



Observer Report

Marblehead Disability Commission May 12, 2022 via ZOOM
LWVM Observer. Nancy Powell

Members Present: Laurie Blaisdell (Chair), Katie Farrell, Sue Harris, Amy Hirschcron, Samantha Marino, Andrea Mountain, Rich Ramos
Guests Present: Lynn Nadeau, Pamela Daly

1. Town Warrant Article to Require Remote Access to Town Board/Committee Meetings

Invited guest, Lynn Nadeau, discussed the warrant article she brought to Town Meeting that would ensure the use of virtual platforms for all Board and Committee meetings. Lynn noted that providing remote access would enable those with physical challenges to participate more fully in the workings of Town Boards and Committees and that currently there are pending bills in both houses of the MA Legislature that would accomplish the same result. The Town voted to form an Implementation Committee to bring about this change in the coming year. Members will be appointed by Gary Speiss before his term as Moderator ends. Laurie will contact him to request that at least two members of the Disability Commission be included on the Implementation Committee.

2. Harbor Matters Update

The Disability Commission has been working with Harbor and Waters Board on plans to open up Marblehead Harbor to those with mobility challenges including making boating available to all regardless of physical ability. After getting valuable input from the Harbormaster, a manual lift has been ordered and will soon be installed at State Street dock. Amy met with the Harbormaster to discuss location of a lockbox and instructional signage. She has designed an online form to track usage of the lift. Printed instructions for its use will also be posted at the site. The Mariner Group donated \$6,000 to the Harbor Lift and Donation Fund for purchase of the lift and ongoing maintenance. Laurie will document all credits and debits to the Harbor Lift and Harbor Donation Fund as well as funds collected from handicapped parking fines.

3. Town Dog Park

Laurie reported to Kyle Wylie, Administrative Aide to Board of Selectmen, that the Town Dog Park is not accessible. She will follow up.

4. Emergency Management and Preparedness

Laurie received notice of a webinar on “Emergency Management and Preparedness-Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities” sponsored by the MA Emergency Management Agency. She registered but never received a link to the webinar and was unable to access.

5. Logo for Disabilities Commission

Sam reached out to the MHS Art Department in hopes of getting input on design for a Disabilities Commission logo, but has not yet received a reply. She will contact the Charter School.

6. Village Plaza Accessibility

Village Plaza has a wheelchair ramp that leads to second floor but it is located behind a door with no signage to indicate an accessible entrance. Sue will draft a letter to the owners of Village Plaza asking that a sign be placed on the door that leads to a ramp and that all stairs leading to the second level have signs indicating the location of the accessible entrance. She will also notify all tenants of the Plaza of the availability and location of the ramp.

7. Town Map of Accessible Locations

Commission members have been working with the Marblehead Chamber of Commerce to add an accessibility designation to “points of interest” on the Chamber’s Visitor’s Guide. The Commission agreed that the following categories currently on the working list will be deleted: yacht clubs, retail stores (except grocery stores), and West Marine. Commission members surveying locations should describe any accessibility issues they find on the Google spreadsheet in an email to Sue.

8. New Business

-Andrea will add Rich Ramos to the list of Commission Members on the Disability Commission website.

-The list of accessible locations on the website also needs to be updated.

- Commission members discussed the need to form a plan to ensure that all relevant Town Boards and Commissions consult with the Disability Commission when they are in the process of developing, approving, or implementing any new (or changes to) structures or programs. Laurie will go to the Building Department to reintroduce herself as Chair of the Disability Commission and offer to review ADA guidelines before permits are issued for new commercial projects.

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 9, 2022 at 4:15PM

