



Commission on Disabilities
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 4, 2024
City Hall Room 430

Commissioners Present: Ashlie Castaldo, Chair; Brooke Marinan, Vice Chair; Christina Johnson, Secretary; Marie Anderson; Jill Isola Johnson; Michelle McDonald; Michaela Mullin; Amanda Paszak

Commissioners Absent: Allison Fochs

Guests Present: Laura Laaksonen, City of Duluth; Mark Bauer, Duluth Police Department; Jon Rix, Guest; Andy Paszak, Guest

Chair Castaldo called the **9/4/24** Commission on Disabilities meeting to order at 3:30pm.

Approval of the September 2024 agenda (Marinan, McDonald)

Approval of August 2024 minutes (McDonald, Anderson; Motion carries with updates below)
Add Commissioner McDonald to the present list. Typo Officer Bauer.

Current Disability Issues and Announcements

- Presentation to the City Council/Annual Assessment this coming Monday. Commissioners are invited to attend. Chair Castaldo is to send a working document of accomplishments and goals to full COD.
- Commission and External Partnership Expansion - Castaldo reached out to Chamber of Commerce to expand disability employment. Find more tourist-friendly places for individuals. Past Chair Crosby speaking for Commitment to Change March in 2023.
- Commission on Disabilities in the News - Chair Castaldo interviewed at Duluth Cider benefit - Stardust Lavender Lemon Cider launch to benefit a neurodivergent organization.
<https://www.wdio.com/lift-online/whats-brewing-mneurodivergent-stardust-cider/>
- Lighthouse is hosting and Open House on October 28 3-6:30. Networking opportunity for hiring individuals with disabilities.
- Arc Northland doing a speed friending event for individuals with disabilities in October.

Accessible Parking Update

- Approved by Parking Commission:
 - 2904 W 2nd Street
 - 615 N 56th Ave W
- Recommended for approval:

- 706 N 7th Ave E - signage on both sides for alternate side parking; multiple users needing accessible parking
- {Address} adjacent to the basketball court and dog park in Gary Garden Site - community area, there are a number of older residents who maintain the garden. Some additional navigation to determine where to put the zone.
- 2624 W 4th Street - Access ramp on front door, grading issues in back
- 3421 W 2nd Street - Individual needs greater, quick access
- 117 N 18th Ave E - Need access for STRIDE bus parking on road
- Accessible push button ADA operators being installed in medical district ramp
- Retrofitting city parking facilities with self-serve gate-less technology. Streamlines exiting ramps; removes concerns for feeling 'trapped,' malfunctions, customer service challenges, and technology barriers. City can now be compliant with state and federal ADA guidelines to allow free parking for 4 hours with accessible parking credentials.
- Parking and Mobility Magazine - Transportation and Accessibility cover story
- Regional parking conference - Officer Mark Bauer considering presenting at spring conference

Parks and Rec Report

- Brooke attended first meeting in August. Superior Hiking Trail trying to approval and backing from P&R Commission for grant application. Hartley's pond repair, reroute waterway, discussing options. Lakewalk repairs 21st through 26th widening trails. 24th Ave E. seasonal rest stop. Discussing repair sidewalk erosion, and changing 90-degree turns, adding more lighting. Improve Leif Erickson steep hill. Installing accessible routes from 26th Ave E. Lakewalk. Add more signage to direct more people and better understand distance. Add more benches for rest area on slabs to allow for greater accessibility.
- Laura - Received recommendation for City parks that are highly accessible. Work with Parks and Rec to create a list? Michaela recommended Lincoln Park or Chambers Grove.

Annual Goals - Updates

- Involvement in Transportation and City Traffic Accessibility - updates and ideas
- Crosswalks - to meet with City to discuss painting of concrete ribbons.
- Skywalk - maurices notified of braille signs. Uncertainty around City vs private ownership.

New Business

- ADA Compliance in City Hall-Based Media - Request for Mayor Reinert's social media videos to include captioning - Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram. COD to draft a letter
- Concepts/Ideas for Athletic Venues Task Force - COD to collect inclusive suggestions for athletic venue. Goal Ball - blind soccer. What sports were in the Special Olympics? Sensory nights, lighting recommendations, facility recommendations. Both considering upgrades to existing complexes AND considering new facility build. Does the task force accept feedback without attending a meeting? Find a point person or venue to provide feedback.

Old Business

Hard of Hearing/Law Enforcement Conference Updates - Securing speakers. Next meeting in October; Chair Castaldo to attend and serve as liaison. Event secured at the Duluth Public

Library.

Public Comment

- Duluth Public Library requested to talk with the COD to make the library more inclusive, more accessible. Laura invited to October Meeting.
- Laura reached out to DTA, invited to November meeting to discuss accessibility in the DTA. Michelle serves on their advisory board.
- Access North re-engaging with voters - Access North works with anyone with any disability, diagnosed or not, seeking ideas where to have a table to provide information or even walk through the voter registration and help generate plans to get them to vote. Recommended Family Freedom Center, Lighthouse, MN Workforce Center, college campuses, RSI, Goodwill True North, Northpointe Resource Center, Library, LSC

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:27pm.

Next meeting:

Wednesday, October 2, 2024

3:30pm - 4:30pm

City Hall Room 430

The public is invited to submit written comment to Laura Laaksonen prior to the meeting by humanrights@duluthmn.gov or mailing comments to 411 W 1st St, City Hall, Duluth, MN 55802. Please note that all public comment is considered Public Data.