



TOWN OF LUDLOW, MASSACHUSETTS
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

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CHAIRPERSON: CHRISTOPHER HARKINS
EMAIL: Dis.Comm.Ludlow@gmail.com
TTY: (413) 583-5668

ADA COORDINATOR: BJ CHURCH
EMAIL: Building@ludlow.ma.us
TELEPHONE: (413) 583-5600

Ludlow Commission on Disability
Minutes of meeting held on January 22, 2026

Present:

Christopher Harkins, Chairperson
Joanne Odat-Staeb, Secretary
Jennifer Wright, Member
Tamara Huntley, Member

Absent:

Harry Mills, Member (Extended Medical Leave)
Diane Shea Walton, Treasurer
Beverly Dudley, Member

I. Called to Order: 6:10 P.M. Role Call and Signature Attendance Sheet shared.

II. Review and Accept Minutes: Tamara Huntley motioned to accept, Christopher Harkins seconded, 3-0 in favor, Jennifer Wright abstained.

III. Budget/Expense Sheet:

- a. **Budget Status:** Diane was not in attendance; however, Chris must submit next year budget request along with the Town Report. Discussion occurred to request the same amount of funding.
- b. **Future Purchases:** Joanne contacted Global Industrial regarding replacement of the vandalized seat of the accessible picnic table. They do not sell parts and only offer a one-year warranty which ended June of 2025. At this time, no changes will be made to the table, in fact, with the seat missing, the accessibility increased to allow for a fully motorized wheelchair. Joanne will reach out to Jamie Tomas DPW to advise. Beverly Dudley purchased the Ryban Beta eyewear but was unable to attend the January meeting. She will share information at the next scheduled meeting. Discussion occurred about purchasing a Braille Label maker to assist with various recommendations contained in the ADA Accessibility report. Jenny shared the list and cost for items to purchase for East Street School. Joanne will follow-up with the order on Amazon.
- c. **FY 2026 Goals:**
 - i. "I Live Here, Come Meet Your Neighbor" highlighting individuals with disabilities residing in Ludlow. Jenny asked Tamara to submit an article about herself that includes information from Tamara's recent webinar. Jenny will work on a draft for Disclosure Release letter for anyone being presented in the Register via the Commission support.
 - ii. Self-defense class for individuals with disability through the Taekwondo program in Ludlow. Joanne will further discuss this option at the next meeting.

IV. Old Business/Correspondence:

a. **Subcommittees:**

- i. **Town Accessibility and Services:** (Harry, Tamara and Beverly)

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1. **Island Pond Cemetery:** Tamara has asked for assistance to file a grievance regarding not being able to access her husband and father's grave site. Joanne will reach out to Jamie Tomas at DPW for direction as to resolving the issue
2. **Ludlow ADA Accessibility Report:** Marc Strange emailed regarding contact for Joanne will reach out to Josh Carpenter, Planning Board as a contact for the implementation of recommendations. BJ Church is also listed; however, she has not responded to requests to meet from the Commission. Joanne will send her another request. Chris will pick up a print copy of the report from Marc. Chris will update the Commission agenda to include the language of accessibility options.
3. **Town Calendar:** Joanne explored the town website and found a calendar of posted events as well as a Funding List for events under the Ludlow Cultural Council. The Commission should continue to explore the town site and calendar to ensure events held are accessible to members of the community with disabilities.
 - ii. **Disability Commission Policies:** (Joanne, Jenny, Diane)
 1. **ADA Web** Chris reached out to Brittney regarding the ADA Web page that Amy was requesting. Chris will follow up with Brittney and Amy.
 2. **ADA Postings:** Joanne will post the updated print outs from the town regarding accessing town meetings as well as filing a grievance.
 3. **Town Report and Budget:** Chris will submit the reports due for February.
 - iii. **Scholarships:** (Jenny, Chris, Diane) Diane will check with Marc Strange about developing setting up a "Friends of the Disability Commission" to apply for an 5013c non-profit, allowing for access to submit grants, etc.
- b. **Wayfinder's:** Chris was informed that the information is available virtually however the Commission members would prefer an in-person discussion directly. Chris will reach out to have a representative attend a meeting.
- c. **Vacancies:** Tara submitted her resignation from the Commission due to health and personal reasons. The position for Vice Chairperson will need to be addressed. Joanne Odato-Staeb made a motion to place Harry Mills' membership on extended medical leave, Christopher Harkins seconded, 4-0 in favor. Chris will re-post the vacancies and Joanne will check the town website on vacancies. It will be important to follow the new protocol with potential applicants.

V. New Business:

- a. **Mass EDP (Equipment Distribution Program):** Joanne shared information that individuals with disabilities (including vision impairment, not blindness and hearing impairments, not deafness) are entitled to free adaptive equipment (including an iPhone 16e), through this state funded program. Mass.gov/massedp
- b. **Ludlow Power Choice Program:** Joanne also shared information posted on the town website regarding a presentation that was done at the Senior Center related to a set cost utility program for the delivery of electricity. The fixed rate is until Nov 2027 and is available to all residents.
- c. **Easter Seals group:** Tamara shared that she is helping to support a series of disability related information sessions for teens/young adults ages 14-26. The sessions are free, 12-2:00 (lunch provided) held at Stavos office.
- d. **Conflict of Interest Certification:** All Commission members need to take and/or recertify their training on the Conflict of Interest. Kim Batista, Town Clerk will maintain the listing of all members that complete the training and will advise accordingly. Joanne will follow-up with all members. Both Jenny and Joanne have completed at this time.

A motion to adjourn was made by Tamara Huntley, seconded by Jennifer Wright, Vote 4-0 in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:52p.m. **THE NEXT MEETING DATE: February 26 2026, Town Hall, Room #1, First Floor Conference Room.**

Respectfully submitted,


Joanne Odat-Staeb, Secretary

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Minutes accepted as read:

By Christopher Marking Date 2/26/26