

**Town of Acton
COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES (COD)**

**MEETING MINUTES
June 19, 2018**

Members Present: Madeleine Harvey (Chair), Ann (Nancy) Corcoran, Danny Factor, Lisa Franklin, Leslie Johnson

Associate Members Present: Joan Burrows, Franny Osman

Others: Joan Gardner (Board of Selectmen [BOS] liaison), Pesha Kokis (volunteer)

Executive session 9:30 am
The COD voted to go into executive session with a vote of 4 in favor and 1 against

Call to order 10:00 am

Citizens' concerns None

Announcements None

BOS report None

**Annual election of
COD officers**

Slate for June 2018-June 2019, unanimously voted/approved:

- Chair, Madeleine Harvey
- Vice Chair, Ann (Nancy) Corcoran
- Secretary, Joan Burrows
- Treasurer, Leslie Johnson

- Access Coordinators, Danny Factor and Joan Burrows

Minutes

Minutes of previous meeting approved with minor revisions

July Agenda

Preliminary agenda set for July

Strategic Planning, Interpersonal Communications, Retreat Follow-Up

Discussion included improved methods of interaction and ways to implement recommendations and exercises from May retreat so that COD can go forward with establishing a strategic 5-year plan. Salient points included the following, and the COD agreed to implement these recommendations:

- Allowing for more relaxed conversations such as we might have at a dinner party. Experiment with different methods; members need to feel more comfortable and have more time for discussion
- Use the “ouch” word if someone feels offended or insulted by another person’s comments
- Use colored cards to denote emotions/issues
- Too much like school? Just speak respectfully
- Switch facilitator roles from time to time. Chair of the meeting does not necessarily have to run each one
- Use “stacker” method of lining up members in order to speak, but also allowing for “direct response” option if someone has a comment specifically pertaining to what has just been said
- Appoint a “Vibes Watcher” who assesses the emotional climate of the meeting and can recommend stretching or taking a breath if the vibes are negative
- Go around the room to solicit members’ opinions on issues, then discuss

- Choose two volunteers to schedule techniques/act as facilitators. Franny and Pesha will work on choosing a method for each month
- Handle disagreements by using “I” statements (“when you say this, I feel this”) Unanimous vote to implement this practice
- Use the term “I respectfully disagree” to lessen meeting intensity and reduce interruptions
- Close each meeting with a short evaluation (how did people feel about the meeting?)
- Engagement level and enthusiasm of the group is a plus and we should capitalize on that but utilize the methods outlined above
- These are best practices
- Should they be included in COD handbook which Danny and Pesha will soon be updating?

It was agreed that this was a healthy and useful discussion and a good stopping point. Strategic plan discussions will be continued at upcoming meeting(s).

Adjournment 11:50 am

Documents None

Respectfully submitted by
Joan Burrows and Madeleine Harvey