



TOWN OF LUDLOW, MASSACHUSETTS
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

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Ludlow Commission on Disability

Minutes of meeting held on
November 21, 2024

Present:

Christopher Harkins, Chairperson
Diane Shea Walton, Treasurer
Joanne Odatto-Staab, Secretary
Jennifer Wright, Member
Tara Bronner, Member
Harry Mills, Member
Beverly Dudley, Member

Absent:

Tamara Huntley, Vice Chairperson (remote attempt)

- I. **Called to Order:** 6:11 P.M. Roll Call and Signature Attendance Sheet shared.
- II. **Review and Accept Minutes:** Tara Bronner motioned to accept, Diane Shea Walton, seconded, 6-0 in favor, Jennifer Wright abstained as she was not in attendance for the October meeting.
- III. **Budget/Expense Sheet:**
 - a. **Donations to the schools:** Jenny provided the "wish list" for the middle school. Tara will order and Harry will deliver the items when they arrive.
 - b. **Scholarship option:** Diane will contact Kathy Green who is the president of the Friends of the Senior Center. Kathy reached out (589-1689 kgreen554@gmail.com), to offer support and possible assistance regarding any future scholarship option. The scholarship/fund-raising focus will be to address education/learning, skill development and/or career training and/or the option to provide a First-Aid training or Self-Defense training for young adults with disabilities.
 - c. **Memorial Picnic Table:** Joanne ordered and purchased the memorial plaque from Awards Company, Springfield, MA. The cost of \$20 was submitted to Diane for reimbursement processing.
 - d. **Fundraising:** Tara spoke with Tony at the Villa Rose restraint about a fundraiser dinner to support a local cause. Tony said options would be available as of 4/16/25. Tara will attempt to secure that date. Discussion occurred as to options for the donation. Once a date is secured, Chris will post on the website.
 - e. **Community Access/Education/Town Outreach:**
 - i. Joanne shared update on her discussion with Jamie Toma (DPW). Jamie is in support of the Commission purchasing portable walkways and suggested it could be housed in one of the sheds in the Town Hall parking lot as access to them would be open at all hours. If they were housed at the DPW, they would only be accessible during working hours. Further exploration regarding measurement for the needed area distance and to secure specific cost to purchase the walkways.
 - ii. Joanne spoke with Jamie Toma (DPW) and met with Deb (Recreation Department), as to the location to install the accessible picnic table. It will be located to the right-hand side of the main building, on the paved area. The public Sani-can is also located in that area.

also on a paved, accessible area. Jamie will replace the current Sani-can, with a handicapped accessible one. Jamie suggested that several Commission members attend the Safety Committee meeting (December 12th) to discuss signage for handicap parking on the Howard Street gate and accessible "drop off" area currently only used for recreation employees and town officials granted access. Tara and Harry will attend the meeting. Tara will get pictures to share with the Safety Committee prior to the meeting. Joanne will contact Amy Kurtz regarding Commission attendance and being placed on the Safety Committee agenda.

iii. ***Supporting Town Businesses Accessibility:***

1. Harry shared there continues to be an issue with the extremely limited parking at Alexanders restaurant. Upon a recent visit, Harry noted that a patron of Alexanders parked in the handicap space without proper vehicle signage and denied access to a patron attempting to secure access in the handicap parking. Harry approached the individual and explained their error in using a designated space without proper vehicle identification. The patron complied and moved their vehicle allowing for legal access of another patron who thanked Harry for advocating. Alexandar's limited handicap parking spaces continue to be a challenge of town residence wishing to visit the restaurant.
2. Harry also shared a heart-felt story of walking with his service dog, Colby, on the town River Walk. A parent of a young child with significant disabilities, was so excited to see her engaged with Colby. Members agreed that our increased presence in the community is helpful for many of the town citizens.

IV. **Old Business/Correspondance:**

a. ***MOD Training:***

- i. Joanne provided a print-out of dates Jeff Dugan at MOD sent related to scheduling CAM virtual training. Each member will review their personal/work schedule and will inform Joanne at the January Commission meeting at to their choices. Joanne will reach out to Jeff to schedule the date. The 1st session option for MOD training begins on March 12th. Each session is approximately 5 hours 10:00-3:00PM. He will allow an exception for our members to attend Day 1 and Day 2 at different times. He requested that we submit names and email addresses, and he will register for us. We will need to submit a request through the ADA Coordinator at MOD for a recording of the training to be made and provided separately based on disability access need. It will be on a Zoom Meeting Platform (not a Zoom Webinar).

b. ***Subcommittees:***

- i. In addition to on-going participation and activities of the Commission, discussion occurred as to three different subcommittees: ***Town Accessibility (Handicap Parking/Program Accessibility)*** (Harry, Tamara and Beverly), ***Scholarships*** (Tara, Jenny and Chris), and ***Disability Commission Policies*** (Joanne, Jenny and Chris). Subcommittee members will connect and share responsibilities related to the area of focus and report monthly to the regular Commission meeting.

- c. ***Memorial Picnic Table:*** Joanne will drop off the Memorial placard for the picnic table to Jamie at the DPW. Jamie will get it attached and will be in touch with the Commission about a date he will be able to install the table at Whitney Park

V. **New Business:**

a. ***Member Updates/Commission membership:***

- i. Chris reached out to James Gennette, Selectman Liaison for assistance with setting up a meeting/introduction time to reach out to BJ Church (ADA Coordinator), as she has not responded to him as yet.
- ii. Review occurred as to the structure and process of new members, guidelines (understanding and possible related experience), having at least 6 months to 1 year

experience and attendance as a Commission member before holding offices, expectations about attendance and being able to offer remote attendance on meeting dates that present a challenge to access the public space. Jenny, Diane, and Joanne will discuss and explore further with James Gennette.

A motion to adjourn was made by Tara Bronner, seconded by Beverly Dudley, Vote 7-0 in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

The next meeting date: January 23, 2025, 6:00 PM Town Hall, Room #1, in the First Floor Conference Room. There will not be a December meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Joanne Odat-Staeb, Secretary

Minutes accepted as read:

By Christophe Markus Date 1/23/25

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