



TOWN OF SHREWSBURY

Commission on Disabilities Meeting
Richard D. Carney Municipal Office Building
100 Maple Avenue
Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545-5398

July 11, 2023

Commission on Disabilities (CoD)

1. Call to order 7:02pm
2. Attendees in person: Diane Burns, Diane Tonelli, Ashley Falandys, Deb DelDotto, via teleconference: Susanna Meyer, Charbel Sakr. Absent – Leonora Ryan.
 - a. Town staff member present: Justin Dobson.
3. Meeting Minutes from 5/9/23 Commission on Disability review. Edits made with attendees during meeting. Susanna Meyer motioned to approve the minutes with changes seconded by Ashley Falandys. All approved: Diane Burns, Diane Tonelli, Ashley Falandys, Deb DelDotto, Susanna Meyer.
4. New Business:
 - a. Community Preservation Committee representative, Jason Molina, joined the meeting.
 - i. Affordable housing, open space, preservation- he asked the committee if there were any areas of concern, needs.
 1. Deb DelDotto: asked about walkable spaces.
*Jason reviewed that there is a plan for open space with handicap parking at one of the town's walking areas.
 2. The old schoolhouse is a current project of the historical society.
 3. Ashley Falandys discussed that the playgrounds in Shrewsbury are all in need. This includes flooring/ground surface and fencing. Families who have a child with physical disabilities need the playgrounds to be fully accessible. The schools are limited in access, and none are fenced. Dean Park is the only one with fencing for children who elope.
*Jason stated that there is a project currently to fix the playgrounds.
 4. Diane presented picnic table for accessibility and bathrooms at Dean Park are an area of need.
 5. Charbel presented that on sidewalks low branches impact walking for visually impaired.
*Jason reviewed that the private homes are not required but the town highway director will reach out to private homes as needed. Such needs should be reported to his department.

- b. Handicapped parking fund update
 - i. Police department has ordered new tickets with the new fine rate on them. No tickets have been written so far.
 - ii. Funds request review: Justin presented that other local towns do not have a formal process. What occurs is that the applicant sends a letter requesting funds for a need. The commission reviews and votes on whether to approve. This then goes to the select board as a warrant to be signed off by the manager.
- c. Library Braille books update: The library director reached out to the Perkins School and they have offered to send on loan to the Shrewsbury Public Library a few braille books every couple months. The book list of the first loaning presented to commission. The books will be rotated every couple months. Charbel presented that he is really happy with this solution.
- d. Susanna presented that an idea for funds from handicap parking fines is to add hearing adaptation to areas in Shrewsbury that include the senior center and library. Susanna stated she could go to the senior center and talk with the director about needs and put a quote together. Diane Tonelli shared that this was a good project and great opportunity.
 - i. MOD project grant program opens August 1st. Perhaps this hearing adaptation project could be written up for this grant. Diane Tonelli presented that the “Aging and Dementia Friendly” Massachusetts may have a focus on hearing. Diane will share information with Susanna regarding COA contact.
- e. Town Certification Awards:
 - i. Town businesses are awarded citation from CoD for their efforts in Employment, and accessibility at their businesses.
 - 1. Diane Tonelli suggested pulling together all the items, update as needed and create a plan to roll out at the September townwide event. We could create a QR code to add to items to increase ease in accessibility.
 - 2. Diane Burns added that there is a link for businesses giving information regarding accessibility supports.
 - 3. Charbel recommended that Pria, Director of Town Library, be a candidate for the award.
 - 4. The CoD plan would be to have the ‘nominations received’ on the meeting agenda. Susanna added that this is a great opportunity for local businesses.
 - f. Adaptive Recreation Programs: Ashley Falandys presented information on Laurel Rossiter, an individual with a strong background in adaptive recreation. She would like to come to the commission and present to the group her ideas and some information.
- 5. Old Business:
 - a. ADA Transportation update: There is a new flyer on the Shrewsbury Council on Aging regarding their transportation process and calendar. It does not include that ADA transportation. Diane Burns presented that the transportation schedule is going to change per a letter her daughter received today.
 - b. Parking Funds; Justin presented that there are no funds noted at this time and that an idea for use could be to do a survey of town members.
- 6. Other Business:
 - a. Diane Burns is resigning from commission at the end of July. She was first appointed to CoD Aug 3, 2010- thirteen years of service. Thank you, Diane, for your service to the commission.
 - b. Spirit of Shrewsbury is in September.
 - i. Commission will apply for a space and the CoD will plan in the September.
 - ii. In the past we have had invisible disabilities interactive experience, Perkins School for the blind did an interactive, a service dog was present. Justin shared that there is an E911 form that we could present to the town.
 - iii. We need to bring weights, table, tent.
- 7. Next meeting September 12, 2023

8. Adjourned: 8:22pm. All in favor- Diane Burns, Diane Tonelli, Deb DelDotto, Ashley Falandys, Charbel Sakr and Susanna Meyer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane C Tonelli CoD Secretary.