

**Commission for Persons with Disabilities  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
March 5, 2020  
4:00 PM**

**Present:** Committee Chair Elanah Sherman, Amy Dudek, Kevin Harkins, Cynthia Litton, Mark Marcy, Julie Menders

**Unexcused absence:** Kevin Saythany

**Others Present:** Brigid Marks and Tina Yeitz (Rose Arts Festival)

**Call to Order:** Elanah called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM.

**Determination of Quorum:** It was determined a quorum was present (6/7).

**Approval of Minutes:** On a motion from Mark, seconded by Julie, the Minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

**Citizen Comments:** None

**Communications:** None.

**Old Business**

Westgate Shopping Center - Update: Elanah reported that, because Dan Coley has been appointed Building Official, it would probably be appropriate for Mark to re-establish contact with the Building Department on the Westgate issue. Mark said he would make contact.

Norwich Census Committee – Report: Elanah reported that she has resigned from the committee because she can function on the issue as easily off the committee as on it. She has spoken with Sharon Heddle, Director of DNEC, to discuss a collaboration with the Commission on increasing census turnout. Elanah will email Sharon relevant links from the federal census website within a week after this Commission meeting.

Charging Stations Sub-Committee – Report: Julie reported that Chris Riley emailed her and Elanah information about the CDBG grant, application for which is due March 11. Mark, who is a member of the Community Development Advisory Board, said that the Commission, being neither a City department nor a private nonprofit, is not eligible to apply. Julie will inform Chris of the Commission's ineligibility. The Commission voted to recommend downtown (perhaps Franklin St.) and Stop and Shop as areas for installation.

Disability Awareness Week 2020 - Update: Disability Awareness Week will be the week of October 12. Elanah reported that the Code/ADA workshop co-sponsored with NCDC is set for early evening Wednesday, October 14. She has already spoken with Deanna Rhodes, Director of the City's Planning Department, about finding a City representative to sit on the panel. Deanna will be designating an employee. Mark and Kevin H will be meeting soon to discuss publicity.

Bus Stop on Town Street: Cyndi reported that she and Elanah have been discussing the issue with Jamie Bohli, Operations Manager at SEAT. Jaime seems to be taking the issue very seriously. She will be investigating the possibility of creating a paved area and placement of a shelter; in the meantime, she wants to explore using the UCFS parking lot as a temporary bus stop.

### **New Business**

Anti-violence Initiative: This initiative grew out of the report of an attack in Norwich on a person with a developmental disability, plus the discussion at the last meeting with Sgt. Nick Rankin. Elanah and Kevin H will work over the next month on developing a first educational event.

### **Guest: Tina Yeitz**

Tina attended the meeting from 4:45 – 5:25 to seek Commission members' experience-based guidance in increasing accessibility at the Rose Arts Festival. (The meeting was extended beyond its customary one hour to accommodate this discussion.) Among the ideas presented: development of an accessible website; ensuring that grass is cut as short as possible shortly before the event; training of volunteers on being sighted guides; staffing of information tent and designation of accessibility point people; posting phone number and email address on website for accessibility queries; scattered seating, especially where there may be lines; accessible shuttle service (perhaps provided by senior center); establishment of service animal relief area; possible sign language interpretation of certain events.

**Adjournment:** On a motion from Mark, seconded by Cyndi, the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 5:25 PM. The next meeting will be at 4 PM on Thursday, April 2, 2020 at Norwich City Hall in Room 319.

Meeting Minutes taken by Elanah Sherman and submitted to the City on March 6, 2020.