

## **Sudbury Commission on Disability (COD) Meeting Minutes**

April 14, 2023 - Virtual Meeting

### **Members Present:**

Kathleen Bell (Chair), Cameron LaHaise (Vice Chair), Pat Brown, Liesje Quinto

Absent: None

**Kay Bell called the meeting to order at 7:05pm and reviewed the protocols under which remote meetings are conducted and took a roll call.**

### **Discussion/Potential Action Items**

**Andy Sheehan, Sudbury Town Manager, in attendance to discuss the Transition Plan.**

Updates from Andy:

- Shared that Sandra Duran is overseeing the Transition Plan.
- Expects that some work at Sewataro should be completed before it opens in May/June.
- There is a Town Meeting warrant article for some additional funding to support the transition plan
- Signed contracts for some work at the schools - sinks in some classrooms.
- In process of getting revised scope for additional AV equipment at the Fairbanks Community Center.

Liesje, as chair of the Transition Plan Subcommittee: would like to have transparency going forward about what projects have been checked off the list. And then, to see the plan for the next 40 months.

Andy: First \$200K came out of the capital appropriation last year. And there is a request for \$200K again this year. And will use that money to go through the transition plan. Looking to check off low hanging fruit. Being mindful of projects that have time constraints (like school projects that should take place over summer).

Trying to be orderly and take a coordinated approach and not "jumping from one brush fire to the next".

No decisions beyond the next town meeting that is coming up.

Kay clarifies that IHCD is the Institute for Human Centered Design - they conducted the self-evaluation and wrote the transition plan.

Liesje: asked Andy about the transition plan he worked on in his prior community.

Andy: In the other community, they established a COD about 5 years ago. The town had large issues with being noncompliant with ADA.

Sandra will have an update for town meeting on May 1 about what they have accomplished and target areas going forward. They plan to create a living document that will be updated and viewed at any time.

Kay shared that the IHCD hosted a 4 hour event at which towns shared their collaborative processes for designing and executing projects to address their transition plans, including case studies. Kay Bell, Pat Brown, and Pat Guthy attended. Noting the interest level is very high in seeing this transition plan successfully completed.

Pat Guthy (COD applicant and former Chair of the COD) spoke: Shared that Town Hall in Sudbury is an issue and needs to be brought to ADA standards. Brought up the issue of Lincoln - Sudbury High School. LS was not a part of the evaluation. Suggests that this town considers doing a plan for LS. Something to explore with Lincoln and school committee as it's a very important part of this town. Expressed that it would be important to share the updates, not just through our webpage. Pat Guthy shared that she was on the commission when they were able to get the town to fund the plan.

Andy: What does community input look like on the plan?

Kay: Community forums, accessible surveys. Perhaps community forums could be grouped by topic since the report is so massive. I.e. the schools, park and rec, etc. Have to formulate capital improvement projects soon to respect the capital planning process. Getting Sudbury to be fully inclusive would happen faster if people are informed and can speak about what is most important to them.

Kay: Surprised that we, the town, is leading the project for improvements at Sewataro. If Kay had been asked, "I would have suggested we put things in order of priority - swim area is important, but taxpayers of the town get very little use of that area. But Liberty Lodge gets a lot of use. That type of conversation could happen." Might not have everyone agree, but good to have everyone have a voice.

Andy: re: prioritization. Wasn't there robust public involvement during IHCD process?

Kay: There was a kickoff mtg in the public works building that was not a public event. IHCD made a presentation with staff and the Chair and Vice Chair who reported out to the COD. What happened next, the serving town manager gave a message that the IHCD was not to speak with anyone from the COD. There were no public meetings other than two joint meetings of the Select Board and the COD over the multi-year process. A blockage of communication. Not open communication. Staff surveys were fully fleshed out, no reporting on results from the public surveys.

Andy: Common issue that must come up with LS as with other regional school districts. Looking forward to working with the new Superintendent and happy to relay the message expressed about from Pat Guthy.

Pat Brown: Had asked the question about LS. Was told that they (LS) need to create their own plan as a separate entity.

Pat Guthy: In her experience, when bringing up issues with the high school they were incredibly responsive. Wonders - has the high school even been approached to do a transition plan?

Kay Bell: shared that Part B: Policies, Procedures, and Programs needs attention on the transition plan as well. Some glaring examples of things that have not been done. For example, not having a grievance procedure. The implications in part B have to do with creating the policies and some training for staff. While they do involve some resources of time and perhaps some funds, they are so achievable, it would be wonderful to see those get attention.

Pat Brown: Thank IT for putting on the page assist widget as a step forward that deserves attention.

Kay: The COD and the Information Systems Department partnered successfully in the pursuit of Americas Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds that are being applied to the work of increasing website accessibility.

**Kay asked Andy Sheehan to explain what the plan is for Membership:**

Andy: Two month anniversary of start date. Long transition. A lot awaiting him. A lot goes into considering appointments and doesn't want to rush. Understands there is desire on the commission to get this done. Also sees that the COD is getting a lot done and sees a "bit of a cushion there" which allows him to focus on a million other things. This is the busiest time in the municipal calendar.

Kay: Town manager appoints people to the Conservation Commission, The Historical Commission, the September 11th Memorial Garden Committee, and the COD, and somehow in the busy time, it appears to Kay that time was found to make an appointment to the Historical Commission. What's the difference in the process for that commission compared to the process for COD membership?

Andy: Want to give it the time that it deserves. Last year was a difficult year for appointments to the COD. And there has been transition since then. So, simply want to give it the attention it deserves. Understands that applicants were given a Dec deadline - that was prior to Andy's arrival. In fairness, with what I (town manager) have facing in the next two weeks - won't be putting names before town meeting. Won't promise a deadline. Deserves a thoughtful process.

Pat Guthy: Served as chair of this committee for 4.5 years. Had to resign for personal issues. Does not understand what type of vetting would need to be done. Presently working with Kay on 30th anniversary. Doing the work because I want to do the work. Background in working with people with special needs and in personnel management.

If Sudbury values its volunteers, would have expected acknowledge of receipt of application - never received anything from the town. As a 47-year resident to Sudbury, courtesy is important.

Extenuating circumstances happened last summer, and I was not a part of that. Suggest Andy look into what did happen last summer.

Volunteers keep the cost down in this town.

Andy: Agrees, research needs to be done and watch some of the meetings and need the whole picture. And that's what he's after. Asking for respect to the job he does. And respects and thanks the COD. Would like the latitude to make thoughtful decisions before putting forth applicants.

Cheryl Wallace comment: Question to Kay - how many hours per week does Kay put in on a week?

Kay: Answer, 40 - 50 hours per week.

Group said goodbye, thank you, and Andy left the meeting as scheduled.

**Kay gave update to questions asked to Adam Duchesneau about Planning and Community Development Dept requesting a COD member to join the Housing Production Plan working group**

-6 meetings between now and the end of 2023.

-Day/time of the meeting is still TBD.

-Ok to have the job shared by two committee members on the same committee. But only one person votes.

Kay confirmend that Adam's email did reach members as this and other similar communications are important to members' participation and no one should be left out.

Cameron LaHaise would like to do it, but expressed it's difficult that they do not have any dates.

Pat Brown assumes that the group will be held under the Open Meeting Law and the format will be decided once formed such as what days they can meet.

Liesje is also willing to serve.

**Motion:** Cam and Liesje be nominated forward as job sharing member and backup to serve on the Housing Development Work Group. Pat Brown moves. And Kay Bell makes the second.

1. Pat Brown: Aye
2. Cam LaHaise: Aye
3. Liesje Quinto: Aye

4. Kay Bell: Aye

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor.

### **Town Meeting Warrant Discussion**

Commission discussed and agreed on which warrant articles the COD voted to support that Pat Brown and Kay Bell would comment on at Town Meeting. Pat Brown will speak for Articles 14 and 24. Kay will speak for Articles 15 and 19; and if Article 42, 44, or 45 are pulled from the Consent Calendar for discussion, Kay will speak for those.

### **Discussion of Article 24**

Kay entertains a motion to support the passage of Article 24, the \$200K to support the Transition Plan Work.

Pat Brown asks - does anyone know where the money is coming from? Kay shared the information provided by the Town - but no answer was found.

**Motion:** Kay entertains a motion to support the passage of Article 24, the \$200K to support the Transition Plan Work. Pat Brown moves. Cameron seconds.

1. Pat Brown: Aye
2. Cam LaHaise: Aye
3. Liesje Quinto: Aye
4. Kay Bell: Aye

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

### **Discuss and vote on new COD Seal**

COD Committee and the COD applicants discussed the presented four versions of the COD seal that Kay generated.

**Motion:** Kay entertains a motion to approve the seal without shading as discussed. Liesje moved. Kay seconds.

1. Pat Brown: Aye
2. Cam LaHaise: Aye
3. Liesje Quinto: Aye
4. Kay Bell: Aye

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

### **30th Anniversary Celebration**

Kay discussed and shared the revised budget. Pat Guthy is in the process of securing food donation from Roche Brothers for the reception.

Discussion on the water bottle ban in Sudbury and if we can have water bottles since they were donated to the COD.

Discussed and determined that it should not violate the code to have the donation of water from Roche Bros.

Kay added that we will plan the food with food allergies in mind, too.

Estimated cost of event is \$300

Liesje shared that she may have a discount code at VistaPrint should that be needed.

**Motion:** Liesje moved to authorize up to \$300 expenditure for the celebration reception of 30th Anniversary. Cam second.

1. Pat Brown: Abstain
2. Cam LaHaise: Aye
3. Liesje Quinto: Aye
4. Kay Bell: Aye

**Vote:** 3 in favor; 1 abstain

Pat Brown would like a larger financial discussion with parameters set prior to making decisions on our finances.

Plan to discuss financials at the upcoming May mtg. Kay invited Pat Brown to assist in preparing that agenda item and materials for the meeting on May 4.

## **Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** Kay entertains a motion to approve the January 5, 2023, COD minutes as amended (moved by Pat Brown, seconded by Cam) unanimously by roll call vote.

1. Pat Brown: Aye
2. Cam LaHaise: Aye
3. Liesje Quinto: Aye
4. Kay Bell: Aye

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

**Motion:** Kay entertains a motion to approve the March 2, 2023, COD minutes as submitted (moved by Cam, seconded by Liesje) unanimously by roll call vote.

1. Pat Brown: Aye
2. Cam LaHaise: Aye
3. Liesje Quinto: Aye
4. Kay Bell: Aye

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

### **Future Agenda Items**

Look at finances at May 4 meeting: income, expenses, parameters for spending

-Liesje: suggests we align our finances with our goals

-Pat: suggests looking at prioritization of goals and where the COD should be putting effort and, possibly, putting money.

-Pat Guthy: we need to look at our income. And it looks as though we have not had income. And why have we not been receiving income from parking violations? Hard to believe this town became law abiding. So, would like to know why we have not received money?

-The May or June meeting is when we are supposed to look at our Bylaws.

Pat Brown and Kay Bell terms are up at the end of May. Will likely get notification from the town. So that is something to think about.

Meetings currently only planned for May and June and will need to plan following meetings.

**Motion to adjourn** made by Pat Brown, seconded by Liesje.

Unanimously approved by roll call at 9:22pm.

1. Pat Brown: Aye
2. Cam LaHaise: Aye
3. Liesje Quinto: Aye
4. Kay Bell: Aye

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

Minutes Submitted by Cameron LaHaise