



Commission on Disabilities
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
October 5, 2022

Commissioners:

Laurie Berner - P

Ashlie Castaldo - A

Roberta Cich – P

Amanda Crosby - P

Allison Fochs - P

Tom Furman - A

Dianne Naus - P

Samantha Smingler – A

Also present: Carl Crawford, Mark Bauer, Alice Tibbetts

Chair Berner called the October 2022 Commission on Disabilities meeting to order at 3:05 PM, there was a quorum.

Approval of current agenda: The Commission would like to add a discussion about Commission membership to the Agenda under New Business. Motion to approve the Agenda as amended - **MS/C – (Fochs/Naus)**

Approval of the August minutes: MS/C – (Crosby/Fochs)

Public Comment/Information: No public comment.

Guest Speaker

Alice Tibbetts presented We Walk Duluth's strategy to help improve walkability and condition of sidewalks during the winter.

- The first step is to interact with the City to improve sidewalk access
- The group sees a need to improve pedestrian access through construction zones.

- What are the rules and protocols? How is it enforced?
- With the addition of many e-bikes and scooters, the group is advocating safe access for bikes on the streets to ensure they are not using sidewalks.
- The group would like to see the City create a Transportation Commission to help address these needs.

There was a long discussion about snow removal from sidewalks. We Walk Duluth and the Commission have the same goals. Ms. Tibbetts explained that the new system for complaints with the City will help with enforcement. We Walk Duluth would like more action on sidewalk snow removal.

- What is the City's plan going forward? There was a conversation about access to bus stops, businesses and other sidewalks. There are also ADA compliance issues.
- It was suggested that the City now plow the same road 2 or 3 times. Those resources could be used to help with other concerns.
- More frequent use of Snow Trains would be helpful to maintain access to sidewalks.
- There was a lot of discussion about education and marketing.
 - Remind businesses of their obligations for snow removal and access.
 - Encourage neighbors to get to know each other and help where they can.
 - Remind home and property owners of their responsibilities.
 - Door hangers, billboards, buses and signs were suggested as ways to get the word out.

There is a need for a much larger conversation. A summary of We Walk Duluth's conversations with the City and possible next steps will be emailed to Commissioners for comment.

Accessible Parking Update:

Officer Bauer reported that 1 new request for an ADA parking spot was approved at the September Parking Commission meeting. There will be no October meeting because there won't be a quorum, but 1 parking sign was installed and will be brought to the November meeting for approval.

Parks and Rec Report:

- Commissioner Crosby reported that the Essential Places Plan passed the Parking Commission unanimously and now goes to the City Council for approval.

Old Business:

Snow Removal Task Force

The Snow Removal Task Force met with City representatives as well as representatives from Age Well Arrowhead, Zeitgeist and Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging. This group would like to address unmet needs of those who are unable to shovel in the winter. The City will not be running the Snow Removal Assistance program, so there was discussion about how to meet the needs of those who used the program.

- Age Well Arrowhead currently has a snow removal program. There was discussion about how to support them and help increase their capacity.

New Business:

- Commission membership

 - Next month the Commission will welcome a new member - Brooke Wright.

 - There was discussion about the need for Commissioners to be present and participate.

Current Disability Issues:

Bayfront Stride drop-off: Commissioner Cich asked Mr. Crawford if he could check for progress on this.

Mr. Crawford brought a situation to the Commission's attention where an individual who is blind needs assistance with City paperwork he needs to fill out. Commissioners suggested reaching out to the Lighthouse for Vital Living and State Services for the Blind.

Commissioner Fochs brought up a concern with needing to exit a DTA bus during a 10 or 15 minute layover. She is concerned that this will become a problem during the winter and is very difficult for some who use mobility devices.

Correspondence/Public Comment: None

Announcements: None

Adjourn: 4:30 PM.

Next meeting is Wednesday, November 2, 2022, 3:00 PM
City Hall Room 430