

TOWN OF LUDLOW, MASSACHUSETTS
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

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Ludlow Commission on Disability
Minutes of meeting held on August 27, 2026

Present:

Christopher Harkins, Chairperson
Joanne Odato-Staeb, Secretary
Diane Shea Walton, Treasurer
Tamara Huntley, Member
Guest: Debra White – Member applicant

Absent:

Jennifer Wright, Member
Beverly Dudley, Member

I. Called to Order: 6:00 P.M. Role Call and Signature Attendance Sheet shared.

II. Review and Accept Minutes: Tamara Huntley motioned to accept, Diane Shea Walton seconded, 4-0 in favor.

III. Budget/Expense Sheet:

- a. **Budget Status:** Diane shared that the available current budget is \$4,342.00 due to expenses from the prior fiscal year being applied to the current budget. Diane also shared that we have \$39.00 from prior sales/donations.
- b. **Future Purchases:** DPW offered to replace the accessible picnic table that was destroyed last winter by the snowplows. Joanne will reach out again to Jamie Tomas at DPW about getting this provided without costs from the Commission funds. BJ informed Chris that the MOD grant application that was completed by Josh Carpenter from the Planning Board (\$300,000.00), was awarded to the town, BJ stated that many of the proposed items/areas were not ADA compliant and that she was holding back approval until amendments were completed. Chris will follow up with BJ for on-going updates. The Commission will explore purchasing portable braille markers to support some of the recommendations made in the ADA Accessibility Assessment.
- c. **FY 2026 Goals:**
 - i. Joanne stressed that the Commission needs to keep the ADA Accessibility Assessment a major focus of attention to establish better ADA compliance. In addition, the Commission will review the report to determine which school program will be identified for funding of accessibility support options.
 - ii. Jenny shared (via email) a Release of Information form to allow personal info to be shared. Joanne Odato-Staeb motioned to accept the Release of Information form, Diane Shea Walton 2nd, 4-0 in favor to accept. Joanne will reach out to Jenny to connect with Carrie Ribeiro at the town office. Diane will reach out to the Ludlow Register to identify who is the contact person for publishing "Meet Your Neighbor" articles.

- iii. Assistive Equipment Device Event (tabled to be discussed at next meeting): Further discussion occurred regarding hosting an event promoting a variety of accessible equipment thru UCP (Iris Long or Shelby Scortis), Stavos, Massachusetts Equipment Distribution (Christopher Murohy) and other to identify agencies to discuss their accessibility equipment programs. Diane will reach out to First Church to see if they might be able to provide space for an evening event (possibly 5:30-7:30 on a weekday). Chris will reach out to Harry to retrieve the Enhanced Listening Device he had borrowed.

IV. Old Business/Correspondence:

a. Subcommittees:

i. Town Accessibility and Services: (Tamara and Beverly)

1. **Island Pond Cemetery:** Joanne reached out again to Jamie Tomas to address the accessibility issue to the family grave sites. Joanne provided the actual grave site and names, but we still have not been notified. Joanne will follow up with Jamie regarding this matter as well as access to the town storage shed.
 2. **High School Sport Complex:** Chris will follow up with BJ to connect with Tim Brillo for updates on the ADA compliance issues
 3. **Ludlow ADA Accessibility Report:** Note above being addressed in collaboration with BJ Church. Commission will identify next school program based on the recommendations in the report for program donation. Chris will also connect with BJ to ensure the town complies at all voting sites (parking, equipment etc.)
 4. **Accessible Equipment:** Shared information with BJ as to items and will address locations currently being stored with DPW
 5. **ADA Web** Chris will continue to follow up with Brittney and Melissa regarding the ADA Web page that Amy was requesting.
- b. **Wayfinder' Housings:** 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. **Conflict of Interest Training:** Diane continues to experience computer access and time challenges.
- d. **Vacancies:** Joanne Odato-Staeb motioned to seek clarification from the town if the Commission can establish a temporary "mentorship" to co-chair some of the vacant positions on the board, Christopher Harkins seconded 4-0 in favor. Debra White, guest, expressed an interest in joining the Commission, completed the application for Volunteer/Internship Program and will meet with Chris as an informal interview to discuss further. Joanne will send Deb's application to the town office and Chris will support a letter for Deb to submit to the board of Selectmen. There were 5 new applicants. Joanne responded to each with an invitation to attend a meeting. Deb White came. Identified Commission members will reach out individually to the others.

V. New Business:

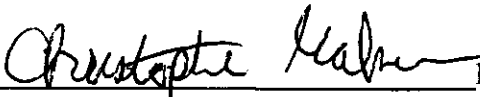
- a. Tamara communicated via email that she would be available to represent the Commission at the upcoming Health Fair supported through the Ludlow Health Department to be held on August 21, 2026, and Chris and Tamara will attend the Color Ludlow with Love event on 8/29.
- b. **National Employment Month for People with Disabilities:** Tamara shared October is the National Employment Month. Discussion occurred regarding promoting two local employers, Ludlow Big Y and the Basketball Hall of Fame. Joanne will reach out to BHof and a possible contact for Big Y.
- c. **Advanced MOD CAM training:** Joanne will forward email to BJ about upcoming MOD training.
- d. **Meeting Dates:** Chris will book on the calendar all the upcoming meetings until the end of the year.

A motion to adjourn was made by Joanne Odat-Staeb, seconded by Diane Shea Walton, Vote 4-0 in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m. **THE NEXT MEETING DATE: September 24, 2026, Town Hall, Room #1, First Floor Conference Room.**

Respectfully submitted,


Joanne Odat-Staeb, Secretary

Minutes accepted as read:

By  Date 9/24/26

The Ludlow Commission on Disability will, upon request, provide auxiliary aids and services leading to effective communication for people with disabilities including qualified sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, documents in readable format, and other ways of making communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, mobility or vision impairments that may otherwise limit their access.