



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT of RACIAL and SOCIAL JUSTICE

KATJANA BALLANTYNE, MAYOR

COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

11 February 2025

Regularly Monthly Meeting

Staff Liaison:

Adrienne Pomeroy, ADA Coordinator

City Staff:

Officer Edna DaCosta, Somerville Police Department

Sergeant John Gobiell, Somerville Police Department

Leonor Galindo, Department of Racial and Social Justice – Notetaker

Commissioners:

Holly Simione, Chair

Harriotte Ranvig, Vice Chair

Sheila Tracy, Treasurer

Pauline Downing

Helen Corrigan

Laurie Brandt

Murshid Buwembo

Mike Shaps

Deborah Haber

Associate Commissioners:

Frank Lee

Not Present:

Nick Altschuller

Ingrid Schneider

Ginny Alverson (Associate Commissioner)

Members of the Public:

Silvia Bravo

Nicole Cannon

CART Provider:

Deb Brown, Partners Interpreting

Roll Call, Welcome, Read Agenda: Holly Simone

Meeting Norms: Harriotte

Treasurer Communications: Sheila Tracy

Chair Simone- Introduced Edna Costa from Somerville Police Department

Chair Simone- Asked Harriotte to talk about Item 4

Item 4: Braille Embosser Training: Harriotte

Vice Chair Harriotte raised the embosser training is still in the works for RSJ, mentioned working with Perkins as well on items relating to the embosser.

Chair Simone- also raised concerns on the embosser and its future use within the city, particularly when talking about infographics or pictures included in reports that are difficult to

emboss. Mentioned 3D maps used in Spain for those who cannot see. Raised continuing to request the use of Alt-Text for these images if they are necessary to the information being presented in reports.

COHR

Edna Costa and John Gobel presented on the work they do within the community, offered insight into what they do. Trying to network with communities and populations to see how they can best help these communities. some kids use the books that were given by the SCPD commission.

Item 5: Commissions and Boards

Chair Simone- Report sent to members on terms, where they sit now. Asked the following members whether they would like to be considered for re-appointment:

- Deborah, Sheila, Harriotte, Holly and ___ shared their reasons for wanting a re-appointment.
- Put to a vote, 8 yes, 1 abstain. Motion Passed

Reasonable Accommodations-

Commission had a discussion regarding reasonable accommodations during commission meetings.

Letter to Land Use Regarding Parking minimum amendments:

Discussed letter that was sent and stated that there should always be accessible parking spots available. October 15th letter was sent. Another meeting in November, not a public meeting. Went back through city council meeting minutes, trying to find materials of Tracking 241197 is not something commission would ever execute. It passed unanimously one member of city council was not present. City Council is interested in working with SCPD and finding solutions in how to ensure ADA parking is still a requirement for new buildings being built in the city.

Event Update:

Michael has secured a speaker for the event; Holly has an invoice. Commission then put the invoice to a vote to approve allocating commission funds for the invoice. Advertise event in all languages and include language for requesting translation if desired. No Vote was taken.

Treasurer Updates:

In January 2025, commission received 9,399.69. 8600 was in fines and fees, \$800 in interest no expenditures. Otherwise typical month still trending. Looks like we will bring the same amount of money as last year.

Somerville Bike Network Plan

Chair Simone- Report is dated 2023 but came up as an email. On page 4 it states, "many thanks to all who participated in the creation of this plan". Under committees SCPD is listed, I do not recall working on the creation of this bicycle network plan. We have asked to be included in the planning of these, things like Somervision 2040 etc. This plan was reviewed as part of legislative documents by the Chair. SCPD is mentioned again in the report. Commission discussed the bike plan and how there should have been more input from Commissions. Treasurer stated that having the commissions name on the plan looks as if the commission approved the plan and they did not.

Michael reminded the chair that no vote on the previous item had been taken.

Chair Simone- made a motion to vote on the invoice for \$1500 for the event speaker to provide a workshop: healing together supporting mental health at home for May 2025.

Michael seconded the motion.

Vote: 9 ayes, motion passed.

3 members left the meeting at 9:00pm, meaning the group was no longer in quorum and not allowed to vote on any items.

Chair Simone- motion to adjourn, all in favor voted aye

Meeting adjourned at 9:20pm.