

**Commission for Persons with Disabilities
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 2, 2019, Room 319
6:00 PM**

Present: Committee Chair Elanah Sherman (teleconferencing), Vice-Chair Kevin Harkins, Cynthia Litton, Mark Marcy, Kevin Saythany

Absent: Laurie Messore, and Lottie Scott

Others Present: Brigid Marks, City ADA Coordinator

Call to Order: Elanah called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Determination of Quorum: It was determined a quorum was present (5/7).

Approval of Minutes: On a motion from Kevin H, seconded by Cyndi, the April Meeting Minutes were approved as presented unanimously.

Citizen Comments: None.

Communications: None.

Old Business

Commission Vacancies: No update

Charging Stations - NPU Speaker Date: No update (NPU speaker at June 6 meeting.)

Westgate Shopping Center - Update: Deanna Rhodes, City Planner, told Elanah she will keep informed on this issue and update Elanah.

Brown Park Conditions (pavement and fumes): No news yet on short-term remediation date. Elanah reported that she has not yet found a way that fumes can be controlled from outdoor cookers at festivals. According to DEEP and building department, temporary set-ups, as at festivals, do not have to meet the same standards as indoor, permanent locations (like restaurants). Only overview is provided by Fire Marshal, who ensures that placement does not create risk of fire. Elanah will call Fire Marshall before next Commission meeting to discuss if placement can have an effect on fumes.

By-laws: Bylaws draft was distributed by email previous to meeting and hard copy at meeting. Elanah said that sections of the document that remain confusing are not amendable because they are taken directly from the City Charter. New by-laws will be voted on at June meeting.

New Business:

Disability Awareness Week: Bonnie advised Kevin that the City wants to celebrate the 2019 Disability Awareness Week from October 7th- 12th so it will not fall on Columbus Day week. The group concurred.

Janet Hawkins contacted Elanah on behalf of Stuart Hawkins, a speaker on special needs trusts from last year. Even though the presentation last year was not a draw, Janet wants to do another in 2019. Members decided to explore alternative venues, like The ARC and – Kevin H's idea - public access TV. Elanah will discuss with Janet.

Elanah reported that she and Kevin H. explored with the minister of Park Congregational a workshop on access to places of worship. (Although there is a religious exemption in ADA Title III, this is still an issue for people with disabilities.) Elanah sees the event as a panel including local religious leaders and congregants. Members liked the idea. Elanah and Kevin H. will pursue further before the next meeting.

Elanah said that, instead of the failed resource fair of last year, the Commission should consider having a single table (on one day) in the Otis atrium with material from local organizations; she also suggested having the municipal roundtable at the Senior center rather than at Otis. Brigid suggested starting publicity for the week earlier so we get more attendance.

Upcoming National Census: Bonnie from the Mayor's office invited Elanah to be on a municipal committee organized to ensure an accurate, inclusive census count in Norwich. Members agreed that the Commission should be involved. Elanah will keep the Commission informed.

Planning Department Grant Application for New London Turnpike Improvements: Elanah wrote a letter at the request of the Department supporting a grant for improvements to New London Turnpike. The project will involve installation of new sidewalks and traffic signals. Elanah said she gained a commitment that the signals would be audible. Cyndi commented that such signals are often confusing because they mimic the warning sound of trucks backing up. Elanah suggested that this issue be brought up with Planning at a future Commission meeting.

Adjournment: On a motion from Cyndi, seconded by Kevin S., the meeting adjourned at 6:51 PM. The next meeting will be at 6 PM on Thursday, June 6th, 2019 at Norwich City Hall in Room 319.

Meeting Minutes taken by Ivery Stakley and revised by Elanah Sherman