

Date and Time: 05/14/20 6:43 PM  
 Location: Webinar  
 Members Present: Kay Bell (KB), Doug Frey (DF) Pat Guthy, Chairperson (PG) Lisa Kouchakdjian (LK), Caroline Santangelo (CS)  
 Members Absent:  
 Also Present: Mark Thompson, Information Systems Technology Administrator, Janie Dretler, Board of Selectmen Liason  
 Public Commenters:

**Convene:** The regular meeting of the Sudbury Commission on Disability (COD) was called to order by Pat Guthy at 6:43 PM. A quorum (at least a majority of 3 of 5) was present.

**1. Selection of Meeting Recorder:** Kay Bell volunteered to record minutes.

**2. Review and Approval of COD Minutes**

**MSV** LK moved, CS seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the 04-23-20 regular meeting of the COD submitted by Doug Frey as amended with correction of a name spelling. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

**3. Town Website Accessibility**

- a) Information Systems Technology Administrator, Mr. Thompson explained that the town is considering engaging the services of Siteimprove to lead the work of making the Town website accessible and ADA compliant. Siteimprove performed a scan/assessment of the website and proposed some alternatives for how to achieve accessibility. Of the 22,000 documents on the site the sample of 500 documents showed substantial deficits. The services of Siteimprove include training for content providers, developers, and administrators along with reports based on regular scans of the site to guide the work of converting content and generating new content that will be accessible.

The task of conversion is massive and to complete it in one push would be very expensive. A staged approach, engaging Siteimprove on a subscription basis, could provide a strong launch to both convert existing material and to train contributors in the skills to post accessible material going forward, with smaller payments over a few years and a manageable ongoing fee going forward.

- b) DF suggested a need to get buy in from all departments and people who make content. Does Mark have any trouble getting people to come to training? Mr. Thompson explained that he has provided at minimum a 90-minute introductory training to all content contributors and that staff seem to be very interested in making the website accessible.
- c) Mr. Thompson noted that the schools use BlackBoard and it has taken a process and time to get teachers and administrators up to their skills. Siteimprove includes training so contributors can make future content accessible.
- d) PG asked what other towns use Siteimprove? Mr. Thompson will get information on that for the COD.

- e) Mr. Thompson explained that the first phase of conversion of existing content would be directed to pages and documents with the greatest traffic. The next phase, go to next tier of trafficked pages and progress through in that manner over time.
- f) Mr. Thompson expressed appreciation for the COD's interest in and support for the project and said that a letter to Mr. Hayes, Town Manager, detailing the value of the project could be helpful. The consensus of the commission was for the chair to compose a support letter and attend a meeting with Mr. Hayes if that would be useful, since making the website accessible complements the Self Evaluation and Transition Plan project and aligns
- g) PG raised the possibility of redirecting the funds the COD previously voted contribute to the Self Evaluation and Transition Plan (SETP) effort toward helping launch the website project, since those funds are not needed for the SETP project. DF suggested that it could be advantageous to allow the Town to demonstrate commitment to accessibility through funding from the core budget. CS suggested that the COD might want to consider suggesting some metrics to promote the efficacy of both projects. Discussion of contributing funds will be on the agenda of a future meeting.

**4 . Update and discussion of Massachusetts Crisis Standards of Care, Council on Aging, Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) contact, and next steps**

- a) PG reported that in conversation with Debra Galloway, Senior Center Director, the she was unaware of Senate Bill 2640 (limiting liability for healthcare personnel) and the accompanying "standards of care" with guidance on triage and rationing in the event of shortage of medical resources. Ms. Galloway asked PG to attend the next Council on Aging (COA) meeting and present a summary of the law and guidance, which she did. Even after advocacy groups were able to bring about revisions that rectify some of the provisions that discriminated against people with disabilities, the poor and the elderly, concerns remain. John Beeler, COA chair, expressed appreciation for the information: You got our attention.
- b) DF reported the Karen Polito, MA Lieutenant Governor, sent a response to the advocacy groups acknowledging progress and outlining areas that need further attention in the legislation. Marylou Sudders, MA Secretary of Health and Human Services, also sent acknowledgement with an invitation to gather together to work on concerns when things settle down with the health crisis, likely in the summer. Important points of concern are:
  - o Eliminate age as a factor
  - o Ensure reasonable accommodations for visitors such as interpreters and personal care assistants
  - o Transparency, monitoring, and accountability of the triage process

DF believes "we have the right dogs in the fight" as major civil rights groups, disability advocacy groups, and community organizations are actively engaged. LK is concerned that the situation could become more critical at any time. PG has approached legislators with questions and concerns on this issue and has not received response. She will write to Jeff Dougan at the MOD to inquire what the MOD's

position is on who should be disseminating this information to the affected constituents.

**5. Sudbury Board of Health (BOH) KB reported:**

- a) BOH meets weekly at 4 PM on Wednesdays. Information on confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19, numbers of people isolating, and numbers of deaths are reported. Contact tracing has been done by our local public health and school nurses and now some is being sent to the state's new Contact Tracing Collaborative (CTC). However CTC is not up to high levels of reaching people, so the cases are coming back to the local nurses where they are always able to reach people within a short time. Our nurses provide guidance and supplies if needed to those who are ill or might be exposed.
- b) Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School graduation and Sudbury Public Schools 8<sup>th</sup> grade and 5<sup>th</sup> grade graduation have come to the BOH to seek guidance/advice on plans for acknowledging those students. Chief Nix is working closely with school leaders on various forms of car processions for the families and students involved.
- c) Long term care facilities (there are four in Sudbury) account for about two-thirds of cases and deaths in town. When the problem emerged the BOH quickly provided both training and personal protective equipment to staffs. Testing was not readily available so the National Guard has stepped in to do testing. Long term care staff have contracted the virus as well. LK: This pandemic is showing us that we need to consider how to manage where our elders are cared for. Is it better to bring help into homes? Should design of facilities be different?

**6. Meadow Walk bus shelter and other Transportation Committee updates DF reported:**

- a) DF passed on resource materials provided by Meghan Dufresne of the Institute for Human Centered Design related to accessibility features of bus stops and bus shelters. Dan Carty, chair of the Transportation Committee and the Board of Selectmen and Adam Duscheseau will assure accessible design.
- b) The committee met via Zoom on May 8.
  - o Rt. 20 shuttle is suspended.
  - o The Quarry North development, now renamed Coldbrook Crossing is zoned (40-R) and will have some designated affordable units. This zoning gives Sudbury one-time financial benefit from state. Coldbrook Crossing plans run a shuttle bus for residents of development. Details are yet to be determined, but the shuttle will not be open to the public. There is a possibility of a shuttle from that neighborhood (perhaps with parking at Davis Field) to the commuter rail station in either Lincoln or West concord. Planning Board is considering the details and the COD could express a position to them.
  - o A soft agreement has been made to hire a program manager for the micro-transit (Uber and taxis) pilot project.
  - o Next Transportation Committee meeting is May 22, 1:30 PM, 2020.

**7. COD Focus**

- a) Town elections to be held June 23. Mail-in voting will be encouraged. Management of polling places will be adapted to to minimize risk of spreading corona virus, limiting the number of people in the space at once. The accessible entrance at Lower Town Hall would be used as the exit for all and it is the only way for someone with mobility challenges to come in. How will it be handled if a person needs an assistant with them? How will masks be handled for those who cannot wear them? Perhaps the COD can supply information and questions to assist making effective accommodations for voting. The COD will also share with the Town Manager the letter just received from MOD Director Mary Mahon McCauley reminding towns of the imperative for accessibility during this health crisis.
- b) At next meeting we should strategize about Town Meeting (Sep 15, 2020) to avoid any breakdown in accessibility as has been experienced in the last special Town Meeting.
- c) Fire Chief Whelan and Assistant Town Manager Maryanne Bilodeau are leading the Task Force for Reopening. Input can be sent to them on accessibility concerns.
- d) The Self Evaluation and Transition Plan project is on hold due to the closure of buildings at this time.
- e) Wayside Plaza accessibility remains problematic after nearly a year. The COD will compile another report to give to the Town Building Inspector, Andy Lewis, with encouragement to actively pursue ADA Title III compliance there. LK: More education may be needed for town leaders regarding accessibility requirements and businesses in town may need the same. KB will compose a report and reach out to Metro West Center for Independent Living staff to seek assistance and guidance on the best way to proceed.
- f) Next meeting we need to discuss:
- o liaisons to key committees to establish relationships and further our mission, especially where there is overlap. Each member should consider what committee(s) with which they would like to liaise.
  - o recruitment: PG was unable to reach Liesje Carrigan, who expressed interest prior to the current health crisis but will persist.
  - o marketing – communicating to the community, educating leaders...

**8. Public Comment** There was no public comment offered.

**[NEXT COD MEETING: Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 6:30 PM ]**

### **Adjourn**

**MSV** LK moved and CS seconded the motion to adjourn.

The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM

A true copy attest: Kathleen (Kay) F. Bell  
Meeting Recorder

May 28, 2020