



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

BEVERLY  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

2024 NOV 15 A 7 54

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**Ludlow Commission on Disability**

Minutes of meeting held on  
September 26, 2024

**Present:**

Christopher Harkins, Chairperson  
Tamara Huntley, Vice Chairperson  
Joanne Odato-Staeb, Secretary  
Jennifer Wright, Member  
Beverly Dudley, Member

**Absent:**

Diane Shea Walton, Treasurer  
Tara Bronner, Member  
Harry Mills, Member

- I. Called to Order: 6:04 P.M. Role Call and Signature Attendance Sheet shared.
- II. Review and Accept Minutes: Beverly Dudley motioned to accept, Jennifer Wright, seconded. 4-0 in favor, Joanne Odato-Staeb abstained as she was not in attendance for the August meeting.
- III. Budget/Expense Sheet:
  - a. Joanne updated members that the picnic table has been received at the town DPW, has been assembled and is ready for installment. Joanne will draft a dedication statement for Beverly Barry and well as reach out to Jamie at the DPW and Debbie at Whitney Park for a site visit. Chris will reach out to see if BJ is also interested in being present for planning.
  - b. Diane previously shared that there is a lot of steps to secure options to apply grants and/or offer scholarships of any sort. A 501c is needed. Joanne will contact the Marc Strange to find out if this can be done through the town or another committee/commission within the town. Also, if there are parameters regarding scholarships/donations etc. using commission funds or funds generated through events. Beverly will check to see if the Ludlow Lions Club could be a fiscal conduit for funds. Jen will speak with the Ludlow Senior Center as they had previously offered a college scholarship. It was decided by members that a scholarship/fund raising focus will be to address education/learning, skill development and/or career training for young adults with disabilities.
  - c. Jen shared that the Commission received \$45.00 at the Color Ludlow with Love as donations. She will make sure Diane gets the funds to place in the cash box. Tara had previously mentioned contacting the Villa Rose again for a fund-raising event. Jen will contact Colleen Hennessy for Social Emotional learning at the Middle School. Joanne mentioned the option to provide a First-Aid training or Self-Defense training for individuals with disabilities.
- IV. Upcoming Trainings/Increasing Town Awareness of Commission: (the goal is to be present at least 1 event quarterly) and Accessibility:
  - a. 250 Celebration Events:
    - i. Tamara will reach out to Diane regarding on-going accessibility to the events scheduled. When using the Memorial Park/gazebo site, many individuals that use assistive mobility devices (wheelchairs, walkers etc.) cannot access booths on the grass. Tamara will also research if there is a solid, level, portable walkway that could be purchased by the Commission and loaned out to groups creating fully accessible events in town.

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**b. Community Access/Education:**

i. The Commission will begin to generate a listing of businesses and venues within the town to contact regarding creating accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Some locations discussed were the new Mexican restaurant on East Street (BarBurrito), and Vanishing Valley events held in their back lot. A committee will be formed to visit and begin to educate regarding developing and/or increasing accessibility options. Chris will reach out to BJ Church to invite to a Commission meeting to discuss accessibility.

**c. MOD Training:**

i. Joanne will again attempt to reach out to Jeff Dugan at MOD related to scheduling CAM virtual training. To date, we have not heard back. Bill Hirsh from the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind wondered if the JAWS program instead of a Screen Reader might be a better option for persons with visual impairments. Joanne will bring this up to Jeff.

**V. Correspondence/Old Business New Business**

**a. Commission Vacancy:**

i. Currently there is one vacancy. Chris has been posting on the Ludlow Forum as well as the Commission Facebook page. Several people have expressed interest but have not followed up with attending a Commission meeting for more information. Chris will repost. Joanne will contact the town clerk to update the town page as well. Chris will contact the Ludlow Registry to see about posting within the paper.

**b. New Business:**

i. **Town Charter:** Discussion occurred regarding the possible effects of the change on the Commission on Disabilities. Chris will reach out to James Gennette to get additional clarification.

A motion to adjourn was made by Joanne Odat-Staeb, seconded by Jennifer Wright, Vote 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

**IMPORTANT CHANGE:** The next meeting date: Thursday October 24, 2024, 6:00 PM Town Hall, Room #1, in the First Floor Conference Room. November meeting will be Thursday 21, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Odat-Staeb, Secretary

Minutes accepted as read:

By Christopher Markus Date 10/24/24