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City of Somerville

Commission for Persons with Disabilities

January 10, 2023

7:00 – 9:00 PM (ET)

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(Captions provided by a live Captioner.)

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CAPTIONER: Standing by for audio. 6:45 PM.

This is a test. Testing captions.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Brian Postlewaite is sick, so he will not be joining us this meeting. So at the top, you will have to ask someone else to capture minutes.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Sorry. Just settling in here. I want to know if I have a quorum. Who will I – oh, Adrienne, I am sorry. Now I can see closed captioning. Okay. Thank you. What is this livestream?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: That has always been there. That is how you can view it as it is being put in the document as it is posted. That has always been offered.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Okay. I used to just go to closed captions. Then it would have viewed the whole transcript.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: It can happen right on your screen, or you can click the StreamText player and see it that way. It just depends on your preferences.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Thank you. It is nice that we have options.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: On your question of a quorum, since you currently have, since Bonnie's term ended, you have four commissioners. So by way of your bylaws, it is 50% plus one, so I believe you need three.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Fingers are crossed.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: I was in a different meeting with Kate Melton last week, and she said she would be here. So there is that. I am not sure about Lian. Marnie is here, who is our guest.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Yes, that is a great.

>>: Looking forward to it.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Well, I think we will have to begin.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: So I will start recording. Then we can get started.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I have everything I needed in front of me. Marnie, is that you?

MARNIE KLEIN: Hi, Holly. Nice to meet you.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I know we wanted to kick off with just a welcome and a hellow. Then we will do a roll call. I see Pauline, Adrienne, Harriotte, Henry, Marnie. Oh, we have Crystal here. Brittney is our captioner.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Pauline is here as well.

>>: Oh, she mentioned it.

HOLLY SIMIONE: No worries. So as far as roll, it would be myself. I am hoping two other voting members will join us. But for now, we are going to get started. And I think, should we let Marnie start? I know Marnie, you have sort of time constraints, and I want to be very mindful of that.

MARNIE KLEIN: Sure. Thanks, Holly. My name is Marnie. I am a local teacher. I work in Cambridge. I run a science club that one of my personal passions and something I have had familiarity with this assistive technology. I run a program in the early spring to late spring all about assistive technology with my students. I have a shared screen, but I know for accessibility reasons I can just talk, if that is easier. I will share it very quickly. It is a yellow background with lots of pictures and students and students working with a community member. Then there is a center kind of banner that says – hello? I work at the middle school. We are a science club looking to work with community members. There is no task too small. So I am going to stop sharing right now. What does that look like? That looks like we are a bunch of middle schoolers. We are not engineers or

professionals in any way, but if anyone in the community who is interested in something custom but something hardware-based, so not technology based, that they would like to be built more like to be reconfigured, we can work on that problem.

It is a way to expose students to technology and things like that. Harriotte, I see your hand is raised.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: I actually, maybe three years ago, 2019, 2018, I can't remember, there was a lovely program much like this for high schoolers run by Universal Design. It was a design course. I agreed to be one of the people that got something designed for them. What the students designed for me was sort of a source bag for my medications. And it is adorable. But it kind of needs renewal because one of my major medications comes in a different shape bottle. It is like a little carry bag, basically. They even went so far as to put different shapes, like a square, round, so forth and so on. Not so critical, but it is wonderful to have a custom bag for my medications so they don't get in the way when I travel or whatever. I don't know. I wouldn't mind having a project again with a couple of young people and see if they want to do it.

MARNIE KLEIN: Thank you.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: I also have a friend who has a wheelchair, and she is forever looking for the perfectly designed bag for the back handles of her chair. I can ask her.

MARNIE KLEIN: Wonderful. These are exactly the types of projects we can do. Again, it would be low commitment, a Zoom with the students, maybe visiting campus two or three times total for about an hour each. And students really take the measurements. It is their job to figure it out. It is a way to help students understand and learn more about disability and also learn about ways to engineer for others. I love running it.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: It is a great project. I will try to think of other stuff too.

MARNIE KLEIN: Keep in mind we are not even high schoolers. Our middle school.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: This is mostly sewing. So I don't think –

MARNIE KLEIN: Again, if anyone is interesting, I can provide my email and at the best channel. You can get in contact with me. I should say I don't know the number of students who sign up until a week before the program. If I don't get a lot of sign-ups, I may not need a lot of volunteers this year, but maybe in a future year we will work with the project. I don't know those numbers yet.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: That is fine. If you send your email to Holly, she was sent it out at least to me.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Marnie, you can put it in the chat box if you like. I will make sure to follow up and make sure that is part of the meeting next. You reached out to talk about your program initially and see if there was interest or someone we could connect you

with that may have a need that your team could work on. Is there anything else that we can do? Would it be helpful if we shared your communication?

MARNIE KLEIN: At this point I need to see the numbers for the club and see how I will communicate out. But just the excitement and energy, if you know someone, that is all I need. I should also point out that we are able to compensate travel to and from the campus. So it is a volunteer gig, maybe three hours total over the semester, unless you want to continue working with the students and want to spend – that is kind of the best part. Uniting students with members of the community.

PAULINE: What school are you affiliated with?

MARNIE KLEIN: Buckingham Browne and Nichols School. It is a private school in Cambridge. So if anyone is interested, I will send out my email. Or I sent it out already. And hopefully we can get some projects going.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Keep me updated, Marnie. I will keep the commission updated. And if we have anything, we will definitely reach out. But if you need further assistance or anything, you know how to reach me.

MARNIE KLEIN: Absolutely.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I did send an email, a document that had a PDF of the screenshot as well as the physical document. So we could all be able to screen readers or visibly see it. One thing I really liked was everything was set up in alt-text. And the descriptions were there, which is really important for people who are blind or visually impaired. So we thank you for that.

MARNIE KLEIN: Absolutely. All right.

HOLLY SIMIONE: You are welcome to stay on and listen. I completely understand if this isn't a good time for you to stay on, I appreciate you being here today.

MARNIE KLEIN: Thank you. I have a Zoom shortly after have to do prep for. But thank you so much. I hope everyone has a lovely meeting.

>>: Thank you.

>>: Take care.

HOLLY SIMIONE: So I just want to update – oh, wait a minute. We didn't have someone taking the minutes. We don't have a secretary. Do we, Adrienne?

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: I could go downstairs and get my computer in try.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: The one option you have, and I don't want to speak for him, a last resort, you could send Brian the transcript and he can do his best. It is important to have a different record than the live transcript for these minutes because they are not considered the legal record.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Correct. They are a tool.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: I can go grab my computer.

>>: How long is the meeting for?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: This is the first meeting where we have a new timeframe. We are going until nine. 7:00 to 9:00.

>>: I like the 7:00 start because I just got home.

HOLLY SIMIONE: That's fine. I will take care of this one, Kate.

>>: I can take some now.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Okay. Then I can take over.

>>: Then maybe Harriotte can do it.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: I have to go downstairs and get my computer, but I have my air pot on.

>>: I will do my best. But after 8:00, I maybe not so helpful.

HOLLY SIMIONE: That's okay. Thank you Lian and Katie for being here. We now officially have a quorum, which is great because we have some wonderful information to share. Hopefully we can vote on some new topics. I have David Thorpe joining us at about 7:15 and 8:00. Is he a call in? I don't know, Adrienne, if you can see.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: There is nobody in the waiting room. Who is David Thorpe? Remind me.

HOLLY SIMIONE: David Thorpe is part of the high school foundation. They are a separate nonprofit organization, and they oversee all the donations and the process of which monies are distributed to Somerville High School students. Some of them are endowments. Some of them are donations. They are a vehicle which we can utilize for our commission funds we had discussed using for scholarships for high school students. And the high school scholarship foundation is what Mr. Bean had recommended. He is the finance director for the city. He suggested we reach out to him. So last week was fortunate enough to get connected to David Thorpe, and yesterday David had a board meeting. They are very excited that we would like to work with them, but they will do all of the oversight and manage all of the funds. We will have a choice of how the program works. So I was going to go over that once David joined us, and he is available to answer questions. So let me just make sure he is not texting me if he is having an issue getting in. Nope. I am just going to keep going for the sake of time.

I am going to bounce all over the place, so please forgive me. I am going to go over to the accessible parking fines fund item. We have had many different lists and ideas, but I thought tonight you could please focus on making a decision to fund these scholarships, which is a topic we talked about, and also to decide a monetary amount that we would

like to put towards the 2022-2023 Somerville High School scholarship year. We currently have a – gosh, Adrienne, do you have that number handy? I can look for it. We have a lovely nest egg. So, anyone want to guess at how fantastic our HP parking fines account is at the moment? Give me a number.

PAULINE: 25,000.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: 90,000.

HOLLY SIMIONE: More.

LIAN GUERTIN: I feel like I saw a number at some point that was over 100,000. If it wasn't over, it was definitely close.

HOLLY SIMIONE: No. Henry, come on. Crystal, anyone want to know?

HENRY: I will go high and say 150.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Crystal, if you would like to participate, you certainly can. But I made a drum roll. Thanks to everyone here and everyone in the city who made this happen, we have \$190,689. Let's just say that December is a fantastic month for everyone to pay their parking tickets, thankfully. Our team into the city is doing an amazing job of managing all of that.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: That is pretty phenomenal. I have one quick question. May I ask a question?

HOLLY SIMIONE: Yes, please.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Are these meant for scholarship use for seniors? Are at these meant for educational opportunities? They already have a definition from the foundation, or is it up to us to support and describe some scholarship it might be used for?

HOLLY SIMIONE: Sorry, I had a hearing issue. You are asking how we would direct these funds through David Thorpe, which I think I see Mr. Thorpe.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: No, that is not what I am asking.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Please ask your question again.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: My question was does the foundation predefine what scholarships are for? For example, college tuition, summer programs like that?

HOLLY SIMIONE: I am going to let David answer that. Let me introduce David Thorpe.

>>: Hi, everyone. I am David Thorpe, president of the Somerville High School Scholarship Foundation. Thank you for allowing me to attend your meeting tonight and talk about what the foundation does into answer any questions that you have. To answer the question that you just posed, so the only requirement that we do have is that the student is attending some type of higher education, whether that be a community

college, four year institution, and they do need to provide proof of enrollment to us before they receive the money.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Please finish.

>>: Just to give a brief summary of the organization, so we are, we started in 1990. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our mission is to award scholarships to Somerville High School students who are graduating and pursuing higher education opportunities. So we are made up of all volunteers. So we have on our board former school principals, teachers, guidance counselors. We also have former mayors from the City of Somerville and people and a general members of the community and people who are interested. Like I said, I would be happy to answer any questions. I spoke with Holly a little bit already. I am excited about any potential partnerships or organizations can have together.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: A great. Thank you.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I am going to jump right in and give you the high level information. And from what I understand how this would work. The first thing we need to do is agree to set up part of our funds and the dollar amount to go to scholarships. And agreed that we would work this through the Somerville High School Scholarship Foundation. What that means is one amount would be spent from the city directly to the foundation. And how that fund gets used would be something we decide. So basically, I sent out, and I believe I included as a meeting document the actual application that is used. So all the different ways the foundation receives funding for these scholarships, they use the same application. If a group designates something as we are looking to fund a person of a certain ethnicity or an athlete who plays basketball or whatever they deem, that is sort of gleaned from this application. In our case, we are looking for someone who either identifies as having a disability, is interested in learning more education toward social type service that would benefit persons with disabilities, or has done some type of volunteer work around things that involve disabilities.

We would not be modifying the existing application. It is the same regardless of who applies for scholarship funding. I recommend that we not see the full applications. I recommend that we only see the actual text that is written under the essays. Why they are going to do something. What they are going to do. I don't think it would be appropriate if we knew of their race, gender, sex, orientation, financial information. There is a lot of things part of that application that I feel would be inappropriate for us to use as is saying these six people look great, or we think these people based on their essays we would like to put their names forward. Lian, I noticed you had your hand up.

LIAN GUERTIN: Yes, this is Lian. I have a question. If you sent out the application, I am not seeing it. Does the existing application ask about disability and whether the applicants identify as having disability? Or have an IEP or anything along those lines? Or is that something we would need to add an if we wanted to know?

HOLLY SIMIONE: Hold on a second. I thought I had a printout of that. Let me see. Adrienne, are you able to display that? Or would it be easier if I did that?

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: In any case, this is very exciting that we have funds and want to share them. And if there's anything we need, is educational funding for people.

LIAN GUERTIN: I guess an additional question while we are looking for that, would this work as a, like we would set criteria for who would be eligible for a scholarship from the money we were providing and then the – I have forgotten the name of the group already, but the scholarship oversight group would sort that out. Or would we get forwarded the applications and a subset of the commission would be directly involved in determining who we wanted to award the money to?

HOLLY SIMIONE: I apologize. I am not very good at multitasking. I just got the document to show up. Could you asked that question one more time?

LIAN GUERTIN: Would we as a commission be directly involved in deciding who to, or would we be setting eligibility criteria and then the scholarship oversight board, I have forgotten the name, would make the decisions while applying our criteria?

HOLLY SIMIONE: So my recommendation is that we focus on, let me just show this application first, which I think will help answer some of the questions. I am displaying this now on my screen. Is there anyone who can't see my screen?

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: If you can give us a sketch.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I believe I sent it out. I will make sure you do have it so it can be used screen read.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Holly, I don't think Pauline uses a screen reader. Is that correct?

PAULINE: No. Not yet.

HOLLY SIMIONE: So I am going to go through the pieces of this application. Again, it is a single application that is used for all the different types of scholarships that are managed by this foundation. The beginning talks about basically their names, address, demographics, phone numbers, parents, email, it does not, it asked if they have completed an application for financial student aid. It asks income questions. It asks about if you have been in any extracurricular or community service or clubs while attending school. And again, there is a section there for them to describe what those activities are. I think their activities will be something important for us to look at. Then there is a section, there is a lot of activity section. It goes into what your goals are for school. Are you looking for a gap year? Are you looking to maybe do a union job or vocational training? Two or four year college. There is a section for free text for other. It is asking what their goals are. It is asking what schools they may have attended in the city, or if other, you may include the city and town. This is for people currently attending the high school. Correct me if I am wrong, David. People who are juniors, seniors.

>>: It is more seniors who are graduating. And just to add one other piece of context, this application is actually created by the Somerville High School guidance department. Our foundation is completely separate from the high school. We work together, but we are two separate entities. This application is used by other organizations or other people that have scholarships and want to award scholarships that don't necessarily need to go through our organization. It is almost like the common application for any scholarships Somerville High School awards to students.

PAULINE: This is Pauline. How many students do you think about awarding scholarships to each year?

HOLLY SIMIONE: So that depends on, again, they get inputs from lots of different resources. Sometimes they are a dollar amount or it is a number of scholarships. Again, they are looking for certain things. So the more funding they have, the more they can get out within the stipulations. David, if you want to give an example either of what the budget last year or the amount of the scholarships.

>>: We have been awarding close to \$100,000 a year in scholarships probably for the past, we have been able to increase the amount we give out, I would say within the past seven or eight years we have been coming close to \$100,000 each year. And we have a number of scholarships. I don't know the exact number off the top of my head. I think it is somewhere of 35 or 45. Around there. Some of those scholarships are in honor of certain people whose family, like when someone passes away, the family may choose to establish a scholarship. For example, we have one for a student chooses to go into nursing, pursuing a degree in nursing. Or a student who is going to Northeastern. So individuals may establish those criteria.

And then we have about maybe between five and eight scholarships, we call them foundress scholarships, and those are named after people who basically establish the foundation. So one example is the Tony (Name) scholarship. He is actually, that is how I got involved with the foundation. He was my great uncle. He was the principal for a number of years. So he passed away for a number of years now, but he was very passionate about education. It was a great advocate of students. So his scholarship, we try to award that scholarship to someone who is pursuing a degree in education and wants to become a teacher.

We have a whole variety of scholarships. Some of them, like I said, from family members of people who have passed away. Some of them are from scholarships that the foundation itself gives out. So yeah, it is kind of, again, it is a wide variety.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Adrienne, I noticed you have your hand up. You need to correct the number?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: I don't have to correct the number. I just want you to be aware that this process won't change the common application that has been created, but is the idea that the commission would use funds to establish a scholarship potentially to fund

somebody with a disability to go to college or a specific programming? We do have to remember that these funds have to benefit people with live disabilities as a whole.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Correct. With that guidance, we are looking at a student going into that type of a school. If you find on item 45. 44 talks about if you are a first generation college student. However, the next section is about what is your intended major. And within these categories there is a section for education. There is a section for engineering, health, math, public service. It gives you an idea of something this person is intending to study if it would then positively attribute to people who have disabilities. What it be something that would lift them up. If you give a scholarship to someone who wants to go into nursing, that would help people with disabilities. If we want someone who wants to go into public service. If we have a person who wants to write an essay about their interest in persons with disabilities, their history, or identifying as being someone with a disability, or that they have done community service and why and if that was to help people with disabilities, I think we need to be brought when looking at candidates. Go ahead, Kate.

>>: Do we think we would have something like, so like the name of it would matter, I think. That would kind of guide people to, okay, I don't know what you would call it, but the scholarship from the Commission for Persons with Disabilities. And then put a couple lines. Is that how it is, David? You name it and put a couple of lines of what kind of student were what you are looking to fund? And then we would review. Do they write letters? Do they write essays?

HOLLY SIMIONE: Before we get ahead of ourselves, just give me one more second, Katie. I am almost done with this document. I think it will make a little more sense if you can just go through what is here for data that is submitted. I went through briefly the categories of what the majors are. Then it talks about do you have a family member part of the PTA. Is there someone part of the school? A credit union. Have you been a member of Best Buddies? And then it talks about hardships. That would be something we have to decide.

My biggest concern is that we don't use things like financial situation, race, income, gender identity. That we don't use protected information to make a decision. That we are looking at someone in trying to understand what their goals are and what they have done and how it applies to helping persons with disabilities. I feel that if we were to look at a complete application and have any oversight or input back to the foundation on who we think should get these scholarships, that would be unfair of us. That would not be something we would do. I am trying to just click through the sections and how they can be helpful. We need to flesh out more on our side about what we are looking for in candidates, but what we need to do is agree to go through the Somerville High School Scholarship Foundation and decide on a dollar amount we would like to do. We need to at least establish that as something we are going to fund. We need to get the process behind the scenes started with Mr. Bean and we need to have another meeting to discuss the points of this application and what we are looking for. I feel we are going to

need a subcommittee of some group to go through these applications. Because what will happen, actually, I am getting ahead of myself. Let me just go through this application.

It asks about the schools they have applied to. It asks if you are interested in a health career, social services, aging and/or older adults. It asks them to describe their interest, focus, and experience with older adults. Have you chosen your specific education or career goals? They want to know how you manage yourself contributing to the campus community. Give examples of what you have demonstrated as pride within the school system. Talk about a situation you help someone or someone helped you and how that impact is. Write an essay about why you think you have earned a scholarship and what the strong reasons are for why you think you should have a scholarship.

And there are, items 65 has a very long list of specific scholarships. However, you do not need to indicate specific scholarship that you are looking for. It is a long list. And then it asks if your guidance counselor wrote you a letter of recommendation. That might be something we would have to talk more about with David. If us reading a letter of recommendation would reveal too much private work protected information. Again, I want to make sure we are looking at very specific aspects of an applicant and not taking into consideration other aspects of their lives. We are looking to see who is going to school and has previously or plans to continue to serve and make a positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities. They can be themselves disabled. You can't really ask them that unless they decide to give that information. But the goal is to be able to see who needs money and education so they can pursue jobs and goals that will help people with disabilities.

So I believe there is only 200 more pages here. They ask about grades. They ask about how long did it take you to complete this application. I am going to choose more than three hours. Forgive me, David. I know you need this information. The application itself has lots of areas I believe we can make good decisions about. I know Lian had a question. I know I interrupted Katie. Lian, do you want to ask your question now?

LIAN GUERTIN: This is Lian. I have about five questions that have come up in the course of this that I might remember some of. One thing is, at least my personal opinion is that I would highly prefer to prioritize funding students who are themselves disabled over students who are not disabled but are going into healthcare or such, maybe unless there is a very specific program they are going to that is known to be good at this. I don't want to be finding people that are going into healthcare with like a Savior idea and are not necessarily going to actually be great for the community. So I guess my first question is, you are talking about can't actually ask that because of protected information, but I know there are, like I believe there are exceptions to something like that for scholarships that are targeted at specific marginalized groups. So I would want to, I don't know the details of that, but I am fairly certain this is the case where we could ask something like that. So I would want to get the details from somebody who actually

understands the legalities and specifics of that so we are not thinking we can't ask for information that we could.

I think related to that, I guess this would be a question for David. A lot of these questions look like they are specifically targeted at individual scholarships. So it is sort of two part question. How much information to the students get when they are applying on what the different scholarship options are, and is it possible to get a question of hours added to the application that is targeted at our specific scholarship?

>>: Great question. To answer the first part of the question, I believe, I would have to double check this. So when they apply for a scholarship, they can check off the scholarships below. If you scroll back up there. So there's a list of scholarships. Now, that being said, a lot of our scholarships aren't even listed here. These are scholarships outside of our organization. So from the foundation's point of view, when they apply for a scholarship, we kind of go through and try to match them up based off of the application out of the scholarships. What scholarship do their credentials best match up with, and then award a scholarship based on that. The students are told, like you said, all these questions like are you a cheerleader, I can tell you that question was added because the foundation received money from a gentleman. His sister was a cheerleader way back when. He was like, I want this money to be awarded, I wanted to go to a cheerleader. A bunch of other credentials with it.

So that question was added for that specific scholarship. So you are right that some of these questions are targeted for certain scholarships. And the students are made aware of that when they apply. They say some of these questions seem a little bit specific. That is because there are certain scholarships to match up with. That being said, we could certainly work to have, if you wanted to add a question or two to the scholarship, we could certainly work with the guidance department to do that. That would be for next year though because the application already went live for this year. I think it was at the beginning of January or the end of December. Probably a few weeks ago it went live. It wouldn't take effect this year, but we can definitely work to have, if you wanted specific questions that were organization wanted to add, we could work to get those added.

LIAN GUERTIN: Who is doing the actual decision-making of the awarding of scholarships? Would we be part of that?

HOLLY SIMIONE: So there is the foundation. Then there is a separate group. I can't find their title.

>>: The selection committee.

HOLLY SIMIONE: So the applications come in and a separate group decides who is going to be selected and what scholarship based on that criteria. The foundation itself is separated from those decisions. We could give them an amount of money. We can say we would like you to spread this out. We would say we would like it to be five scholarships. The quantity we can certainly decide on. If we would like to be part of who

specifically receives those funds, which I think we should have a piece of, we would take a piece of, we would receive the application, only the parts we feel it is appropriate for us to know about. I don't think we need to know someone's income or other protected information. But I do think what their goals are, what they have done historically, what they want to do in school, and if they identify as being disabled in an area that is sort of free text, tell us about yourself and why. What challenges have you gone through? What has impacted your life? Those are the areas we would then look at.

So we would get a group of applications that the selection committee feels what meet our criteria that we would then review. We can also look at all the applications, but I'm not sure if that would be necessary. But we would then have the free text information that has been screened by the selection committee that then we as a subcommittee could look at and see if there are five candidates or attend candidates depending on what we decide to invest into this. We would have a decision as to who we feel is a stronger candidate based on their application. Does that make sense?

LIAN GUERTIN: Follow-up question. How many applications you typically receive? Is there any demographic information that you have collected on how many of those identify as disabled? Or is that not something that has been collected?

HOLLY SIMIONE: I do not... How many applications, David?

>>: It varies depending on the year. Sometimes I think it is around maybe 80 or 90. In that general vicinity. But again, it varies every year. As far as the disability question, I don't believe that information is collected anywhere on the application. I can say that I have served on the selection committee previously. And from the essay questions, I personally, this is my own opinion, I think that is probably the most helpful section because you can learn the most about the student from those essay questions. A lot of the ticket the box questions don't really tell you much about the student, but you really learn about them through their essay questions.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Henry, you had a question?

HENRY: Yeah. I have a couple of comments. So if I may have about five minutes, I will go through it quickly. Some of the things that I think we might want to consider subsidizing either through this program or in general would be assistive technology. When I injured my wrist, I was provided with Dragon Naturally Speaking so I wouldn't have to write notes or typed during meetings. Another thing that I know is a need is labeling things in braille. For providing braille transcripts for people to read. Mobility aids. Transportation. Now, in terms of scholarships, I absolutely do think that we should ask about people's financial status. I don't think we should be providing scholarships to millionaires. I do think we should provide scholarships to people who are homeless, to people who are indigent, and there's no way we're going to know that information unless that person volunteers it.

HOLLY SIMIONE: These are high school students though.

HENRY: If their parents are millionaires, we should be providing them scholarships instead of somebody who is an immigrant or a poor person? I don't think so.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I am not making a judgment or disagreeing. I want to make sure we are narrowing this funding to scholarships to high school students from our city who have applied for assistance. I mean, there is a question here about estimated family income. But my opinion is that that shouldn't matter. But I don't represent the voting commissioners. But I want to make sure that we are talking just specifically about giving assistance to people who are pursuing higher education who either have disability in their background, disability interest, disabilities themselves, or are pursuing jobs that would affect people with disabilities. I don't know, David, if we were to be given, let's say 10 applications.

HENRY: Excuse me, Holly. Can I continue, please?

HOLLY SIMIONE: It sure.

HENRY: Okay, thanks. You used the term protected information a number of times, Holly. I don't really understand what you mean by that. For instance, if we are providing scholarships, it is absolutely appropriate for us to provide scholarships to disabled persons or for persons who are doing things to help disabled people. It is absolutely appropriate for us to base part of that decision on financial need. That information is not protected from people who provide scholarships. I mean, it is entirely commonplace at every institution of higher learning I have ever heard of, that they provide scholarships and financial aid primarily based upon financial need. I also want to say that identity is intersectional. A person may be disabled and LGBTQ+ or they may be biracial or a person of color. They may be an immigrant. I think we should positively regard those other characteristics when we are talking about granting a scholarship. That that information, we may not require it, but we should ask for it and positively regard favoring those who would most benefit.

Now, I also have a follow-up question. And I just want to say when you are talking about protected information, institutions of higher –

HOLLY SIMIONE: Protected classes. Maybe that is what I should use as the term. Please continue.

HENRY: Okay. We absolutely should know who is in a protected class if they want to disclose that information. And we should positively regard those applications. Now, institutions ask for demographic information all the time. There is no legal reason not to do that. Now, my question is, to David, how is there accountability and lessons learned to follow up? For instance, if someone says, "I want to use my scholarship so I can become a medical professional and direct my practice towards aiding those with disabilities," how do we know that actually did that? How do we have metrics for success? And how is there support for people going forward? How do we interact with

them when they receive those monies? I will turn it back if the Chair or perhaps David would care to respond. Thank you.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I'm sorry. I didn't understand the last part of what you said. If you wouldn't mind repeating that.

HENRY: I am asking the Chair if they feel it is appropriate to permit to David to respond to my question.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I think it is fine for David to respond to your question. I just don't know if our debate about how this process should work is something David can answer to.

HENRY: My question is, how is there accountability and lessons learned?

HOLLY SIMIONE: David, do you have any response to that? I think that is a good question.

>>: That is actually a question that gets brought up at the condition a lot. We discussed what our rules should be. I can tell you what it used to be was, and we actually eliminated this rule four or five years ago, a student would need to show before they receive their money, they would need to show that they completed a semester of college. They would need to send us their grades. Not only was that an administrative burden, but it also prevented students who earned an award from utilizing that award if they needed the money to go to school by us not giving them their money until they completed a semester. We thought it really wasn't equitable to the student to do that. So we basically eliminated that requirement. The only requirement we have now is we believe what the students are saying on the application. That is why we take a full look at the application and try to learn as much as we can about the student. That is why I am saying those essay questions are just so important. To really learn about what drives them and what their passions are. And have they demonstrated that so far up to this point? Okay, they say they are interested in helping people, but their application shows they have only played football. How will they ever help? They are just saying something to sound good. We try to get a good understanding of that.

I will be perfectly honest. We do not follow-up to see whether two years from now they have changed their major or dropped out of college. We don't see that as our responsibility. We believe that they earned the award and their credentials and achievements and accolades from high school is what earned them their award. If what they said on the application is true, that is what earned them their award. We don't pursue other information after they receive the award.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Did you have another question?

LIAN GUERTIN: This is Lian. I had just a couple comments.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Okay. I wasn't sure. Forgive me. Go ahead.

LIAN GUERTIN: I just wanted to support what Henry was saying about I think if we are reviewing the applications ourselves rather than leaving it to the foundation, I think it is important to see the full application and not just a small subset of the questions. I think it is important to get a full picture of the student. And also just to comment on the –

HOLLY SIMIONE: Bless you.

LIAN GUERTIN: Just a comment on the follow-up. I just want to say in my own experience as a student getting scholarships, when I was in college it was enough work trying to do college. I would not have wanted to also deal with –

HOLLY SIMIONE: Katie, can you mute your background noise? I am sorry.

>>: Sorry. I didn't realize.

LIAN GUERTIN: Did actually do the things I said I was going to do on my college application would have been a giant burden and would be, especially for a lot of students with disabilities. I don't see the need to follow up with students about are you doing the things you said. I think that is also, especially if we are funding students who are themselves disabled rather than students who want to go into disability adjacent fields, then yes, we are giving you money to study however works for you. I don't see a need to be like are you studying the right way afterwards?

HOLLY SIMIONE: I think these are all valid points. I appreciate that everyone is bringing their comments, questions, and concerns forward. I also greatly appreciate David for coming here and answering questions. I would like us to put it to a vote. We do have a quorum. It looks like we have someone – okay, we have Pauline. That we will fund Somerville High School students with scholarships and that we will be using the Somerville High School Scholarship Foundation as the vehicle to manage that and also decide the dollar amount we will put towards scholarships this year. It will be the amount just for 2022 to 2023. If we were to amend our bylaws going forward, that percentage or certain amount each year would be contributed to the scholarship foundation, that would be something separate. My goal for tonight is to simply have a vote to agree that we will do scholarships. This is the vehicle. This would be the amount. After that we would need to debate further on what we would be doing in reviewing the applications and how the process would work. But we need to move forward with this is the path in this is the dollar amount. Because we have to start somewhere. Lian, do you have a question as it relates to –

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Can you see me?

HOLLY SIMIONE: Yes, Harriotte. Just like Lian go first. Henry has his hand up. But I promise I see you.

LIAN GUERTIN: This is Lian. Question relating to dollar amounts. First, both for David, is there a sort of standard range of what is awarded to each individual student? Or does it vary based on the different scholarships?

>>: At various. It is really up to the person or organization giving the money. It really depends on what you guys want to do. It is completely in your court. I could say that all of our scholarships are in the \$2500, 2000, \$2500 range. That doesn't mean it can't go more. Our organization is looking to take initiatives on our end to increase because I am sure you know the cost of college is going up and up and up. \$2000 or \$2500 is not what it used to be. It is completely up to you whether you wanted to give multiple \$2000 or one 2000 and or five. Anyway you slice or dice it is up to your organization.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Henry, I'm sorry. Harriotte.

LIAN GUERTIN: I had a second one. Is there a preference or is it completely up to the funders whether we are planning to give this amount each year, this meant this year, next year it might be twice as much, we don't know.

HOLLY SIMIONE: This can be a one and done, which I hope it isn't, where this can be something that the commission decides each year. So what we are talking about right now is something that what I need us to put to a vote is that we will fund scholarships, and this will be the vehicle that we work with, and this will be a dollar amount we are recommending that we are committing to this process. We can make 100 bucks for however many people. You can give whatever for every single applicant. We can do one large scholarship amount. We can break them up. All of those details we would discuss. But in order for us to start the process through the finance department and through the city, we need to agree and vote on that we are going to fund scholarships, this is the dollar amount, and we are going to work with this foundation. Once that happens, all of the debate about what we will see in the application and what we should ask for, and also how much we decide to give out individually. I am drawing a blank right now. On how we will have our name listed. All of those things. And who will decide. Those will absolutely be discussed and debated. But for tonight, I am sorry to feel like I am pressuring you, it is 8 o'clock. My goal was really to begin to get two things accomplished. Are we going to give scholarships? How much? It looks like Katie is saying yes to that. I have seen Katie throw some numbers up there. I like some of those numbers as well.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Can you read them to us, please?

HOLLY SIMIONE: Is short. I still had a quick question.

LIAN GUERTIN: I see from Katie in the chat, I would like to give at least 2000 to 5000. Can we say we will award up to \$20,000 to be divided up by the commission? And we would decide how much to give based on the number of applicants we want to fund. In the question I thought, is there a maximum amount we are allowed by the city to contribute before we have to start jumping through extra hoops? Or is this different than government such that we don't have to worry about that?

HOLLY SIMIONE: Depending on what we vote on and how we vote, the next step would be to have a meeting with finance, who has in the past worked with the

foundation for funding scholarships to understand what is the process, what is the paperwork we need to fill out to make sure that we make our request so that everything works together. Along with the business person from the foundation. So there's a lot of back work that will happen that I will make sure the commission is aware of. Maybe we will have someone join a subcommittee that we can work together on these meetings. This isn't a situation where we are going to vote on the money and a check is going to be handed over. This is to get us to commit funds we have discussed in the past or something we would like to fund. As far as selecting those candidates, that can certainly be debated. I have my opinions, but I don't represent everyone else's opinions. We all have comments. The commissioners have the ability to vote on how we do that. Harriotte, you had a question.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: I make a motion that we first simply vote that we are going to fund scholarships.

HOLLY SIMIONE: For anyone who can't see Katie because she is outside of the screen, she has two thumbs up and a very happy smile on her face.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Okay, good. I would like to separate these two. I would like to just say let's just vote number one, we are in agreement, the motion is we need to vote on it being an agreement as a commission to fund scholarships for the high school scholarship fund. Can we vote? Anyone second it for me? That is my motion. I can't vote, can I?

HOLLY SIMIONE: You made a motion.

LIAN GUERTIN: I will relate that motion as a voting member just in case there are any, I don't know if you are technically allowed to. Lian will motion to, motion that the commission will use the money collected from the traffic parking fines to fund scholarships for Somerville High School students –

HOLLY SIMIONE: Somerville High School Scholarship Foundation. SHFA. It is a long acronym. But yes. Okay, great. We have a first. May I have a second? Katie, we have a second.

>>: I second it. Sorry. I am trying to go back.

HOLLY SIMIONE: All those in favor, raise your hand and say Aye. We have three. Lian, Katie and myself. We have no other voting members. We have passed and will be using the Somerville foundation and sending scholarships to the high school. We have to make a boat on the dollar amount.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Am I allowed to make suggestions?

HOLLY SIMIONE: I need a first.

LIAN GUERTIN: I think we should discuss before we make motions.

HOLLY SIMIONE: We can make a motion. Then we debate. Then redo the second.

LIAN GUERTIN: Can we just have a discussion? Sorry, that is attacking my microphone. I think it might be easier to have a discussion without worrying about the details of procedure, but feel free to override me.

>>: Can be used the language "Up to?" Can we award up to \$20,000? Or do we have to have a specific amount?

HOLLY SIMIONE: I think for the city we also need to have a specific amount of what we are going to send it to them. Because the rules around how those requests through finance get funded are definite.

>>: So if we give a dollar amount, we can split it up anyway we want once we get the applications. If we decide there is four really great ones, we can give them each five each. Or if there is two, we can get each 10. Or if there's more. Can we do it that way, David? The dollar amount or the number?

HOLLY SIMIONE: We can do anything we want as far as how much, how many, and the choosing of the applicants.

>>: What are we deciding now?

HOLLY SIMIONE: We have to decide on what our criteria is for our decisions for who we would like to give these scholarships to. We also need to decide as a commission how we are breaking up those monies.

LIAN GUERTIN: This is Lian. I have a question for David. He might have a better idea than I do. I have vague numbers in my head for the cost of a private four year college. If someone were going to a community college or a two year program, what is sort of the average cost for that recently?

>>: I honestly do not know. I would just be pulling a number out of the air. I have a general idea of the four year colleges just from my own experience. Just the what is it up to now type thing. But I honestly don't know. I apologize about that.

HOLLY SIMIONE: That's okay. Lian, did you have a dollar amount in mind?

LIAN GUERTIN: So my thoughts from my own experience is the amount that feels like it is significant enough to sort of make the difference of, you know, is this going to change whether someone is able to go to college versus not is more up in the 10,000, maybe 5000 if they are getting multiple scholarships area. Again, I am not sure if I am way off board for someone going to a two year community college. I am thinking I would rather be, especially given that we have so much currently accumulated, and we haven't managed to actually work out the details for spending it on anything else, I am thinking we are in the 30,000 to 50,000. Between five and 10 scholarships of 5000 to 10,000. That would feel better to me than \$2000 scholarships.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I am going to make a motion that we agreed to fund with \$50,000 of our HP funding to the Somerville High School Scholarship Foundation. \$50,000 for the 2022-2022 application.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: I would like to make a motion that we fund \$80,000. I don't know all the things on the list. I just want to put it out there. Colleges are crazy.

>>: I will second that.

HOLLY SIMIONE: You will second that. Lian, do you think it should be different? I would say yes, I am in agreement.

LIAN GUERTIN: I was thinking 50 is enough to feel like it is significant, but a small amount to figure out what we are doing and how many applications are there actually that fit into it. But if other people are wanting more, I would be happy to support more.

HOLLY SIMIONE: So I have, I made the first motion. Katie made the second. We can vote if the three of us feel \$50,000 is appropriate. Where you certainly can disagree and suggest a different number.

LIAN GUERTIN: I thought someone else suggested a different number.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Harriotte had made a suggestion. So we have first, we have a second. All those in favor please raise your hand and say Aye.

LIAN GUERTIN: I am not sure what we are voting for at this point.

HOLLY SIMIONE: We are voting on procuring \$50,000 from HP funds to be sent to the Somerville High School Scholarship Foundation. At this time we are going to use \$50,000 and ask finance to process that for us. That is all we are voting on. We have three yeses. Thank you. So we have voted that we are going to work with the foundation. We have voted that we are going to put aside \$50,000 from our funds to go to the scholarship. So thank you, everyone, for your interesting debate and comments. Thank you very much, David, for making yourself available. I would like to add that this is the first piece of the process. Katie, I agree that we should all be clapping into saying wonderful things. I know that many of us on the call today have taken a very big interest in not only how we should use these HP funds, these parking funds that we have, and I know there is a whole a longer list. Henry mentioned some very important things we should consider funding. I was trying tonight to really have a laser focus on this one item because it is something that we had discussed. It is something I found a mechanism for us to do. It also had a time constraint.

I really appreciate everyone going through this process to get to this point. And then what will happen next is I will schedule a meeting with the city, with David and his team, and if anyone would like to be part of a subcommittee that will work on this project with me, happy to –

>>: Sorry, go ahead, Henry.

HOLLY SIMIONE: David.

>>: I just wanted to thank everyone for giving me their time tonight. I really look forward to working with all of you. I know my organization is very excited to work with you as well. I look forward to the future and seeing where this goes. I know what this money that you committed tonight will do so much to help. However you decide to divided, that is down the road, but that amount of money will make a difference to deserving students, and I am grateful for that and thank all of you.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Thank you. We appreciate your help. So did anyone have any interest in joining a subcommittee to get into the deeper weeds?

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: I would be happy to do that.

LIAN GUERTIN: What is the timeline of this?

HOLLY SIMIONE: So the applications have already been put in. Don't like the cat in. Sorry. I believe, when is the decision sent out? I feel like it is February.

>>: The decisions are made, we start reviewing the applications in March-April timeframe. By the very beginning of April. March is when we really take a look at those applications. So right now the application is alive. So they will be rolling in. Once the applications are received, we will receive them and be able to start going through them. Again, however your group decides, what you want to see, everything, anything, whatever you decide, our foundation will work with you to get that information that you need.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Thank you.

>>: Thank you. If there's nothing else, I will head out.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Thank you very much.

>>: I will see you later. Thank you, everyone.

>>: Thank you, David.

HOLLY SIMIONE: You should all know that I got connected to David, I reached out to find out who I could speak to on the high school scholarship foundation. I think it was a Friday. That afternoon I got an email back with a contact name. Actually, my phone number was given to the foundation and four hours later I had a phone call and a long conversation. That was Friday. And on Monday they put it to their board to vote if they would administer our funds. Or any other funds from any other groups that wanted to contribute to them. They made that decision yesterday. And they were thrilled, the foundation was thrilled that we had interest in contributing to their fund and also was more than happy to manage that whole process. Because the process of which you recruit, review, and actually distribute funds for scholarships is not something that either the city or us as a commission could take on. But again, this is the foundation that Mr. Bean recommended. I can't wait to let him know that we voted to fund some

scholarships. I heard Harriotte say that she would help on a subcommittee. We will report back to the commission knowing that it is March and they start to go through them. We are still going to need, I don't know how swiftly the city and process can manage these funds, but I am very happy today. Lian.

LIAN GUERTIN: Yeah. I think I could, I think, yeah, I could also be part of that subcommittee.

HOLLY SIMIONE: That is great. There is a lot of lifting. But I think between the three of us that is plenty. Again, we will make sure we give regular updates. Not, you know, of what is going on. Adrienne. My apologies. I skipped around the agenda. I want to make sure you have the time allotted that you asked for to go over your report. You said you were going to include goals for the commission and the ADA survey.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: A couple things. Housekeeping up front. I have gone ahead and emailed Ed and copied you, Holly, so it was fresh. And it will hit Ed's mailbox as soon as possible.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Thank you.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: So that is in there. The second thing I wanted to talk about is you all talk, or Holly talked about at length in December sort of ideas for a communication plan for the commission. Because this commission is under the guise of racial and social justice, we actually have our own public information officer. His name is Hawkin Brookes. He is a lovely man and great staffer. Holly, he would like to either have a conversation about you, your ideas, and what that looks like, or he is happy to come to the next commission meeting and have 15 or 20 minutes or so and talk.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I think that would be fantastic to have both.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Okay. Great. We will plan that out. The two things I wanted to focus on this evening is, and we didn't get to this, Holly, when you and I met with Commissioner Killick and Denis. That you each come up with at least three goals of things you would like to accomplish this year. I don't think that whole conversation can happen in the next 40 minutes, but if you wanted to take five or six minutes to start brainstorming, maybe we can have a bigger conversation in February. But these are three things that you all would like to focus on and potentially report on to city staff, the community, etc. I would suggest one of those things, once this gets off the ground, would be the scholarship you all just voted on. So if you all wanted to take five or so minutes to begin that conversation, I think that would be good.

HOLLY SIMIONE: It is 8:22. We have to go through. We cannot hang up the call until we go over the bylaws. So I am going to ask that we table discussion for the three goals. I think that is a very reasonable request. I also think it is great for us to have some goal setting. So we can certainly go over that in February.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Great. The other thing is that the department will be launching a Community Survey on accessibility and the ADA. When any city department launches a survey, it is not as simple as just putting a survey on a website and hoping people fill it out were putting copies in the library. We really as a department focus on outreach and meeting people where they are at. So I would like to work with this commission to create one or two outreach focused opportunities that the commission can help with once the survey is live. That can look like canvassing. That kid look like tabling somewhere where we can talk with folks and take them through the survey. That could look like almost being on the phone with folks who maybe need some assistance having their thoughts capturing the survey. Those are some things to keep on your radar. Hopefully a bigger conversation in February about what that would look like, whether a focused couple of events or ongoing things.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Okay. Anyone have any comments or questions for Adrienne? Okay. I am going to move us forward. We need to talk about our bylaws. I don't want to get the dates wrong, Adrienne. We had passed changes to the bylaws. They were specific to what was considered and also it was about allowing people, members, only require commission members to be residents when they were first appointed. That if they were to leave the city they could still remain as a commissioner. Unfortunately, there were no edits ever put into the bylaws. They weren't documented. But we do have the minutes that serve as a document that will be added into our bylaws. So right now the only saved version of our bylaws is from 2013. So we will be putting in those two changes into the bylaws. We were supposed to have a larger conversation about our bylaws in general.

The Massachusetts Office on Disability is the governing body. The state has appointed them as the governing body for all the commissions on disability within the state of Massachusetts. They follow the direction of the Department of Justice that requires from the federal government that we actually exist as a commission in each municipality. We get our direction from the feds to the state to the municipalities. And within that, they have a lot of training. We had Jeff Dugan on in the past, one of the leaders at MOD, Mass Office on Disabilities, talked about the built space, discrimination, disabilities and laws, and very clearly about what a Commission on Disability is charged with. They actually have bylaws on file that I would like to adopt. These are all the bylaws that meet the state requirements. It even calls out a specific laws. And what it really does is it enforces what the power and duties are of the commission. It also clearly talks about in the first article of the title and the purpose.

And I think clearly we have gone through this section on section 3 about members that I think our process is very similar. As well as officers and some what about meetings. But it goes through. Excuse me, it is interesting, Adrienne, because you mentioned the part about three goals. I do definitely believe in goals. It has a section about goals, what you would be doing, and how you would support the work of the commission. Just by example, one of those schools is to review grievance procedures and notifications of

rights. Surveying buildings. Assessing services for physical and communication accessibility and make sure that policies within the city are not discriminatory. So I believe I have sent this out, shared this document. I would be happy to display it now.

Harriotte and myself also looked at examples of current bylaws from Cambridge and Boston. And what I found interesting is that they don't call themselves Commissions on Disabilities. They say in their bylaws this is the Commission on Disability, and we will be further known as, and they are named as advisory councils. It is just a different set of terminology. They have some very clear bylaws that I think we are lacking. I know it is no one's fault on this phone or no one's fault in the city, but a lot has changed since 2013.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Excuse me, do you want to read some of that to us?

HOLLY SIMIONE: I am trying to think what the best way is to this. We have 30 minutes.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Holly, I am sorry. I am just trying to be clear, putting on my staff liaison hat for a moment. Are you trying to revise the whole entire bylaws in the next 30 minutes?

HOLLY SIMIONE: That would be magical if I could.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Please keep in mind you are missing one voting member who I am sure would like to participate in this conversation, although I can't speak for him. And that is quite a daunting task over the next 30 minutes.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I agree.

LIAN GUERTIN: This is Lian. I will just say that I would not be comfortable voting on changes of the magnitude that it sounds like you are talking about in 30 minutes without having a chance to actually read through things. I don't see anything you have sent out recently about the bylaws. So I have not reviewed that ahead of time.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: And if you are going to have a fruitful discussion, I will also need time to get whatever you may be proposing in terms of changes in language in braille for Pauline so she can have time to do that. And to Lian's point, I didn't see anything in terms of documents related to this meeting.

LIAN GUERTIN: I think discussions can happen now, I just don't think I would vote on anything as significant as that.

HOLLY SIMIONE: So just to clarify. We could never vote on the entire piece. However, what I am trying to find to share with you, which I believe should have been posted online, is what the MOD publishes as bylaws. And to your point, Adrienne, we have four voting members. It is unfortunate that Brian isn't here to vote on the scholarship fund either, but we still can vote based on having three members. I cannot find this piece of information. Here we go. Commissions on persons with disabilities. There should be event documents and agenda. Why do we have minutes?

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Are you going back to the website, Holly?

HOLLY SIMIONE: I am online right now. I am looking at our website to see the material.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: My point was, Holly, not to stop a vote for anything, but the magnitude of what you are trying to do is a lot within the timeframe. And number two, I don't think I saw when you sent the various documents to be posted to the email that I saw the MOD document for bylaws.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Okay.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Can I make a comment? This is Harriotte. In my understanding, what you are proposing is not to have a vote on the entire bylaws because they are not fully prepared, but I thought I heard you say a particular portion. If that is what you are recommending, I don't know. You are searching for a particular thing. And obviously we can't do the whole bylaws. We've got preparation to do. Is that accurate?

HOLLY SIMIONE: Correct. I am in a deep pause at the moment.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: I have found the sample bylaws from MOD. I am putting them in the chat.

LIAN GUERTIN: One other question that I am still unclear on after however long. Is there a standard place in the city for official bylaws to live? Is there some repository of this is the official bylaws that we need to be adding a new document? And if so, what is that place?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: That is to be at the City Clerk. Any time a commission updates their bylaws, it is sent to her and the website. It is archived there. Therefore, if anyone comes along and asked to see the current bylaws for the commission on persons with disabilities, somebody should be able to pull that up.

PAULINE: This is Pauline. May I ask a question?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Pauline, you may, but I believe Lian was finishing their thought.

PAULINE: Go ahead. I'm sorry.

LIAN GUERTIN: I think once, possibly twice in the time I have been here, we have voted on updating the bylaws. I have never actually seen an updated copy.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: The issue here is because there is the copy I have and probably It appears that a lot of people that came before Holly have a scanned document of the last time they were presumably updated, which was 2013. So as of right now, myself as a staff liaison/ADA Coordinator and Pauline, possess the editable Word document of those bylaws, which is why those edits weren't able to be made when you made those changes So there's a couple ways to solve that problem, which I

talked to Holly about. She can speak to Bonnie and/or Colin to see if they have a document. More someone can volunteer to redo them in and editable format.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Crystal, you had a comment.

>>: The last time the commission went through and worked on the bylaws, I transcribed them myself into a Google document. I can find that a Google doc and share it in the chat, if that would be helpful.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I am failing at screen sharing. I can see this tiny little box at the top with the document. Katie, is that why you have that look on your face like I do? Why the heck is that? I don't know why I can't make it bigger.

LIAN GUERTIN: From here it looks like it is screen sharing fine.

>>: For me it is a small because am typing at the same time. You guys are in the corner. I can't see anything very well.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I can't even see it full screen. What does it look like to you, Adrienne or Crystal?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: I can see your window. Then I see all of the Mac stuff. The tabs or however Safari organizes.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Adrienne, do you mind sharing the document?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: I can. Thanks, Henry, for putting this in the chat. This is the July 2013 version. This is not the updated. This is the scanned ancient copy I have been speaking about.

LIAN GUERTIN: I definitely remember seeing it. I am probably thinking of the Google doc that Crystal was talking about. I definitely remember seeing that. Did that editable or edited one ever make it to the City Clerk?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: I wasn't aware until this point that that existed. But that would be helpful.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I have the 2013 version we all can see in the link that Henry shared. I also have the minutes in my notes of what we voted on to be amended and those bylaws. Crystal, you are going to send me that version. I can verify it against what is on paper and make those changes and then submit them to the clerk. So at a minimum, we will have the changes in place that we voted on and accepted. Was it –

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: July 2022, I believe.

HOLLY SIMIONE: July. We can check the box on that. What I am saying is this document is bylaws. They are based on the Massachusetts General Law as well as the Rehab Act of 1973 and also what the AAB board and ADA, all of which govern what we do, as well as other laws. This isn't anything that we have created on our own. Not to say that we can create our own bylaws. So we are on that first page. I am just going to

describe what we are looking at. Article 1, title and purpose, which is where we have the name of our commission, what city we serve, and the purpose of these bylaws is to establish our principles and procedures for the governance of this commission. And there is another little read document. I think I need to sit at a massive table with little piles lined up to be efficient. I apologize. I do not have a large desk or even a table. What I am trying to put in front of me is our bylaws. Forgive me for a moment. I don't think we can screen share two documents.

>>: I don't think so.

>>: This is Crystal. If I can interject for one second, I put the link to the Google doc I typed up into the chat. There are a few suggested edits in the Google doc of what I tried to capture from the February meeting last year of what was voted on, but I did not capture everything, which is part of why it did not get disseminated to the commission, I believe. There are a couple typos that I tried to correct. But I typed it up as it was and put anything I was suggesting, even if it was just a grammar edit or a misspelling as a suggestion in green so that you would have the original. Or at least that is my recollection from a year ago.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Thank you. I just opened this up. It is exactly what I was looking for. I also have it here on paper. Okay. I am trying to think of the way to logically do this in the next seven minutes and 22 seconds. Because we are at a disadvantage because we all don't have the original, and we all don't have the MOD version, although it is displayed, and some of us needed to be read to us. You know what I think I should do? I think I should call a special meeting just to look at bylaws and make sure that all the documents are sent out and have time for braille. That we find a time that we can meet as the full commission. Because I don't think it is fair for me to try to disseminate this information without having it physically in front of each of us or available in a way that we can access it.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Sounds good. This is Harriotte. Sounds really good to me.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I had high hopes for today. But I must say I am very proud we have made a movement with the HP fund.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: You can do a special meeting, Holly, or you can form a subcommittee to do an initial review of the bylaws in comparison to the MOD template and suggestions and then bring those suggestions to a chunk of meeting time in February and have a bigger discussion then. Because right now, based on what we talked about that agenda potentially has some stuff for me, which shouldn't take much time. You will have Mobility present for 20 minutes or so. What I am saying is that right now you have the privilege of time because that agenda hasn't been fully set yet. It is up to you what you would like to do.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I appreciate your comments. I agree with them. Okay.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Thank you, Crystal, for having that. That is extremely helpful.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Yes, thank you very much, Crystal. Lian, you had a question.

LIAN GUERTIN: I was going to say what would be most helpful for me at least would be to have sort of a plan before we leave today on what is going to happen before next month's meeting so we are all on the same page, whether that is try to review X and Y document so we can have that discussion start from there, or is someone planning on doing a first pass of potential edits just to we know what to expect and are prepared.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I was unclear in the beginning if you were referring to future things for the February meeting or if you were talking specifically about the bylaws. I think you have clarified for me, please let me know if I am not correct, they were talking about the bylaws. What we will do between now and February.

LIAN GUERTIN: If we are moving the bylaws discussion to February, how do we make sure we are ready to have that discussion in February?

HOLLY SIMIONE: So in my pile on my lap is our version. I am holding up our version of the bylaws from July 9, 2013. I also have a copy of the Mass Office on Disability bylaws. And I have what Boston and Cambridge have for bylaws. And I also – yes, that is this piece here. So looking at those four documents, I think that anyone who would work on this as a subcommittee would be comparing those and making recommendations of what they would add into ours as well as what we may decide to change that is in this. So just by example, look at the MOD bylaws, there is a line that says... We may have something very similar.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Holly, this is Harriotte. Since we have so little time left, candy commission make a choice about a special meeting in a week or 10 days? Then we will ideally have time, all of us, to read through at least the 2013 and the Google doc. I don't know about plowing through both of the others. That kind of thing. Just so we can leave the meeting securely knowing, okay, this group of people will review it or we have some procedural way of working on it. That is what I hope we can decide now.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Absolutely. Let me just finish because it is sort of a simple explanation of what is in the bylaws with the Mass Office of Disability and what is in ours that is only based on things that existed in July 2013. You look under powers and duties, or purpose, there is a specific item about, we don't even have the same columns, that says under powers and duties of the commission is to file an annual report which will be printed in this city and town report. We do not have that in our bylaws. However, that is actually a requirement of the commissions for persons with disabilities is to file an annual report. We can certainly debate if that is something we would like to have in our bylaws. That is something that is currently a requirement of the commission since we had our bylaws updated in changed in 2013. That is a simple example something that I feel we should put in because in the last 10 years that has become part of what we are expected to do, to file those annual reports as a commission with the city.

But again, that would need to be discussed, voted, and accepted. There are things that are much more detailed that we may choose not to put in our bylaws. But I do agree, Harriotte, that we need to have a plan, look at what we have, look at what the state has, and what those other two, Boston and Cambridge, have it. Who would like to join a subcommittee to review these documents? Harriotte. That's fine. It can be Harriotte and myself to review them. Harriotte, did you say you thought we should set up a time for a special meeting before February?

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Yes. Yes, I do think so. And also, the timeline, Pauline, in your experience, and Holly, in your experience, how long does it take for, I don't know if we use the National Braille Press or how we get things printed. I do know that the Boston Public Library has a printer. I think even our local Somerville library may have a braille printer. Does anyone –

ADRIENNE POMEROY: So we have been printing for Pauline via Perkins Library, Harriotte.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: I know that. I was suggesting that perhaps there is a more efficient and cheaper way to do it. That's all. Thanks.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Currently our public library does not have a braille printer that is still in process. That was part of the budget this year.

HOLLY SIMIONE: So we did get the money. It is just a matter of getting the proper paperwork and bids and a decision made through the city on how to spend those funds. But in the interim, it is a good question that Harriotte is asking. Adrienne, is there an alternative that we can get those turned around quicker?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: I will check with Boston Public Library to see if their turnaround is any quicker than Perkins.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Are we paying a fee for these services?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Yeah.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Would you mind, Adrienne, if I also checked with the National Braille Press?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: I had done an initial quote when Pauline made this request, and they were pretty skyhigh.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Okay.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Can you just quantify what we pay now and what you have seen for other quotes?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Perkins charges us nine to \$10 for every agenda. For every word document page it prints about three pages in braille. They charge as per page of braille. If there is something they have to redo or change, there's 50 or a dollar extra.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: It would be like 50 pages of documents, wouldn't it?

HOLLY SIMIONE: They are not that lengthy.

PAULINE: Try 60. Just to go a little bit more. I would try 60. There is an awful lot of, I don't know how print is laid out, but sometimes there seems to be an awful lot of blank space.

HOLLY SIMIONE: My apologies, Harriotte. You were talking about how many pages of output or how many pages are sent in to be transcribed?

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: They are going to charge us, if I understood correctly, they are going to charge us \$0.50 a page, it will bulk up to three or four pages.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: We are charged for output.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Understood.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: We are charged by each braille page 9 dollars plus.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Not nine dollars plus. It is per page.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Remember they said formatting \$0.15 or something more?

ADRIENNE POMEROY: As long as the document, I'm learning, is as Plain Text as possible, meaning in a Word document. Meaning they don't have to take a PDF or PowerPoint and break it down, that helps with the cost.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: There is a distinction between Plain Text and Word document.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Correct.

HOLLY SIMIONE: There is probably a distinction too between a PDF format. Extraction reasons is my guess. So you are both going to take a peek at what we can do for a faster turnaround. What I will do today is blind copy the commission on these four documents that I have just so everyone has them. Harriotte and I will find a time to start reviewing these. Then we will find a time if we can schedule a meeting before the next February meeting or possibly just a separate meeting just to go through these bylaws. Maybe that is what we need to do.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Can I just ask, anyone can join us if they want to, right?

HOLLY SIMIONE: Yes, they can. They know how to reach us.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: I'm sorry. I spoke over somebody. Go ahead.

LIAN GUERTIN: This is Lian. I don't know that I would be able to attend a special full meeting or a special meeting of the commission. I think if we are able to do whatever sort of prep work in between but then have the full commission discussion at the February meeting, that would be my preference rather than trying to schedule another meeting before hand. Just putting that out there.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I appreciate your feedback.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: Excuse me, this is Harriotte. I think we said Holly and I will work on it and we will do it as a group, as a commission in February.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I think what I also said is if we come it would take a large chunk of time to go through this once we have the information to share as far as voting and reviewing it. And that it may need another meeting. I think what we should do for now is we have action items for two different people to find if we can get braille, if we can have these brailled sooner than a month or three weeks so we make sure everyone has access to them. I will make I send these to everyone blind copied tonight so you have copies as well. And then Harriotte and I will start working on pulling out what we think is useful based on when we can get all the materials out to everyone. We will decide on if I want to recommend a special meeting in addition or if I want to dedicate the February meeting to that. I guess it also will have a bit to depend on where we are with the HP funds as they relate to the Somerville High School project, the foundation there.

So lots of competing items for time. It is 8:57. I just want you to know, Kate, you still look wide-awake. You may not feel it on the inside, but I can tell you you look very wide-awake.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: I am grateful to you, Kate.

>>: You haven't seen the minutes yet.

HOLLY SIMIONE: That's okay. We always have CART notes and live transcript to reference it. Lian, you want to add a comment?

LIAN GUERTIN: One more logistical question before we finish. For the scholarship stuff, since I volunteered to do subcommittee stuff for that, who is a court is the ball in? Should I be expecting to hear from you at some point? How is that working? In terms of going next.

HOLLY SIMIONE: As Adrienne said, she sent a note off to Mr. Bean in finance and copied me on that. Part of my uniqueness is that I have really bad dyslexia. The only way I can remember things sometimes is associating them by something physical or s remember. And Mr. Bean is a fantastic resource and committed worker. He does a great job at what he does. I am in no way tryin but his name is Mr. Bean. There has been in the past people who talk about being counters, people who come to beings, and he is the head of finance. I am telling you I can remember the head of finance because his name relates to people who count beans for finance. My degree is in business. I have been called a be encounter many times. I don't say it to offend him or judge him in any way, but I really like Mr. Bean. I think that if you met him he would feel the same way. He works really hard for us. He has done a lot of fantastic things. A lot of hard work behind the scenes along with Adrienne and others in the city, especially working on the HP funds. We would not have the funds that we have, let alone the amount we are able to get to the high school scholarship foundation, if it weren't for Mr. Bean and

Pomeroy and others in the city. So thanks. I forget where I was even going. So the email went out. I will make sure that we figure out next steps. I will keep you informed.

HARRIOTTE RANVIG: This is Harriotte. I think what you might have been referring to is that you and I agree to be on a subcommittee, if we need to have a meeting with Mr. Bean perhaps or have anything to do with the finances. That will be coming down the pike once Mr. Bean reviewed what we want to do.

HOLLY SIMIONE: There was some training we had about the process, but basically we need to reach out and have him get back to us and let us know the next steps.

LIAN GUERTIN: Mostly I just want to wait for them waiting for someone to reach out to me.

HOLLY SIMIONE: That you don't have a deliverable this moment in time. You are good. Your commitment is your deliverable. I appreciate that very much. Thank you, Henry, for being here today. I appreciate all of your comments. I'm sorry. I know we didn't have enough time. You probably had more to say. I am sorry that we didn't have time for all of it. We will have more meetings.

ADRIENNE POMEROY: Crystal has her hand up.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Hi, Crystal.

>>: Hi, this is Crystal. They/them, actually. I wanted to say that when I attend the commission's meetings I try to live tweet or live social media post when I can. I had two meetings at the same time tonight, so I tried to do both, so it is not complete as I would normally do, but if it would be helpful for the notes process, I would be happy to, I don't see how to share anything in the chat other than to everyone, but am happy to share my email in the chat. If you want to email me, I can give you the link to the thread.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Thank you. The more you would like to contribute for communication purposes, greatly appreciated.

>>: My email is k_milton@hotmail.com and I will do my best to put the information together. Thanks.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Okay. It is 9:02. I think with that we are going to adjourn. I am going to motion to adjourn. We need a second.

LIAN GUERTIN: I will second. But before things close out come I just want to check Katie or whoever else is going to be putting notes together, you might want to grab the transcript of the captions now so you have it immediately instead of waiting for it to be posted. I have it up somewhere.

HOLLY SIMIONE: Can you save it?

LIAN GUERTIN: If I can manage to copy the link, I can throw that in the chat.

HOLLY SIMIONE: I have it. I can send it.

LIAN GUERTIN: And with that, I will second the motion to adjourn.

HOLLY SIMIONE: All in favor? Aye. Three. Thank you, everyone. We are adjourned. It has been a pleasure. Happy New Year.

(Ended at 9:02 PM ET)