

**Harvard Commission on Disabilities
Meeting Minutes 2/16/2022**

Zoom Meeting:

Meeting ID: 839 3053 3483

Passcode: 060965

Called to Order at 4:00pm by Davida Bagatelle

Present: Davida Bagatelle, Toni Spacciapoli, and Susan Tokay

Guest: Sarah Nechamen, Outreach and Training Specialist with the [Disabled Persons Protection Commission](#) (DPPC)

Town Employees: Julie Doucet, Tim Bragan

Approval of January 19, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Presentation by Sarah Nechamen, an Outreach and Training Specialist with the [Disabled Persons Protection Commission](#) (DPPC). She discussed the process involved in the department's [reporting hotline](#) of suspected abuse by caregivers of disabled persons. The department investigates the suspected abuse and makes suggestions for services to remediate the abuse of disabled adults between ages 18 and 59. These protective services may include: counseling respite for caregivers, healthcare, peer support, transportation, abuse registry, or policy changes and staff training for agencies. The DPPC also provides mandated reporter training. The hotline number is 1-800-426-9009. Please refer to the presentation on Cable TV and the power point on the CoD website.

Old Business

- Met with Town Administrator, Tim Bragan, and Executive Assistant, Julie Doucet to discuss the website ADA disclaimer, improvements, and content from recent CivicPlus webinar. Discussed the use of social media platforms to disseminate information to residents and their accessibility. Tim Bragan recommends that all Town Boards and Commissions solely use the Town website due to better control of accessibility of the information provided. He also mentioned that town administration can provide information to Town boards and commissions for adding to respective landing pages. Julie Doucet informed the committee that she does not have the expertise for making the changes to the website to assure accessibility. The Town will need to budget that support. CivicPlus can provide a review and update of the Town's website at an additional cost.

Davida Bagatelle shared other platforms for accessibility, i.e., Userway and Audioeye. A discussion regarding the legal minimum requirements for website accessibility for municipalities. Town administration will contact Town Counsel regarding the legal minimum requirements. Discussed use of website disclaimer and suggestions made for ways to access tools for users to access websites. Committee members and town administration will further investigate information about accessibility and tools.

Davida Bagatelle suggested that the Commission and town administration consider some next steps to address website accessibility. They are: contact Town Counsel regarding minimum requirements of the town, review recommendations resulting from the future Town Transition Plan and Self-evaluation, and a discussion with CivicPlus regarding current contract support in this area.

- Tim Bragan indicated that he has submitted a request in the finance budget in a financial warrant article for moving forward with renovations to the town beach house. This renovation has been identified as a priority despite the Town not receiving the funding from the MOD grant application.
- Tabled the discussion for improving the Commission on Disabilities website. Recommendation to share ideas from other towns' websites prior to the next meeting. Members of the Commission will take screenshots of town websites and research other state municipalities by region.
- Status update on response from invited guests to participate in a virtual forum regarding disability awareness. Confirmed participation has been received from town ambulance service, Council on Aging, and Nashoba Board of Health. We are waiting to hear back from the police and fire departments and dispatch. Davida Bagatelle suggested having a panel discussion with prepared questions. The Commission will identify topics at our next meeting.

New Business

- Report on recent webinars and training attended. Davida Bagatelle attended a webinar related to recreation and inclusion opportunities. She shared her experience with recreational inclusive programs and she provided information to Park and Recreation regarding these opportunities. Toni Spacciapoli commented that there are school resources which the community may tap for inclusion opportunities and adaptive technology.
- Nashoba Board of Health approached the Commission on Disabilities to pilot test an accessibility website that they are considering and requested if the Commission can ask residents in town to also test the website. Davida Bagatelle looked at the platform and contacted Nashoba Board of Health, Jenna Montgomery, regarding her impressions. She felt that the tools on this platform did not seem user friendly or comprehensive. The Commission decided to refer the site to individuals who may be willing to test the site for Nashoba Board of Health.
- Park and Recreation asked the Commission if there is money for us to contribute to the cost of placing handicapped port-a-potties at the fields around town. Unfortunately, the Commission does not have a budget to support this.
- Discussion regarding the upcoming re-appointment process.
- Promotion of residents to join the Commission on Disabilities.
- Kevin Mitrano, Community Education Director, and Bob O'Shea will be joining us at our next meeting.

Next Meeting Date: March 16, 2022 at 4:00 PM

ADJOURNMENT- Motion to adjourn at 5:52 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Toni Spacciapoli, Commission Secretary