's responsibility to clear sidewalks and curb cuts to maintain accessibility. Mr. Crawford encouraged the commission to reach out and let him know where the "hot spots" are across the city.

Commissioner Castaldo brought forth the concern on un shoveled DTA shelters that have been over packed by snow. President Cich let the commission know she is working with the city as well as the DTA on who's responsibility it is to clear bus stops and bus shelters. At this time, it is the adjacent home owner's responsibility but there are other questions to be explored regarding this issue.

Other Business/Announcements:

Commissioner Smingler discussed the accessible parking that was added in the Greysolon parking lot for the Duluth Play House. She noted that the parking spots are not available for Play House guests and are being used by Greysolon residents. Samantha understands that they would need accessible parking but questioned if there was thoughts on parking downtown. Officer Bauer noted the accessible parking stalls were added in an attempt to remove permanent parking on Superior Street. There will be a new parking facility near the Medical District with an estimated additional 600 parking spaces to be completed late 2023 that will hopefully help. It was also noted that Greysolon Management does have an agreement in place with the city and individuals do pay to park in the lot.

Commissioner Berner announced that she will be retiring from Arc Northland in April of this year but she will continue to serve on the Commission. Congratulations Commissioner Berner! Commissioner Berner also gave updates on Arc Northland and is hoping to come and present at a future meeting.

Commissioner Naus reminded the commission to get the word out on the the live Zoom conversation with Senator Amy Klobuchar and Secretary Steve Simon on how to protect voting

rights. The live Zoom takes place at 6PM on January 11th. You can sign up here <https://americanpromise.net/event/protect-mn/>

Correspondence/Public Comment:

None.

Adjourn: MS/C (Cich/Crosby)

Next meeting is Wednesday February 2nd, 2022 3:00 PM
Location to be determined.