



**TOWN OF LUDLOW, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**COMMISSION ON DISABILITY**

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2025 MAR 18 10:00 AM  
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TOWN OF LUDLOW

**Ludlow Commission on Disability**

Minutes of meeting held on  
January 23, 2025

**Present:**

Christopher Harkins, Chairperson  
Joanne Odato-Staeb, Secretary  
Jennifer Wright, Member  
Tara Bronner, Member  
Harry Mills, Member  
Beverly Dudley, Member

**Absent:**

Tamara Huntley, Vice Chairperson  
Diane Shea Walton, Treasurer

- I. **Called to Order:** 6:04 P.M. Role Call and Signature Attendance Sheet shared.
- II. **Review and Accept Minutes:** Tara Bronner motioned to accept, Beverly Dudley, seconded, 6-0 in favor.
- III. **Budget/Expense Sheet:**
  - a. **Donations to the schools:** Chris shared a thank you email sent by the middle school personnel for items donated to their programs. Harry shared that they were very excited by the items they received. Tara will submit for reimbursement funds of \$405.00 which was approved at prior Commission meeting.
  - b. **Scholarship option:**
  - c. **Memorial Picnic Table:** Joanne will reach out to Beverly Barry's daughters to update them on the status and the plans to have a small dedication event when the table gets installed.
  - d. **Fundraising:** Tara will follow up with Tony at the Villa Rose restaurant about a fundraiser dinner to support the potential Commission Scholarship. Once a date is secured, Chris will post on the website.
  - e. **Community Access/Education/Town Outreach:**
    - i. Tara and Harry attended the December Safety Committee to discuss handicap parking signage drop-off area. The Safety Committee is in support of the option but is seeking some documented regulation information related to the required opening fence opening for access as well as related parking dimensions. Tara and Harry will gather the information and ask Tamara to visit the site for additional support to resolve any concerns. Jame Tonia changed the current Sani-can and replaced it with a handicap accessible one that is in the identified area near to the picnic table future placement.
    - ii. Further exploration regarding measurement for the needed area distance and to secure specific cost to purchase portable walkways will be discussed at the next Commission meeting.
    - iii. **Supporting Town Accessibility:**
      1. Joanne and Chris shared information regarding an email received informing the Commission that Ludlow had received a Municipal ADA Improvement Planning Grant in the amount of \$88,000. This email was generated by an individual

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interested in securing a position to assist with implementing this grant. Chris immediately reached out to BJ Church to get information and clarification regarding the contents of the grant application and the importance of including the Ludlow Commission members. Chris has not heard from BJ (and she did not attend this meeting as previously agreed to). Chris will reach out again and include Marc Strange and James Genette. According to the MOD website (which administers the grant), the Municipal ADA Improvement Grant provides funding to Massachusetts cities and towns to improve accessibility for people with disabilities. The site further states the funding supports updating a municipality's ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition plans and making capital improvements that improve access or remove barrier in municipal programs, services and facilities. Chris and Joanne will continue to seek additional information. Joanne will also research prior assessments completed during MOD CAM training in 2001 (Town Hall Walk Through) and 2002 (Ludlow Community Center).

#### **IV. Old Business/Correspondance:**

##### **a. MOD Training:**

- i. Joanne reviewed the dates for the MOD CAM training and requested members to provide dates of availability for the training ASAP. Joanne will reach out to Massachusetts Commission for the Blind to ensure Beverly's ability to participate in the training. Beverly may require additional support from another Commission member to fully participate.

##### **b. Subcommittees:**

- i. **Town Accessibility:** Harry, Tamara and Beverly. Joanne shared the Handicap Parking/Program Accessibility document.
- ii. **Scholarships:** (Tara, Jenny, Chris) Tara will connect with Diane and Kathy Green (who is the president of the Friends of the Senior Center). Kathy reached out (589-1689 kgreen554@aol.com) to offer support and possible assistance regarding a future scholarship option.
- iii. **Disability Commission Policies** (Joanne, Jenny, Diane). New Member Procedure: Jenny drafted and shared a possible "New Member Process" outlining steps of inviting and supporting new applicants to the Commission. Jenny spoke with Carrie Ribeiro, town Human Resources Department and Marc Strange to investigate the process used by other committees. Carrie shared the form used for town Volunteer/Internship programs and a Release of Claims, Indemnity and Hold Harmless Agreement for us to use as part of the process. Jenny asked if members would review her draft so she can present a formal process for the next meeting. After a quick review, all members liked the draft presented but will look at it closer in order to incorporate the process as a formal approach with new members.

#### **V. New Business:**

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

- i. Harry is getting a cochlear implant February 20 (will not be at the February meeting). He shared the process through the VA and is very excited. Jenny and Tara will continue to reach out to him during this process and will update other members. Members discussed helping with meals etc. while he is recuperating.
- ii. Beverly has a new email address that was shared with other members. Joanne will update member and attendance lists.
- iii. Joanne will reach out to Tamara to confirm her continued interest in membership and any support she may need to fully participate.

##### **b. Amendment to Commission By-Laws:**

- i. In addition to including the New Member process, continued discussion occurred related to new members having at least 6 months to 1 year experience and attendance as a Commission member before holding offices as well as expectations about attendance and

being able to offer remote attendance on meeting dates that present a challenge to access the public space. Joanne shared copies of the Commission's current By Laws for members to review prior to next committee meeting to vote on any changes. Jenny will reach out to James Genette to discuss as well.

- c. **Town Report:** Tara shared that the Commission needs to complete the Commission's update to the Annual Town Report for February. With prior support from Beverly Barry, Tara had completed this update. She will draft the report and share with all the Commission members for feedback.

A motion to adjourn was made by Tara Brenner, seconded by Jennifer Wright. Vote 6-0 in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

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The next meeting date: February 27, 2025, 6:00 PM Town Hall, Room #1, in the First Floor Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

*Joanne Odat-Staeb*

Joanne Odat-Staeb, Secretary

Minutes accepted as read:

By Christopher Smith Date 3/7/25