



Commission on Disabilities  
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes  
November 2, 2022

**Commissioners:**

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

**Also present:** Carl Crawford, Mark Bauer

Chair Berner called the October 2022 Commission on Disabilities meeting to order at 3:15 PM, there was a quorum.

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

**Approval of the October minutes: MS/C – (Castaldo/Fochs)**

**Public Comment/Information:** No public comment.

**Accessible Parking Update:**

One ADA parking spot has been requested to mirror an existing need for approval and installed. There has been one additional request that Mr. Bauer will review before the next meeting.

The Parking Commission has struggled to reach a quorum, so a couple ADA spots have been installed and will be approved at the next meeting. This is done so people don't have to wait so long for needed parking spots.

Mr. Bauer reviewed the review process for ADA residential parking spots and site visits. Commissioners were invited to go on a ride along to see the process first hand. Any Commissioner interested in this can contact Mr. Bauer.

### **Parks and Rec Report:**

Chair Berner read the Parks and Rec update provided by Commissioner Crosby. This email will be provided to all commissioners.

The Parks and Rec Commission has been discussing proposed changes to Duluth Public Golf. The decision to continue Public Golf as planned or close Lester permanently is financial in nature and will be determined by the city council. Permanently closing Lester would provide an estimated \$750,000 increase to the budget. They also reviewed course updates at Enger. At this time, there is not a plan to renovate the clubhouse, which causes concerns with accessibility.

Information regarding the proposed referendum on the November 8th ballot to support Duluth Parks and Recreation was provided to the Commission. Commissioners are urged to contact Commissioner Crosby if they have any questions. Vote Yes for Duluth Parks is hosting a 'Rock the Vote' concert at Bent Paddle on Friday to promote the importance of this levy.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Snow Removal Task Force**

Mr. Crawford provided an update from Age Well Arrowhead. Age Well is finding the snow removal service extremely challenging to provide. They have a couple of volunteers who are helping specific clients but are not able to accept more. They don't anticipate that changing. In order to break even, they would have to charge far more than our target audience could pay. They also explored partnering with existing snow removal services but even their reduced rates are \$150 an hour.

Age Well said that if the City would like to look at applying for grant money in this area, they would be interested in partnering on that.

Commissioners expressed the continued need to emphasize neighbors helping each other and how important accessible sidewalks are. Commissioner Cich again expressed frustration that those that were being served by the City's program will have no help this winter. There were conversations around

continuing to support those trying to do this work. However, it does not appear that anyone is currently looking at grants or other options to continue the snow removal assistance program.

Commissioners discussed the fines residents will receive if their sidewalk is not shoveled. Commissioners are concerned that those who have disabilities or are elderly and cannot remove snow without assistance and do not have the financial resources to hire a service will receive fines that they do not have the resources to pay.

Commissioners have some questions going forward:

- Is there a cap on fines residents can receive?
- Can residents request reasonable accommodations?
- Is there someone at the City who is following up on grant/funding options?
- Would it be possible to use the money from fines to help those who can't shovel?

**New Business:**

Elections: Elections for Commission Officers will be held in January. A slate of possible Officers will be brought forward at the December meeting. Nominations can also be taken from the floor. Commissioner Smingler expressed interest in the Secretary position and Commissioner Castaldo expressed interest in the Vice-Chair position.

There was also discussion on term limits and the need for new Commissioners.

**Current Disability Issues:**

Mr. Crawford shared concern regarding the number of evictions currently happening. After much conversation, Commissioners would like to explore the possibility of partnering with local agencies to provide a Fair Housing training for Landlords.

**Correspondence/Public Comment:** None

**Announcements:** None

**Adjourn:** 4:45 PM.

**Next meeting is Wednesday, December 7, 2022, 3:00 PM  
City Hall Room 430**