



Arlington Disability Commission Minutes

Date: January 15, 2020

Time: 4:00 pm

Location: 27 Maple Street, 2nd Floor HHS Conference Room

Attendance: Commissioners Cynthia DeAngelis (Chair), Michael Rademacher (Public Works Director), Karen Mathiasen, Darcy Devney, Paul Raia, , Kerrie Fallon, Liza Molina

Others: Christine Bongiorno (Director of Health & Human Services), Jillian Harvey (DEI Coordinator), Jenny Raitt (Director, Department of Planning and Community Development), Alison Elmer (Special Education Director), Ellen Leigh (Disability Advocate), Grace Carpenter (volunteer)

Minutes

1. Welcome and introductions
2. December 2019 meeting minutes unanimously approved.
3. Special Education Director Alison Elmer came to discuss her role and answer questions regarding special ed. in APS. Elmer oversees all of the special education services in the district. The district process of Child Find identifies children who meet the eligibility requirements for special ed., provides the children assessments and then team plans based on service type and frequency. Special Ed. Services are available starting at age 3, up to 22 years of age; they are entitlement services that cannot be denied if a student has at least 1 of the 12 disabilities define by the state of Massachusetts. There are a range of services starting with integrated preschool, some full-time services and out of district placements occur as needed. Currently approximately 900 students receive special ed. services. At this time the only service that is contracted out is for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services. About 200 staff members provide special education services, including teachers and paraprofessionals. The commission can keep in touch with Elmer regarding any school based events or programs that are not accessible or have other potential areas of concern.
4. Director of the Department of Planning and Community Development, Jenny Raitt provided updates on the ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition plan. Raitt reviewed the assessment process conducted by the Institute for Human

Centered Design led by Valerie Fletcher. The transition and implementation plan is possible through state funding to make public buildings and spaces ADA compliant. There is an extensive excel workbook, which will be shared and made public, that contains the assessment, priority level, cost and needs for each town building and public space. Raitt stated that a \$100,000 per year request was a part of the capital budget to begin to comply with changes for ADA. The commission would like to have Fletcher come to do a presentation, so the public can be informed on the plan. The commission will take time to review the plan, and seek an opportunity to provide feedback.

5. Bongiorno reported that \$3,000 for education remains unspent in the budget, and \$3,489 is left total. The presentation that Valerie Fletcher would fulfill the education requirement and funds could be allotted to bring her.
6. There is no scheduling conflict for next month's meeting; the date will remain February 19, 2020.
7. Warrant article inquiry from resident John Sanbonmatsu was withdrawn earlier that day.
8. Priorities for next meeting: Bongiorno and Harvey will discuss date for Town Counsel Doug Heim to come provide training and review of Disability Commission duties, DeAngelis and Harvey will plan retreat, member vacancy has been posted and needs to be shared, see if Elmer could suggest student volunteers/member.
9. Updates: Rademacher indicates that the site work at the high school will start in February; Raia states that the High School side and bike path ramps have been cut out of the plan; the cafeteria staircase concern has not been addressed appropriately.
10. Adjourned at 6:00 pm