



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT of RACIAL and SOCIAL JUSTICE
KATJANA BALLANTYNE, MAYOR

COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

9 July 2024

Regularly Monthly Meeting

Staff Liaison:

Adrienne Pomeroy, ADA Coordinator

Commissioners:

Holly Simione, Chair
Sheila Tracy, Treasurer
Pauline Downing
Helen Corrigan
Laurie Brandt
Murshid Buwembo
Mike Shaps
Nick Altschuller
Ingrid Schneider
Deborah Haber

Not Present:

Harriotte Ranvig, Vice Chair
Brian C. Postlewaite, Director of Engineering
Ginny Alverson
Frank Lee

Guests:

Leiran Biton, Ward 7 School Committee
Luisa Oliveira, Director of Public Space and Urban Forestry

CART Provider:

Cindy Thompson, Partners Interpreting

Roll Call, Welcome, Read Agenda: Holly Simone

Treasurer Communications: Sheila Tracy

FY25 City Budget

a. Larger discussion will be next month, August 2024

Monthly Parking Fines Fund Report

Motion: Chair Simone – Allocate \$10,000 for book purchases for various uses.

Second: Nick A.

Discussion: Helen: Have all the scholarships been paid out? No. Mike: What is the point? To have a separate fund for education purposes. Murshid: My concern is why books? To purchase books to distribute residents and for other uses. A way to track and use our funds. Murshid: Shared ideas for types of books. We would like our book budget to be separate. Nick: It may be clearer if we say educational options.

Favor: 9, Not in Favor: 2, motion passes.

Public Spaces and Urban Forestry (PSUF) Discussion – Accessible Swings; Luisa Oliveira

Luisa Oliveira introduced herself and her department. Holly Simone shared how the SCPD came to be based on the state statute and the APFF uses and how that fund works.

1. Swings

We are 100% on board with adding more swings to the parks. All of our playgrounds have safety inspection protocols. We cannot install swings without looking at these things. We have to make sure that the right swing is being hung on the right hardware. We would like to put 1 swing in every ward. If we know that there is a family with children with a disability, can we put one in their neighborhood. It makes the most sense. There is a bit of process but would like to start that process with this group.

Holly talked about the use of a “Jenn Swing.” And the work of the SCPD with DPW so far.

Luisa discussed the inspection process and the CPSI report in order to ensure equipment is safe. Playgrounds are inspected during design. The maintenance of playgrounds is part of DPW.

Holly discussed current inventory of accessible swings at area parks.

The group shared experiences and questions around this topic.

2. ADA + Design Process

- Luisa continued to discuss the park design process and how the ADA plays a role.
- Luisa proposed a project group with PSUF staff and SCPD to start this process and how to close the gap between the ADA and the needs of the community.
- Adrienne clarified procurement process.
- The group shared questions and suggestions for accessibility.

Disability Pride Month Updates

- Mike volunteered a flag to keep the original date of 7/11/24. Holly went over the items ordered and other events.
- Holly will be reaching out to folks to schedule shifts.

Motion to Adjourn: Chair Simone

Second: Sheila Tracy

Approved, meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm