



Commission on Disabilities
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 1, 2025
City Hall Room 430

Commissioners Present: Ashlie Castaldo, Chair; Christina Johnson, Secretary; Marie Anderson; Allison Fochs; Jill Johnson; Michelle McDonald; Michaela Mullin; Amanda Paszak

Commissioners Absent: Brooke Marinan, Vice Chair

Guests Present: Marsha Lue, City of Duluth; Andy Paszak; Mark Bauer, City of Duluth; Duluth City Councilor Azrin Awal; Jean Wiseheart; Beth Johnson, Arc Northland; Josie LaPorte

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Chair Castaldo called the **10/1/25** Commission on Disabilities meeting to order at 3:33pm.

Approval of the October 2025 agenda (McDonald, Anderson)

Approval of September 2025 minutes (Castaldo, Mullin)

Current Disability Issues and Announcements

- Marsha is looking into constituent concerns received in her office
- Rev Up event with The Arc Northland - October 21 - voters rights. Amanda Crosby invited COD to table. Lighthouse will be great speakers. Chair Castaldo and Commissioner Mullin to serve on the discussion panel.

Accessible Parking Update

- Sept 5 meeting approved:
 - 902 N. 6th Ave E.
 - 521 E. 10th Street
 - 4428 W. 8th Street
- Installation requests are largely placed by residents with a need or their family members. Removals are often requested by a new homeowner or real estate agent.
- Oct 3 meeting up for approval:
 - 4816 Dodge Street plus mirrored zone
- Commissioner question: Any vehicle with an accessible placard does not need to pay for any public meter up to 4 hours

Parks and Rec Report

Guest Josie LaPorte - passed resolution to make budget recommendations to City Council. Accessibility and compliance with ADA.

Crosswalk Discussion

Marsha Lue provided drafted posters and social media post from the City regarding crosswalk rules for drivers. Also shared an older video of Officer Jim Forsyth from DPD discussing rules for drivers. COD discussed if these materials would address the concern for crosswalk safety downtown. Talking points:

- State law says crosswalks do not need to be marked.
- The existing DPD video does not address the COD's concrete ribbon concern. Discussion on when vehicles need to stop at crosswalks. The issue is for drivers not to stop in the crosswalk, but before it. Suggest to not use that DPD video, or record a new one addressing those specific concerns.
- Poster feedback: Good start on design. Replace "folks" with "people." Add a statement about "stop behind the white line."
- Guest comment: 6th Avenue and Superior Street are problematic for residents of the Lenox and Gateway Apartments. Drivers not stopping for those in the crosswalk.
- Invite the Community Officer, Clean & Safe Team to COD meeting to discuss crosswalk safety.
- COD still requests the City to identify the concrete ribbons as crosswalks

New Business

Councilor Awal - Addressing possible restructure of boards and commissions.

Initial Proposal: Turn Commissions into Committees; committees would not have open meeting laws - more meeting availability, virtual meetings possible, no quorum to meet, collaborative support from HR Commission. Suggestion to be under the Human Rights Commission to be the governing appointee. Have one permanent seat for a COD delegate to serve on the Human Rights Commission. HRC would go to City Council for policy suggestions to consider.

Councilor Awal asked Commissioners to vote. COD discussed at length:

- Why do we need Human Rights to assert communication with administration?
- Why remove COD when City just launched a new Transportation Commission? The Transportation Commission has been in conversation for decades.
- Where did the restructuring idea come from? How does it benefit everyone else? Conversations about how commissions to have a larger voice.
- Can we have both? Can we remain a Commission AND have a representative on the Human Rights Commission? If we had a representative on HRC, they would not be a voting member.
- Restructuring under HRC risks reducing our independent voice to a subagenda item.

Vote not taken, meeting ran out of time. Tabled discussion to November.

Old Business

Skywalk update - Marsha updated that they're in the process of quantifying information. Marsha will bring in COD when ready.

Public Comment

Dining in the Dark reminder Nov. 6

Adjourn 4:41

Next Meeting:
Wednesday, November 5, 2025
3:30PM-4:30PM
City Hall room 430

The public is invited to submit written comment 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 comments are considered public data.