



Town Clerk Date/Time Stamp

Merrimac Commission on Disability Meeting Minutes

TOWN OF MERRIMAC

Meeting Date: September 7, 2022

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Meeting Location: Hybrid: Merrimac Senior Center, 86 West Main Street, Merrimac, MA and Zoom

Members Present:

Christopher Gaudet, Chairman
Robert Hart, Vice Chairman
Kathleen Sullivan, Secretary
Ann Marie Murphy (Virtual), Member
Charlotte Eileen Stepanian, Member
Margaret Sullivan, Member
Brienne Walsh, Member

Members not Present:

John Joseph Murphy, Treasurer
Bob Sinibaldi, Member/ADA Compliance Officer
Anne Brown, Alternate

Also Present:

Jeremiah Murphy (Virtual), Veterans' Affairs

Agenda Item No: I
Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Agenda Item No: II
Approve Agenda

Robert Hart made a motion to accept the agenda for the September 7, 2022 meeting. Eileen Stepanian seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion. The agenda was accepted.

Agenda Item No: III
Approve Minutes from July 13, 2022 Meeting

Commission on Disabilities members considered the minutes. Brienne Walsh made a motion to accept the minutes from the July 13,, 2022 meeting. Robert Hart seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion. The minutes from the July 13, 2022 meeting were accepted.

Agenda Item No: IV
Old Business

1. \$45,000 Earmark Request for ADA Improvements at Sweetsir and Donaghue Schools sent to Representative Mirra and Senator Dizoglio

Earmark was received and once the grant contract is received the COD chair will send it to the Board of Selectmen for approval.

Brienne Walsh made a motion to authorize Christopher Gaudet to send the grant contract to the Merrimac Board of Selectmen for approval once it is received.. Margaret Sullivan seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion.

2. Draft Copy Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policies, Procedures, and Practices

Questions from the town legal team were answered but there has not been a response as of yet.

3. Light Department ADA Items

No updates, Light Department is still working on items.

4. Deaf Inc. Information Sheet (Update from Brienne Assisted Listening Devices)

Brienne Walsh reported that Deaf Inc. will send a sample listening device for her to trial within the next two weeks. She also shared the Our Neighbors' Table offers interpreter services and will share information with her. The Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has a website with price lists for interpreters but the wait time is up to three months. Jeremiah Murphy shared that the Veterans' Administration often works on getting services for veterans. Many veterans have hearing issues and/or tinnitus and have needs for services and equipment. The Veterans's Administration helps with applications for phones with captions that are federally funded.

5. MOD Grant

Christopher Gaudet provided updates on the MOD Grant. If the COD applies for the grant to complete the sidewalks on Church Street, there may be issues meeting the June 30 timeline because these are engineering issues that need to be addressed. Christopher Gaudet reached out to Robert Sinibaldi regarding relocating the sidewalk project to a different section of town but has not heard back yet. Grant needs to be submitted by the end of September so the COD will apply for a \$100,000 grant for new sidewalks on Union Street Extension and Locust Street. A \$45,000 grant will also be applied for for new sidewalks in a location to be determined by COD and DPW. Christopher Gaudet will reach out to Robert Sinibaldi again regarding sidewalks to be replaced..

Agenda Items: No. V

1. Meeting with Sweetsir and Donoghue School's Principal Stephanie Dembro and Assistant Principal Krista Niles to review ADA Transition Plan and to Discuss \$45,000 Grant for ADA Improvements

Meeting was productive and school administrators were receptive. They showed good understanding of the plan and custodians will begin to work on no cost items now through next summer.

2. Emails and Correspondence

CODA has sent many emails to Margaret Sullivan. Christopher Gaudet will forward this correspondence to members.

COD members discussed having an article written by John Guilfoil's company to let the public know about the COD and projects that have been funded through grants and earmarks. Kathleen Sullivan made a motion to hire John Guilfoil to write an article about the Merrimac COD. Robert Hart seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion.

Agenda Item No: VI
Open Discussion

Margaret Sullivan shared information from CODA. Scholarships may be available.

Jeremiah Murphy from the VA shared that in 2020-21 there were 80 disable veterans in Merrimac. He explained that the VA works to connect veterans with health care services needed in addition to service covered by health insurance. They link veterans with health care options and try to do outreach through the Council on Aging so members are aware of resources that are available.

Agenda Item No: VII
Adjourn

Next Meeting: October 5, 2022 Hybrid Meeting at the Merrimac Senior Center, 100 East Main Street, Merrimac, MA and through Zoom

Eileen Stepanian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Robert Hart seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

List of Documents and Other Exhibits Used at Meeting:
CODA August 2022 Meeting Notes

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kathleen Sullivan, Secretary

Minutes Approved by Committee on:

Chairman Signature:

Vice Chairman Signature:

Secretary Signature: