



**City of Fall River
Massachusetts**

COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

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PAUL E. COOGAN
Mayor

Dennis Polselli
Chairman

Debbie Pacheco
Vice-Chairwoman

**Minutes of the Fall River Commission on Disability
Conference Call Meeting
Wednesday, March 10, 2021
2:00 PM**

Chairman Dennis Polselli called the meeting to order at 2:00pm

1. Chairman Dennis Polselli opened the meeting by reading the Open Meeting Law statement.
2. **Members Present:** Chairman Dennis Polselli; Commissioner Daniel Robillard; Commissioner Lisa Silva; Commissioner Ann O'Neil-Sousa

Others Present: Catherine Destremps, Health Department Clerk; SGT Kevin Dolan, Fall River Police Department Traffic Unit

Members Absent: Vice Chairwoman Debbie Pacheco; Attorney Gary Howayeck ESQ, ADA Coordinator

3. **Public Input:** No public input
4. **Approval of the minutes for the meeting of Wednesday, February 10, 2021**

Motion: Commissioner Daniel Robillard
Second: Commissioner Lisa Silva
All in favor; none opposed; abstentions: 1

5. Guest Presenter: SGT Kevin Dolan of the Fall River Police Department Traffic Unit to review and renew The Disability Parking Enforcement Police Detail Program.

SGT Kevin Dolan stated that they have two officers who work for the Disability Parking Enforcement. They work opposite days off and on and opposite shifts, so that they don't overlap. The officers patrol all parking areas and streets. They are looking for people who are parking in handicap spots without placards, with expired placards, cars blocking handicapped ramps or any other violations that pertain to handicap parking. The officer waits for up to one hour so they can actually speak to the violator. A lot of times this will resolve the issue because it will be an elderly person who just forgot to hang their placard up that day and in the spirit of the law that doesn't really merit fining someone. Sometimes community education is best at that point, instead of just issuing a ticket. The officer will explain to the violator that they need to renew the placard.

SGT Kevin Dolan then read a few reports to show how the officers handle certain situations. The following is one of the reports.

- a. On December 6, 2020 at 11:53pm the officer saw a car parked in a handicap spot at Market Basket. The car had a placard hanging from the mirror but it was placed so the officer could not see the placard numbers. The officer could see that the placard had expired in 2018. He then ran the registration and saw that the placard was issued to a 2007 Hyundai to a person in Falmouth, MA. The officer waited until 12:40pm. When the violator came back to the car, the officer asked who the placard belonged to and the woman stated it belonged to her mother who passed away on January 3, 2018. A citation was issued for misuse of a handicap placard and parking in a handicap spot without a proper placard.

Commissioner Robillard asked what the fine for a violation of a misused placard is. SGT Kevin Dolan replied that it is \$505.00 and then \$200.00 goes on a parking ticket for parking in the handicap spot without a proper placard.

Commissioner Robillard asked if the policy had changed for who the confiscated placard was turned into as he thought they were kept at the Police Department. SGT Kevin Dolan stated there hasn't been a policy change. The placard is brought to the police station and SGT Kevin Dolan makes a package that is sent to the traffic clerk. When the police officer charges someone with misuse of a placard, a report is generated and sent to the Medical Affairs Office of the RMV in Boston, MA. Sending the confiscated placard to the traffic clerk lessens the time for the person to get it back if it

was an honest mistake. If the person is found responsible for the misuse of the placard, the traffic clerk will either destroy it or ship it off to Boston.

Commissioner Robillard asked if Laura Ferreira was the officer that conducts the misuse hearings, as well as other violation hearings, when requested. SGT Dolan stated that Laura Ferreira is the one conducting the hearings. Commissioner Robillard also asked if SGT Dolan or one of the other officers that serve in this role working for the commission attend any hearings. SGT Dolan stated that, on occasion, they will attend a hearing but they do not attend all of them. If Laura has any questions, she knows ahead of time when the hearings are scheduled and they will send the officer that gave that particular fine and tag to the hearing.

Commissioner Robillard looked up the latest MOU that he could find between the Fall River Commission on Disability and the Fall River Police Department. Generally, he finds it to be acceptable – however, it dates back to 2016. He would like to see it updated between the commissioners and SGT Dolan. He feels that an hour for each stop is way too long and education is not necessary because parking in a handicap spot has been illegal for a very long time and people should know the rules by now.

Motion was made by Commissioner Robillard that the Fall River Commission on Disability consider revising the MOU between the Fall River Police Department and the Fall River Commission on Disability within the next sixty days.

Second: No second

Motion denied from the order of business.

6. Work Group Updates

- a. ADA Updates: Chairman Polselli stated that they had a very interesting work group meeting about audible pedestrian signals with presentation by John Perry, a national expert on audible pedestrian signals for the blind and hearing impaired. A follow-up meeting for the pedestrian signals will be held on March 31, 2021.

Chairman Polselli will also be looking into getting an update on the ADA Grant work being done at the Government Center from Tammy Moutinho for our next Commission on Disability meeting.

- b. Policies: No update at this time

c. Finance:

1. Formal vote on Renewing the Disability Parking Enforcement Police Detail Program

Motion was made by Ann O'Neil-Souza to renew The Disability Enforcement Detail Program for 2021.

Second: Commissioner Daniel Robillard for discussion and vote

No further discussion

All in favor; one opposed; abstentions: 1

2. Current Pooled cash totaled \$267,645.18, as of February, 2021.

- d. Outreach: Commissioner Lisa Silva stated she is still going over numbers with schools for the scholarship program. They are trying to figure out how many graduating students there are between all three schools. Chairman Polselli stated that he would like to have specific motions on how to allocate the \$32,000.00 between the three schools for our next Commission on Disability meeting scheduled for April 14, 2021.

7. **Old Business:** No updates, at this time

8. **New Business:**

a. Next meeting Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at 2pm via Conference Call

b. There will be an interesting forum by Jeff Dugan and the Massachusetts Office of Disability on Wednesday April 14, 2021 from 11:30am – 12:30pm. This is a series that they will be doing. One item of interest is outdoor dining and if proper accessibility rules are being followed. There is a registration but no charge. Contact Chairman Dennis Polselli for more information.

9. **Adjournment at 2:41pm**

Motion to Accept: Commissioner Daniel Robillard

Second: Commissioner Ann O'Neil-Souza

All in favor; none opposed; abstentions; 1

Documents Distributed

Agenda

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