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BELMONT, MA**

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## **BELMONT DISABILITY ACCESS COMMISSION**

Minutes, Meeting of June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020 (Held via Zoom)

**Disability Access Commission Members in Attendance:** Janet H. Macdonald (chair), Mark F. Clark, Nan Donald, Patricia Groves, Esq., Emily Walsh, Erica Zidel

**Disability Access Commission Members Absent:** Michael Lanza.

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m., and ended at 8:05 p.m.

The meeting minutes for the last meeting on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 were approved.

Commission Chair Janet H. Macdonald noted that the terms of members Mark Clark, Michael Lanza, Emily Walsh, and Erica Zidel are expiring and those wishing to be reappointed must reapply by July 10<sup>th</sup>.

Discussion regarding accessibility of Town meeting was continued from the May meeting. Emily Walsh was the Commission's point person for the town regarding access issues for the June 16<sup>th</sup> Town Meeting. She reported that there were no requests for captioning or ASL interpretation. Mark F. Clark noted that Town Meeting approved money for sidewalk repair. Commission members will report back on any sidewalks encountered that are creating potential accessibility.

People may be unaware about both the right to reasonable accommodation to attend public meetings and/or to the availability of such accommodations, such as captioning. Discussion was held regarding the importance of raising awareness.

The personal impact of the pandemic was discussed, with issues including the lack of spontaneity, the lack of direct contact with loved ones, and concerns for persons in institutional settings such as nursing homes and psychiatric facilities addressed. The Council on Aging has suspended volunteer transportation services due to the pandemic. Belmont Helps, a local grassroots organization, is available to help connect neighbors to neighbors and other resources during this difficult time.

The Massachusetts Office on Disability will be holding a virtual inclusion meeting on July 20<sup>th</sup>. Notice will be sent out to all commissions on disability and municipal ADA coordinators.

Persons working as personal care assistants (PCAs) to persons with disabilities can get free masks and gloves delivered courtesy of their union, 1199 SEIU.

This was Janet H. Macdonald's last meeting as Chair, and she expressed her thanks to the other Commission members for their service. Incoming Chair Emily Walsh spoke for the Commission in both appreciating Janet's time as Chair and for her continued tenure on the Commission.

The next meeting will be determined later.

--Submitted by Nan Donald, Clerk.