



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

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Ludlow Commission on Disability

**Minutes of meeting held on
August 24, 2023**

Present:

Tara Bronner, Chairperson
Joanne Odato-Staeb, Secretary
Harry Mills, Member
Diane Shea Walton, Member
Christopher Harkins, Member
Jennifer Wright, Member

Absent:

Beverly Barry, Vice Chairperson
Julie DiCesare, Treasurer
Beverly Dudley, Guest

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- I. Called to Order:** 6:00 P.M. Role Call and Signature Attendance Sheet shared.
- II. Review and Accept Minutes:** Jennifer Wright motioned to accept, Diane Walton seconded, 6-0 in favor.
- III. Budget/Expense Sheet:**
 - a. Julie was not present to give a formal update on the budget, however the members agreed to purchase a 4th chair to have available for community events. Diane will follow-up with the vendor. Harry shared that Costco would not accept the Tax-Exempt statement and was told that the town needed to set up an account. Harry will speak with Julie as to who we should contact to get an account formalized.
- IV. Upcoming Trainings/Increasing Town Awareness of Commission: (the goal is to be present at least 1 event quarterly)**
 - a. **Library Stakeholders meeting Outreach:** Jenny shared that there is a change in the administration at the library. Jenny will email Melissa Rickerson about support from the Commission related to disability resources. Tara will reach out to July Siebecker from the Youth Program at the library, to attend a meeting and work with the Friends of the Library.
 - b. **Lunch and Learn Senior Center:** Marc Strange agreed to assist with scheduling a training (hopefully the MOD Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities) with the Senior Center. Commission members would like to try to schedule a training in the fall. Tara will follow up with MOD. Harry will reach out to Julie to contact the presenters from the Home Modification program to see if there were any recent applications as a result of the Commission in-service provided during the Lunch and Learn at the Senior Center.
 - c. **Park and Recreation outreach:** Diane was asked by the Parks and Recreation committee if members from the Commission would be available to participate on the Open Space Committee. No one is available to commit currently. Discussion occurred related to assisting the Parks committee with addressing increased access for community members with disabilities and if there was a need for modified equipment. Diane will connect again with the Parks committee.
 - d. **Community Outreach:** Joanne had copies available for information about the Reverse 911 (copied from the newspaper article sent in). Joanne will look to get this information written on a formal flyer to pass along to community members. Tara will be reaching out to MOD to look possible dates to schedule the MOD Emergency Preparedness Training for People with

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Disabilities. Also, Tara will share all of the resources MOD provided from the training provided (recently came in her email account), to all Commission members. Tara reached out to Pauline Matusick, Public Health about speaking at a Commission meeting. Pauline said she wouldn't be available until January. Tara also spoke with Leslie Ward, ADA Coordinator who will be attending the September meeting. Leslie shared with Tara that she is not sure of her full responsibilities as the ADA coordinator. Joanne will provide a copy of the Commission by-laws in preparation for Leslie's attendance. Joanne also shared in earlier days of the Commission, members were provided with and reviewed building plans to look at accessibility concerns. Members expressed an interest in doing this again which will be further discussed with Leslie.

Ludlow Cultural Council outreach: At this time, \$88.00 was collected towards the donation to support disability access to theater productions for individuals needing deaf interpreter services. The members decided to wait until after the Celebrate Ludlow event to see if additional funds could be added to that amount. Joanne will reach out to Jennifer Poutre and Christina Climo to inform them of the donation plans. Discussion occurred about having a "Donation Jar" on the table to hopefully increase giving. Tara and Jenny reached out to Michelle from the Cultural Council for more details about an Art event they had mentioned previously to highlight artists with disabilities. Tara will also reach out to Valley Art Newsletter to see about promoting the event once there are more specific plans. Jenny and Tara will look to attend the September or October Cultural Council meeting. This art "show" option would attempt to promote art from individuals with disabilities preferably Ludlow residents.

- f. **Celebrate Ludlow 250th Town Celebration:** Diane has secured a table site location for the Commission to host at the October 14th event at Memorial Park. The event is from 12:00-7:00 pm. Tara will generate a 2-hr block time sheet and share for Commission members to sign up to be present at the table throughout the day.
- g. **CAMP Training:** Tara will reach out to MOD to determine the next CAMP training. Some discussion occurred regarding hosting a training through this Commission. Funds have been approved for member training under this FY budget.

V. Town Physical Access

- a. **Accessible handicap parking:** Harry shared information that the Mazier Funeral home has repainted the handicap parking signage. Diane had assisted Harry by contacting the funeral home as well. Harry shared that the car vacuums at the Sunoco station by Big Y, is not easily assessable and often there is a vehicle parked in the spot labeled for handicap parking that does not have handicap sticker or plates. Harry spoke directly with the young attendant who was adamant that Harry needed to provide some sort of formal identification that he was from the Ludlow Commission on Disability and that the attendant stated he was told he could park in the identified spot by his supervisor. When asked, the attendant refused to provide the name or contact information of the supervisor, so Harry shared his contact information asking for the supervisor to contact him directly regarding regulation on handicap parking. Harry revisited the site on a different day and was informed the attendant no longer worked there and the supervisor was still not available. Harry will follow up again. The previous issue with CVS still has not been resolved and will be shared with Leslie during her attendance at the Commission meeting. Handicap parking, as well as the parking access at Cha ice cream since the recent renovations also is a concern.

VI. Correspondence/Old Business New Business

- a. **Correspondence:** No new correspondence. Harry asked about getting some sort of identification card stating membership with the Town Commission on Disability. We had previously been informed that we would no longer be having formal appointment cards so it can be a challenge to verify our membership. Joanne will reach out to Marc Strange about this concern.
- b. **Commission Positions/Members:** Beverly Dudley is interested in becoming a member of the Commission and will submit a letter to the Board of Selectmen. Jenny offered to share the information she submitted in her application. Tara asked if there was any accommodations

Beverly might require (visual) to feel she has full access to information. Beverly stated at this time she uses large print from her home computer but would make sure to inform members if she needed any assistance.

c. **New Business:**

- i. **Social Media:** Diane discussed some options and possible resources to investigate starting a Facebook page. Chris offered to assist as he has some experience with social media as well. This will be discussed further. Discussion will continue regarding developing a "resource" brochure that might include access to Caption Call, Eversource options, free specialized equipment from agencies, disabled veterans' program, etc. that might be included on a website and/or through social media. Diane will reach out to Marc Strange for further clarification as to guidelines for social media presence.
- ii. Jenny shared information about the Color Ludlow with Love event that is geared to address access for all individuals. The event is on 9/16 10:30-1:00. Jenny would like to have a Commission table at the event but will explore further if there are others to assist her with set up on the tables and tent.
- iii. Dine-Out events for fund raising to support disability awareness and access to local groups or agencies was discussed as possible options to create awareness and generate donations.
- iv. Tara will continue to work on putting together a draft to publish an article in the Register and Reminder about the updates of the Commission's activities.
- v. Diane shared information that came to her through her position with the Lions Club looking for funding for a ramp. The family in Ludlow has three children, one who uses a wheelchair for mobility. The family was provided with a ramp to access the front of the house, but they are seeking funding to provide a backyard ramp to allow the child to play in the yard. Diane will reach out to the Lion's club to gather more information. Diane will also reach out to Julie to access her contact at the Home Modification program to see if that program might be an option for the family.

d. **Not Discussed from prior meetings:**

- i. **Town ADA Compliance** – The note from the prior meeting is as follows: "The town will be conducting its Annual Walk-through to address ADA compliance.
- ii. **Live Closed Caption of ADA meetings** – The Commission was informed that virtual/zoom presentations of meetings can occur which would provide additional community access, however not for individuals with hearing impairments. This option will continue to be addressed.

A motion to adjourn was made by Harry Mills, seconded by Diane Shea Walton, Vote 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m. The next meeting date: Thursday September 28, 2023 6:00 PM Town Hall, Room #1, in the First Floor Conference Room. A reminder that to access the Commission email page the password is "ability&488"

Respectfully submitted,


Joanne Odatto-Stach, Secretary

Minutes accepted as read:

By Keri Brown Date 10/26/23

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