



City of Malden

Malden City Hall
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Meeting Minutes - Final Personnel/Appointments Committee

Councillor Amanda Linehan, Chair
Councillor Chris Simonelli, Vice-Chair
Councillor at Large Carey McDonald
Councillor Paul Condon
Councillor Jadeane Sica

Tuesday, June 20, 2023

6:30 PM

City Hall, Room #108
215 Pleasant Street

Roll Call

Present: 5 - Councillor Amanda Linehan, Councillor Chris Simonelli, Carey McDonald, Paul Condon and Jadeane Sica

Also Present: Councillors Colon-Hayes and Winslow
Alicia McNeil-City Solicitor

Councillor Linehan called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Minutes to be Approved

[244-23](#)

Minutes of February 21, 2023 to be approved.

A motion was made by Councillor at Large McDonald, seconded by Councillor Condon, that the Committee Minutes of February 21, 2023 be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[245-23](#)

Minutes of May 2, 2023 to be approved.

A motion was made by Councillor Simonelli, seconded by Councillor Condon, that the Committee Minutes of May 2, 2023 be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Business

[191-23](#)

Appointment: Mayoral Appointment of Kathleen Higgins, 34 Forest Street, to the Disability Commission, said term to commence upon confirmation by the City Council, and to expire September 23, 2025. This appointment is to fulfill the unexpired term of Frank Cina who passed away.
(Confirmation Required)

Sponsors: Amanda Linehan

The clerk read Paper #191-23 into the record. Councillor Linehan opened the floor up to Kate Higgins and asked if she would like to tell the committee a little about herself and what interested her in the position
Kate explained she moved to Malden last July with her husband. She heard about the disability commission and wanted to get involved she is interested professionally and in

her personal life as a blind person and moving the needle on accessibility and disability inclusion. She currently works as an Associate Director of Disability University Resources at Harvard and helped come up with initiatives such as a disability, diversity celebration and a newsletter that is campus wide and other efforts to promote disability among staff faculty and students. She was previously the Associate Director of a college success program at Perkins School for the Blind. After leaving that position she joined the board and she chaired the educational programs committee. Her time is divided between pursuits of educational lines, advocacy and social justice movements. She formally held a position of as Research Assistant at Yale University where all of these interests began. She is totally blind and lost her vision unexpectedly as a teenager due to a virus. Prior to becoming disabled herself she didn't know anyone who had a disability so she took the time to learn not only about herself get training on how to be an independent person with a vision impairment but immersed herself in disability culture. She read all she could and watched movies, interviewed people informally who had disabilities just to learn.

One thing she learned is that the world is not built for people with disabilities and she wants to make an impact for herself but more importantly for others in future generations for people with disabilities.

Councillor Condon thanked Kate for applying and said he is sure she would be a good asset to the committee

Councillor McDonald asked Kate what is at the top of your list of the things to address in the committee

Kate said at the very top of her list is social inclusion followed by physical accessibility. We have a lot of diversity represented in Malden but too often the conversation discusses race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation. All of these things are separated by commas but actually disability is the great connector across all identity groups. She wants people of Malden to feel that they can bring their authentic self into the community. She said next month is disability pride month. She would like to see Malden integrate disability pride into existing events and occasions that are already happening.

Councillor McDonald welcomes a collaboration with Kate and he is grateful to continue the conversation when they have a chance.

Councillor Sica said she was amazed by all of Kate's accomplishments. She mentioned being a close friend of Frank Cina that Kate would have big shoes to fill but feels that she is looking forward to see everything that she is going to bring to the table and welcomes her to Malden.

Councillor Colon-Hayes thanks Kate for applying and educating them on disability month in July. She is hoping she brings some new ideas to the commission.

Kate is excited to be able to have this opportunity.

Councillor Linehan said she is impressed by all the things that Kate is looking forward to bringing to the commission and thanks Kate for coming in.

A motion was made by Councillor at Large McDonald, seconded by Councillor Simonelli, that the Appointment be recommended favorably to the City Council. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Other Business

Adjournment

A motion was made by Councillor Simonelli, seconded by Councillor Condon, that this meeting be adjourned at 6:45 PM. The motion carried unanimously.