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Minutes: Somerville Commission for Persons with Disabilities 10/21/2026

Recording and transcript materials can be found for more information about meeting discussion

In attendance:

- Holly Simione (chair) – PRESENT
- Nicole Cannon - PRESENT
- Sheila Tracy - PRESENT
- Elyse Best – PRESENT
- Helen Corrigan – PRESENT
- Jess Adams – PRESENT
- Mary Otiato – PRESENT
- Katie Andalcio – PRESENT
- Jessika Resendes – PRESENT
- Danielle O'Hearn - PRESENT
- Jason – PRESENT – removed for misconduct
- Ingrid – PRESENT
- Nickalt Schuller – PRESENT
- Joe Lynch – PRESENT
- Niki Aurora - PRESENT
- Pauline – Waiting
- Harriotte – Waiting
- Phoenix – Waiting

In attendance for Mayor's Office: Alaya Killgoar, Mayor's Office

Meeting Opened 6:09pm

1. Roll Call, Welcome, Read Agenda: Holly Simione 6pm

2. Reminder of Robert's Rules and recommendations for respectful and caring communication: Harriotte Hurie

Harriotte not in attendance. Holly gave a general overview.

3. Meeting Minutes

1.September 9th Draft Minutes.

Tabled

4. Accessible Planning and Zoning Maps Discussion; Alaya Killgoar, Mayor's Office (15 minutes)

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- Alaya shared Brenna's notes regarding the city's ask for guidance from the commission. The following feedback was shared.
- Holly - noted that the two members who are blind are not present and this project would benefit from their input. In Holly's experience physical models with different ridges and textured, different sized labels tend to be helpful for visually impaired people. She recommends the city look to the Boston Center for Independent Living, the Center for Human Design, and the Carlson Center for the Blind while researching.
- Sheila – The city should present to SCPD when choosing between options. Recommends having two options, braille and a second option.
- Mary – be wary of the braille, very few people read it. Seconds recommendation of Center for Human Design, Carlson Center for the Blind
- Danielle – alt text is also good for maintaining accessibility for other folks
- Holly – Images on city website especially need alt text. Does city council have copies of the agenda in braille outside of council meetngs? Alaya stated Brenna will look into this further.

5. Accessible voting – the red book Embossed Copies

- Holly - Can notes about accessible early voting be closer to the top? The city's October 15th message did include ADA accommodations and visual impairment accommodations.
- Noted that the city's Elections webpage has information towards the bottom and thinks it should be higher up on the page.

6. HP Funds Discussion and Possible Vote

• All Ages and All Abilities Inclusive Dance Class, Holly Simione

- Ingrid motioned to vote for $200 budget for snacks and drinks.
- Motion Passed.

• Straps for Inclusive Swings, Niki Aurora

- Feedback was given to Niki –
  - Messaging from the city and signage at the parks regarding availability would be helpful
  - the idea of gifting straps to families is nice but it might add a burden to families who have to bring an additional object to the park with them.
  - Commission recommends the city look for a way to have the straps available at the parks.
  - Commission shared a reminder that accessible paths to swings is an ongoing issue.

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- Niki clarified this is an idea to partially address concerns formerly brought up during previous meetings. They will go to PSUF for further guidance on the topic and report back to the commission.

7:16 Break until 7:30 PM

6. HP Funds Discussion and Possible Vote (cont.d)

• Accessibility Measurement Tools, Elyse Best

- Elyse is taking Community Access Monitor (CAM) Training - a workshop regarding accessibility measurement tools. She wants to propose giving people access to a starter measuring kit.
- Sheila motioned to approve expenditure of $1,500 for those who have completed the training.
    - Motion Passed.

7. Discuss Draft Letters and Possible Vote

• Letter to Mayor, Elyse Best

Tabled

• Letter in Support of Inclusive Schools, Jess Adams

Tabled

8. Crip Camp movie showing at TAB Council on Aging space

Tabled

9. Treasurer's report: Sheila Tracy

Revenue: $8.2 K

Expenditures: $25 K in scholarships. Another $10 K expected as 2 more scholarships will go out.

10. SCPD Group Projects Discussion, Holly Simione

- Holly proposed 4 groups be formed to address the following topics
    - Parks
    - Housing
    - Commissions Website
    - Emergency Management
- Alaya asked for commission to address ask for Permitting Process Accessibility Checklist and Accessibility Audit of Parks/Event sites. Holly clarified this would be included under Emergency Management group purview.

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- Holly asked the commission to think about which groups they'd be interested in joining and let her know offline.

11. Transportation needs for persons with different disabilities – Nicole Cannon

Tabled

12. Kennedy Inclusive Playground and Elm Beacon Connector project current safety issues for parents and students, Holly Simione

Tabled

13. Housing Strategy to Increasing the number and sizes of affordable and Accessible units in Somerville, Holly Simione

Tabled

14. ADA Transition Plan Update

Tabled

15. Mobility request for input on future designs

Tabled

16. Chairs Report/Updates: MAAB Variances, SCPD Website, SCPD Email, Public Records Requests, Emergency Management

- Holly announced training for next week. Brenna will check if the training is subject to open meeting law. The training will be recorded.
- Next meeting is scheduled for November 11th. She reminded the group of the need to make sure the commission meets the 10 meetings per year requirement.

Ingrid motioned to end the meeting.

Meeting closed 8:11 PM

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