



Merrimac Commission on Disability Meeting Minutes

TOWN OF MERRIMAC

Meeting Date: December 4, 2019

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Meeting Location: Merrimac Public Library, 86 West Main Street, Merrimac, MA 01860

Members Present:

Christopher Gaudet, Chairman
Robert Hart, Vice Chairman
John Joseph Murphy, Treasurer
Kathleen Sullivan, Secretary
Ann Marie Murphy, Member
Anne Brown, Member
Margaret Sullivan, Member
Jeffrey MacLeod, Member

Members not Present:

Bob Sinibaldi, Member/ADA Compliance Officer
Charlotte Eileen Stepanian, Member

Agenda Item No: 1

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

New Member for Merrimac Commission on Disability, appointed by the Merrimac Selectmen: Jeffrey MacLeod. Anne Brown made a motion to accept the new member, John Murphy seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted Jeffrey MacLeod as a new member of the Merrimac Commission on Disabilities.

John Murphy made a motion to accept the agenda for the November 6, 2019 meeting. Robert Hart seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion. The agenda was accepted.

Agenda Item No: 2

Approve Minutes November 6, 2019 Meeting

Approve minutes from Merrimac Commission on Disability meeting on November 6, 2019 with the following changes: Delete part of Agenda Item Number 8 regarding budget.

Christopher Gaudet proposed that the Merrimac Commission on Disability should receive gifts and grants for funding and not have a line item from the town. The Commission will be funded with grants and gifts. Members considered the amended minutes. Robert Hart made a motion to accept the amended minutes. Margaret Sullivan seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion. The minutes from the November 6, 2019 meeting are accepted.

Agenda Item No: 3

CODA Conference Call Update- Anne Brown

Discussion (see attached notes), No action needed.

Agenda Item No: 5

Parking Bylaws

Christopher Gaudet had a discussion with Merrimac Police Chief Eric Shears. Chief Shears shared that Handicapped Parking Signage needs to be visible through the windshield of the car that is being parked in a Handicapped Parking Space. The signs need to be between five and eight feet tall. Robert Sinibaldi will be contacted to check the existing signage. Chief Shears also want the existing Handicapped Parking spaces to be painted to indicate that the space is a Handicapped Parking space. Chief Shears was thinking of a parking violation charge of \$150.00. The handicapped space at Town Hall is the closest spot to the access point of Town Hall and nearby businesses. Chief Shears requested the Merrimac Commission on Disability set one rate for violations. Merrimac Commission on Disability needs to request that Merrimac Selectmen approve 22G article to approve that Handicapped Parking violation funds will go to the Merrimac Commission on Disability. Members questioned whether the Board of Selectmen or a Town Meeting vote is needed to approve the change in parking violation fees. James Murphy made a motion to charge \$150.00 for a violation to Handicapped Parking. Ann Marie Murphy seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion. Anne Brown made a motion to put change in parking fee on the Board of Selectmen agenda to get their approval. Kathleen Sullivan seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion to add M.G.L. 40, Section 22G to the Board of Selectmen agenda.

Agenda Item No: 6

Grant Update-Ramp-Robert Sinibaldi

This Agenda Item was tabled because Robert Sinibaldi was not in attendance.

Agenda Item No: 7

Sidewalks

Discussion: Massachusetts Department of Transportation wants to complete Broad Street sidewalks on the Broad Street bridge. Merrimac Commission on Disability is concerned that there is no sidewalk access from Main Street to the bridge. There are grants available for sidewalks but they are competitive and applications for the grants are only available for application once a year. The town does need safer sidewalks. It is possible that the Merrimac DPW could get a revolving account for sidewalks then the Merrimac Commission on Disability could contribute grants or funds. Hot top is cheaper than

concrete. Sidewalks are expensive because removal of trees and existing concrete is involved.

Agenda Item No: 8

Resident Concerns

Discussion: An individual who lives in town is disabled and has financial issues. The condominium building has issues and management is not responding to requests to remedy the situation. New England Independent Living could not help and the individual needs financial assistance.

Open Discussion

Northeast Independent Living e-mailed the Merrimac Commission on Disability regarding an ice skating event in Portsmouth. They sponsor events for people with disabilities. Christopher Gaudet will add a link to the Merrimac Commission on Disability website as a resource.

Agenda Item No: 9

Adjourn

Next Meeting: February 5, 2020 at 6:30 at the Meeting Room at the Merrimac Public Library, 86 West Main Street, Merrimac, MA 01860.

Robert Hart made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Margaret Sullivan seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

List of Documents and Other Exhibits Used at Meeting:
Notes from Anne Brown from CODA Conference Call

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kathleen Sullivan, Secretary
Minutes Approved by Committee on:

Chairman Signature:



Vice Chairman Signature:



Secretary Signature:



CODA conference call 12/04/2019

Call time 12:00pm

No formal agenda for today's meeting.

Alternative Housing Voucher Program has a \$12 million budget for the upcoming year.

Now is the time for local agencies to put in for vouchers if needed in their communities.

The administrative cost for each voucher is \$40 under this program. Most agencies gravitate toward the larger voucher programs because they believe the administrative costs are not worth it.

AAB Directorship is still an ongoing thing. Conflicting information coming from the governor's office and other sources regarding the status. Information was given to a commission member that the hiring committee has 2 excellent candidates and a decision would be made by the entire Hiring Committee. When the commission member talked to a member of the hiring committee, the member had no idea that there were any candidates being considered.

There is a meeting set with Governor Baker on December 12th to give CODA input on where the commissions stand on who should have responsibility for hiring the AAB directorship. Updates to follow in January.

Affordable housing: property production plans occur typically every 5 years. Planning boards are active on this process to determine the direction of town growth, particularly pertaining to 40b development and accessibility issues. The question arose in one community on whether 40b developments were being held to ADA standards of accessibility. The general consensus is that they historically have not been because commissions have been inactive with town planning boards so accessibility of a percentage of units is being overlooked and developers are taking advantage of this.

Big topic of discussion was in snow removal, clearing curb cuts, town ordinances, fines and fees for both commercial and residential.