

BRAINTREE COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
Meeting Held Via Zoom
Monday, March 3, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE: Crystal Evans, Treasurer
Robin Torpey, Member
Mary Russo, Member
Scott Lamphere, Member

ALSO PRESENT: Marybeth McGrath, Director of ML & I
Kristina Ziniti, ADA Coordinator

Call to Order:

Robin Torpey served as Acting Chairperson for this meeting.

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by roll call vote: Crystal Evans-yes;
Robin Torpey-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of February 3, 2025 were reviewed.

*Motion made by Scott Lamphere to approve the meeting minutes of February 3, 2025.
Motion seconded by Crystal Evans. The motion passed by a roll call vote:
Crystal Evans-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes*

South Middle School Store, South Middle School PTO:

John Cass, representing the South Middle School PTO, addressed the Commission. He stated the school currently has a school store and they are looking for sponsorships for running the store and to expand opportunity. They would like input from the Commission on where they can look for funding opportunities. He stated the store is open a couple of days a week on a rotating schedule. Students from the Aims and Ables program and the Ambassadors Club work in the store. The students from Aims and Ables are working on communication skills and prevocational skills. The speech language pathologist overlooks the store project. Students from the Ambassadors Club work alongside these students acting as models and providing minimal support.

Ms. McGrath asked what is sold in the store. Mr. Cass stated items like stationary and pens are sold and clubs can use the location to meet. Ms. Torpey suggested they contact Amazon, as they provide funding for school programs. Mr. Cass stated he will send information about the store to the Commission members and they can let him know if they have any ideas for funding sources. Ms. Evans stated the Doug Flutie Foundation provides grants for projects, especially if students with autism are participating. She also

suggested civic organizations such as the Rotary and Knights of Columbus and organizations such as Work Inc. and Dharma Dreams.

Accessibility of Sidewalks/Snow Removal:

Ms. Evans stated during recent storms DPW did a good job with snow removal. One storm was snow to rain and they did the best they could under those conditions.

Ms. McGrath stated she will forward this information on to the DPW, as they have been working hard to concentrate on the priority areas.

Ms. Evans reiterated if businesses took responsibility for snow removal on their sidewalks this would make it easier on the DPW. Ms. Ziniti has been visiting businesses in the squares reminding them of their responsibilities. The managers of Walgreens and McDonald's were not aware the sidewalks were their responsibility, they thought it was limited to the property only. They are also working with DPW to determine who is responsible for sidewalks in a mall or plaza setting.

Ms. Evans expressed continued concern about clearing the bus stops. Ms. Ziniti stated the MBTA takes no responsibility for clearing the bus stops, and she feels they should. She has sent letters to the MBTA expressing her concerns about this. She thinks they should have a snow removal department that is dispatched to assist with snow removal in individual communities.

South Shore Plaza Updates:

Ms. Ziniti stated she has been going to the South Shore Plaza every couple of weeks to check on the paddles to ensure they are working and keeping the General Manager up-to-date. Ms. Evans made her aware that the elevator near Pizzeria Regina was not working and there was no signage telling people where to go. Allen Smith, the General Manager, informed her a vendor used the elevator and damaged the doors so it needed an emergency repair. She has not visited yet to see if it has been repaired.

Ms. McGrath stated Mayor Joyce met with Mr. Smith and had asked for any concerns departments may have. They provided the Mayor with a comprehensive list of concerns, particularly concerning signage when elevators/escalators are out of order. They are hoping by reinforcing this with him the issue of signage will be addressed. She stated other malls have digital signage that directs customers to the nearest elevator/escalator. Ms. Evans stated digital is also helpful in an emergency situation and should be considered for future planning. Ms. McGrath stated they would like to have Mr. Smith meet with the Commission periodically throughout the year to get a status update.

Handicapped Parking Fund Account:

Ms. McGrath reported the current balance in the handicapped parking fund is \$44,860.78.

Other Business:

Ms. Evans stated there is no way to access Eaton Pond unless someone physically unlocks the gate which was installed for the Fire Department. She stated this is a town trail and it should be accessible to everyone. There are boulders in the way and wondered if they could be moved for wheelchair accessibility. Ms. McGrath stated they can discuss this with DPW.

Next Meeting: April 7, 2025

Adjournment:

Motion made by Crystal Evans to adjourn the Commission on Disabilities meeting at 7:05 p.m. Motion seconded by Scott Lamphere. The motion passed by a roll call vote: Crystal Evans-yes; Robin Torpey-yes; Mary Russo-yes; Scott Lamphere-yes