

Meeting Minutes
Andover Commission on Disability
April 25, 2012

Present: Maddy St.Amand, Bernadette Lionetta, Justin Coppola Jr., Ruth Rosensweig, Julie Pike, Stephen Surette, and Susan McKelliget. Guest: Nancy Hogan

Minutes: The meeting began at 7:05 p.m. Bernadette made a motion to accept the March 28, 2012 minutes. Stephen seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Old Business—Program Updates

- **Kids on the Block--** Bernadette gave a brief update of this scripted autism awareness program which the Best Buddies—a group of middle school students at the Doherty School-- is expected to perform sometime in June. ACOD members expressed an interest in attending.
- **Spot Checks--** Julie gave an update on the progress resolving curb cut and access issues which were previously reported to ACOD. As noted in previous minutes, former ACOD member Jami Cope noted problem areas including the railroad crossing at the bottom of Essex Street. Stephen reported that despite some opposition from the Boston and Maine Railroad, the town DPW addressed the matter and there is no longer a problem at the tracks. Stephen further noted that the Bartlet and Chestnut intersection and town hall access problems have also been resolved. *Action item: The commission will continue to respond to citizens' complaints regarding lack of access. Specifically, Julie will follow up with the owner of the Orange Leaf Yogurt Shop on Park street regarding access into the front door of the shop, and Maddy will also continue to check on Sovereign Banks' progress regarding agreed upon access modifications.*
- **Start-up project funding**
 1. ***“Middle School Peer Mentoring Program—***Last month ACOD passed a funding proposal for a \$600 stipend to be used to pay for gift cards at specific downtown establishments. The idea is to partner high school students who would accompany middle school students with special needs in structured activities like purchasing small items or having an ice cream with their peers. Final approval for this proposal has been received from town officials.
 2. ***“Printers for IPOD and IPAD Touches”*** Last month ACOD passed a funding proposal allowing students with special needs at the Doherty school to have printing capability at the school for their IPOD and IPAD touches. The funding proposal was for \$593.85 and it has been approved by the town. This is possible because Doherty Middle School is already wireless. *Action Item: Bernadette will follow up with the town's chief information officer, Paul Puzzanghera regarding*

wireless capability and other technology issues to facilitate with this new printing capability for Doherty Middle School.

3. **“My Own Voice—Treble Chorus”** Last month ACOD passed a funding proposal to pay for start up costs in the form of sundry musical supplies such as sheet music, a drum, and rhythm sticks which would be used in a new peer mentoring program matching 12 special needs kids who want to sing, with 12 Treble Chorus members as buddies to help them. Essentially, the Chorus would be providing its “expertise” to these students so that they too could have a venue to perform. A performance by this new group is planned with the Treble Chorus at the West Parish Church on Tuesday June 29th and ACOD members expressed an interest in attending.

NOTE: Maddy informed the commission that there was some discussion among town officials about some of these funding proposals in light of ACOD’s role as primarily an advisory group. Maddy researched state law regarding the purposes and mission of disability commissions to ensure ACOD was in compliance with the law. She distributed copies of the applicable law (M.G.L. C.40 s. 8J) which appears to clarify that appropriations by ACOD are in keeping with the spirit of the law if within our mission of providing equal access to places and programs available to the general public. She also noted similar expenditures in the past such as puppets for the Kids on the Block puppet show (education), adaptive playground swings, a ramp, various curb cuts, signage for the visually impaired in a school, and signs for handicap parking at the veterans auditorium, as well as plants and supplies for the community garden at the Senior Center were all within the purview of the commissions’ overall mission. **Action Item: Maddy will draft a letter outlining the rationale for ACOD’s funding proposals in light of the Anti-Aid amendment to the Constitution which prohib certain types of funding on the part of town commissions to certain entities. Ruth and Bernadette agreed to work with Maddy on this letter.**

New Business

- **Review of warrant articles for Town Meeting-** Maddy reviewed the Finance Committee Report and recommended the following ACOD **approvals** to warrant articles of particular concern to the commission. The commission reviewed these articles to be submitted as ACOD approvals on the town’s warrant article “punch list” which is submitted to the Town Clerk reflecting various town Boards’ input. Those articles are as follows:
 1. Article 5--Capital Projects Fund Appropriation (sidewalks repairs, park improvements and the like) - Approve;
 2. Article 10-D—Property Tax Exemptions - Approve;
 3. Article 15—FY3013 Revolving Accounts (Health clinics DCS, DYS elder services, public safety, library, fire rescue training, and equipment) - Approve;
 4. Article 16-- Elderly/Disabled Transportation Program - Approve;
 5. Article 22-Tech Infrastructure, Connectivity etc. (i.e. wireless classroom) Approve;

6. Article 23--Town Playground Replacements - Approve;
7. Article 25 School Building Maintenance and Renovation (including handicap parking access, and curbing issues) - Approve;
8. Article 28 Balmoral Fence and Masonry Repairs (up to code for handicap access etc.) - Approve;
9. Article 31 Fire-Rescue Communications Upgrades (crisis response) - Approve.

Stephen made a motion to approve the above nine article recommendations and Bernadette seconded. The motion was unanimously passed.

Adjournment: Pat made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Justin. The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

***Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 23, 2012, 7 o'clock p.m.
Activity Room, Memorial Hall Library***

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McKelliget