



Commission on Disabilities  
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes  
April 6th, 2022

This Commission on Disabilities meeting was held electronically via WebEx due to the COVID-19 Emergency.

**Commissioners:**

Laurie Berner - P  
Ashlie Castaldo - P  
Roberta Cich – A  
Amanda Crosby - P  
Allison Fochs - P  
Tom Furman - A  
Dianne Naus - P  
Samantha Smingler – P

**Also present:** Carl Crawford, Laura Laaksonen

Chair Berner called the April, 2022 Commission on Disabilities meeting to order at 3:10 PM, there was a quorum.

**Approval of current agenda: MS/C – (Naus, Crosby)**

**Approval of February minutes: MS/C – (Smingler, Fochs)**

**Public Comment/Information:** No public comment.

**Accessible Parking Update:**

No new parking requests.

**Parks and Rec Report:**

Commissioner Crosby provided an update on the Hawk Ridge Nature Preserve. HRBO presented their facilities plan to the Parks and Recreation Commission at the March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022 meeting highlighting key issues and improvement needed including limited accessible facilities. You can find this plan here <https://duluthmn.gov/parks/parks-planning/progress-in-the-park/hawk-ridge/>. The plan will be coming before the Parks and Recreation Commission at their June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022 meeting.

Commissioner Crosby also announced upcoming community workshops for the Essential Spaces Master Plan. This is open to the public and seeking community attendance and input.  
Event Dates:

City Hall Room 330 Wednesday 4/13 4-4:45PM

Locations and Time to be determined for 4/14 but will most likely be the same time frame at Portland and Morgan Park community centers. These meetings will run concurrently.

**Old Business:**

Snow Removal Task Force- Mr. Crawford will be calling a meeting to discuss the Snow Removal Program and how that will work in the year to come. Currently the city utilizing an AmeriCorps volunteer but this will not be an option moving forward. The city is seeking partnerships, much like they did with the warming centers, on this project.

Mr. Crawford noted that the DTA task force will reconvene at the end of April or early May.

**New Business:** None

**Current Disability Issues:**

Commissioner Fochs inquired if we had any reputable resources that talk about the differences between service animals and companion animals. Commissioner Castaldo will be sharing references and information.

The conversation regarding housing in Duluth has been moved to our May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. Commissioner Castaldo has spoken with both Deb Holman, who does homeless outreach for CHUM and John Cole, CHUM's Executive Director. Chair Berner has confirmed with Arc Northland's Housing Services and all will be joining the commission to engage in this conversation.

Mr. Crawford informed the group he attended the Duluth Aging Conference and will be inviting this group to a future meeting. Mr. Crawford noted the community has gaps in services and we need to identify those so our aging population can age in place in our community.

A man had reached out to Chair Berner and Mr. Crawford regarding accessibility concerns in hotel rooms, public bathrooms etc. He would like to join an upcoming COD meeting. Mr. Crawford reminded the group that we need to be on the forefront of accessibility upgrades in our community, especially with renovations among our existing infrastructure.

**Correspondence/Public Comment:**

No public comment.

**Other Business/Announcements:**

Mr. Crawford let the commission know he is looking into the city obtaining an outdoor all terrain track chair. The hope would be this chair would be available for rent through the city.

Chair Berner announced her last day at Arc Northland will be 4/22/2022 and Chair Crosby will take over as the Executive Director on 4/20/2022.

**Adjourn:** 4:00 pm

Next meeting is Wednesday May 4, 2022 3:00 PM  
City Hall Room 330