



# CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

## Commission On Disability

**Meeting Date: February 28, 2022**

### MINUTES

**Room Zoom**

**Time: 3:30PM**

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### “Funding for the Benefit of People with Disabilities” Subcommittee

#### Subcommittee Members Present:

**Rob Caruso, Chair, remotely on Zoom**

**Lucie Chansky, remotely on Zoom**

**Nancy Kritzman, remotely on Zoom**

#### Subcommittee Members Absent:

**Anne Marie Killilea,**

**Eileen Sandberg**

#### City Staff Present:

**Jini Fairley, ADA/504 Coordinator**

#### Guests:

**Councilor Bowman**

### 1. Introductions (3:30-3:35)

Meeting started at 3:35pm with introductions.

### 2. Approval of January 31, 2022 Meeting Minutes (3:35-3:40)

Rob asked if minutes were read and if there were any changes or comment. No comments. Lucie made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, Nancy seconded the motion. Rob asked all in favor say yes, three yes, no no's. Motion passed unanimously.

Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

Barney Heath,  
Director, Planning &  
Development

Amanda Berman  
Director, Housing &  
Community Development

Nika Sandal  
Planner  
Community Development

#### Members

Anne Marie Killilea, Co-Chair

Eileen Sandberg, Co-Chair

Jane Brown, Treasurer

Warren Abramson

Rob Caruso

Lucie Chansky

Lakshmi Kadambi

Nancy Kritzman

Darby Leigh

Sandra Lingley

Barbara Lischinsky

Girard Plante

Matt Volpi

Jason Rosenberg  
Chairman Emeritus

#### Advisor

Sergeant Michael B. Wade  
Newton Police Department

#### Staff

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ADA/Sec 504 Coordinator  
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### 3. Mission Statement (3:40-3:42)

A compilation of all present. Rob said this is the Funding Subcommittee for the Benefit of People with all Disabilities. This includes people with mobility, vision and hearing loss along with barrier removal as well as people with developmental and intellectual disabilities and mental health issues. This also include accessibility to programs and services essential to all people with all disabilities. This subcommittee's aim is to locate adequate sources of funding local, state and federal, to make Newton more livable and welcoming to people with all disabilities. It is imperative that funding be allocated on a timely basis because safety and other factors are usually a necessary component for people with disabilities. According to the latest statistics from Massachusetts Easter Seals 1 in 4 people or 25% of the population have a disability. As our population ages, living longer will only increase these numbers.

### 4. Vetted Projects for Consideration (3:42-4:10)

Rob suggested vetted projects that are near shovel ready. Rob asked for any suggestions from members or should we just rely on CDBG projects that the COD could not fund and are still out and ready to be worked on. Lucie suggested projects from the CIP 5-year plan 2023 – 2027 she named a number of the projects that seemed quite extensive. Rob agreed it is quite large and needs to be pared down to smaller projects that can be proposed for ARPA funding. The larger projects are better suited for the city Budget. Jini said there is a separate section in the CIP for accessibility. Jini noted that some of the CIP projects were so large such as complete school renovations that would fall under the Mass school grant program. Counselor Bowman made a comment that there a no projects listed in the next 5 years that are about accessibility in our village's centers. Jini suggested that maybe the committee should propose the list of projects that Rob was talking about.

### 5. CIP Projects for Consideration (4:10-4:20)

Jini mentioned we skipped item 4 which was the vetted projects. Rob said that these CDBG projects were the ones the COD could not fund. Rob referred to the individual items and their costs. Rob mentioned the City Hall campus project and Jini verified the cost at \$28K. Rob suggested the Beacon St. project and asked Jini about specifics. Jini said the Beacon St. project was about \$80K. Lucie asked if the presentation to the Mayor for the ARPA funding had to be specific or can we just ask for a block money from the ARPA funding so we can move the projects forward more quickly. Rob said we need specifics because we need a dollar figure to present for each project. Nancy said the benefit of doing a village center is also helping the business community as well as the disability population. Rob suggested 3 more projects that have dollar figures. Rob suggested the Newton Centre Beacon/Langley/Sumner streets curb cuts and crosswalks that was estimated at \$159K and Jini confirmed that. The next project in Newton Centre was the Trowbridge and Centre Streets estimated at \$28K to \$30K. Also the intersection of Watertown and Chapel Streets estimated at \$92K. Jini agreed that these projects would be best for ARPA funding as suggested by Lucie because Jini said ARPA funding needs to be spread out over 3 years. Jini said this is a good list to start with and maybe add some projects from the CIP as suggested by Lucie. Jini mentioned all the work done in Newton Corner and Councilor Bowman said it still need work to safely cross south to north. Councilor Bowman mentioned to keep in mind the MBTA communities and the village centers zoning. She also mentioned at one of the Mayors ARPA meetings it was important to make the city more walkable. Jini agreed and said the many of the projects Rob and Lucie suggested would step by step make the city more walkable. Nancy said adding lighting to the village centers would increase traffic in those centers. Rob noted that DPW and Shane Mark have been doing a good job with repairs. Jini mentioned that the safe routes to school program has benefitted from all the DPW work. Jini said there would be a bigger ask for sidewalks and that amount under CIP would be \$265K. Councilor Bowman talked about the Mayors override for schools etc. and how there should be a line item in the budget for people with disabilities. Rob agreed with the Councilor and explained how the origin of the funding for people with disabilities started with Rob and Girard wanting to have a line item in the yearly budget for people with disabilities. Rob talked about how the City of Boston was so deficient in curb cuts that sparked individuals to come to an agreement with the city of Boston per a consent decree in the amount of \$25M to replace and repair a number of curb cuts through out Boston. Councilor Bowman asked if we had a list of CDBG projects that have not been done and their amounts, Jini said we have a pretty good list since 2014. Jini recalled there is a very large project for Newton Highlands and asked Councilor Bowman when that might begin. Councilor Bowman responded that it will kick off in the spring. Jini mentions one more very large project is 4 corners project that can be between \$500K and 1M that's way down the CIP list. Jini mentioned that Tiffany had other projects going back and would Rob like to see the spreadsheets and he

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said yes. Councilor Bowman said the Mayor would probably be more responsive to smaller projects for the ARPA funding. Rob agreed and said that a number of smaller projects would probably benefit more people. Rob mentioned that a cityscape of Newton Centre would be next and Councilor Bowman agreed that the public process would begin this spring. Discussion on the width of sidewalks took place and how the tree cut outs need grates. Councilor Bowman asked if there are other things we should be thinking about. Jini said we should add up all the CDBG projects. Since CDBG doesn't cover sidewalks, we should add that in.

### 6. New or Existing Programs or Services (4:20-4:30)

Jini asked about Programs & Services because that will probably be part of the mission statement. Councilor Bowman asked if there was a needs assessment survey done for ARPA for people with disabilities. Jini said there was by Health and Human Services, she didn't see the results. Nancy Raised a concern about NewMO not having enough qualified drivers even though they have 2 wheelchair accessible vans. Jini noted they may need more funding for another qualified drive for the wheelchair van. Further discussion with Nancy convinced Jini that NewMO needed better planning for pick and drop off. Nancy suggested a mentoring program for students in high school to start working with people with disabilities and advocating on their behalf. No one has heard of such a plan, Jini talked about self-advocacy programs offered at independent living centers. Lucy commented that she is aware of self-advocacy groups that are required by the transition regulations for kids with IPS and 504's so when they are out in the world they can say this is what I need and this will help me.

### 7. Projects for ARPA (4:30-4:40)

Lucy asked if we should be putting a list for ARPA funding for the mayor. Jini answered yes for ARPA but not the budget. Jini recommends a list of projects for ARPA funding but if it includes programs you need to request funding to hire a person to run the program. This list should be a combo of projects that are infrastructure and not, add up the number then you would vote on it as a subcommittee and then bring it to the COD and educate them for the opinion. This is for ARPA and if it doesn't fly for ARPA you ask in a different way. Council Bowman suggested "Go for Broke" add all the CDBG projects to the list and submit it to the Mayor. Lucie voiced an opinion that the longer we make the list the worst the conditions appear. Jini says you can delegate one person to put the ARPA list together to present to the COD on the March 1, 2022 meeting. Lucy delegated rob to put the list together to present to the COD because she sent the information out previously to Rob. Lucie made a motion that Rob does this and Nancy seconded it. Vote was unanimous that Rob do it. Rob said yes.

### 8. Projects for City Budget (4:40-4:57)

This item was not specifically taken up but referred to in item #5.

### 9. Next Meeting Day/Time (4:57-4:59)

Due to conflicts, it was decided to hold the next meeting of this subcommittee on Tuesday, March 29, at 3:30.

### 10. Adjournment (4:59-5:00)

The meeting ended at 5:20pm.

## **NEXT MEETING DATE: March 29, 2022**

The location of this meeting is wheelchair accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities requiring assistance. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA/Sec.504 Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: [jfairley@newtonma.gov](mailto:jfairley@newtonma.gov) or (617) 796-1253. For Telecommunications Relay Service, please dial 711 or call City Hall's TTY/TDD line at 617-796-1089.