

Andover Commission on Disability
Wednesday, March 22, at 6:30 PM

Justin called the virtual meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

Roll call: Kathleen Dolan, Y; Stephen Surette, Y; Eileen Reilly, Y; Trish Leelman, Y; Katherine Ananis, Y; Justin Coppola, Y. David Kahan and Carlene Bell Flanagan arrived after Roll Call.

Liam Flanagan attended.

Liaison Reports & Announcements

No Reports tonight. Jemma, Janet, and Gail were at the Andover Leadership Academy.

Approval of February Minutes

It was moved by Stephen, seconded by Kathleen, and voted 7-0 to approve the February 22, 2023 Minutes.

Roll Call: Kathleen, Y; Stephen, Y; Katherine, Y; Trish, Y; Eileen, Y; David, Y; Justin, Y.

Old Business:

Stephen reported Spring/Summer paving season will be starting soon. Shawsheen School area begins tomorrow.

ADA Updates – Justin reported a conversation with another disability commission who is struggling and said ACOD is well organized with its mission, activities, web-site and meetings. There is Town support, which is not always the case in other communities. Janet Nicosia will be getting recognition at the New England ADA Center in April. Her work and the Town of Andover will be highlighted as an example of how to do a transition plan in the “Why it Matters Course”.

Justin reported the following:

Program Access – The Conservation Commission accepted the non-ADA boat launch and said Ellen Townson did a great job explaining that as part of the variance process for that site, the town has committed to building an ADA accessible one, which is Nason’s Landing. Its funding will be voted at Town Meeting.

Home Loan Modification Program – This is an interest free loan program for those with disabilities or Seniors who wish to make their home accessible. The Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation in partnership with Mass. Rehab administers the funding and vetting of applicants. Over 3000 homes have been part of

this program. The contact person is Catherine Tammany: ctammany@commteam.org
Telephone is (351) 322-5512.

Trish asked about what areas are covered and Justin said homes in Massachusetts are covered.

AARP grant application – Senior Center listening garden grant submitted, and Justin wrote a letter of support.

Ironstone Farm – the new Director Terri Whalen asked if ACOD is interested in a site/field trip visit. Trish, Katherine, Steve, Eileen, Carlene, and David said they were interested.

Action Item: Those interested will meet March 29, at 11:00 a.m. at Ironstone Farm. There will be a half hour tour followed by an optional ADA assessment led by Justin and Steve. Justin will follow up with details.

David reported that in anticipation of the Merrimack College neuro divergent project, he had a discussion with a friend who is a doctor who works with people with neurodivergence.

Announcements

April 12: Seminar from the New England ADA Center “Why It Matters” sharing stories and talking about transition plans. It will be on Zoom and will highlight what Andover is doing, especially regarding the transition plan.

April 26: Zoom ACOD meeting as the State has not yet voted on whether zoom or in-person will be used going forward. ACOD has a waiver and does not have to have in person meetings.

May 1: Town Meeting with assistive listening. Eileen and Justin will be available that night 6:15-7:00PM at the ACOD booth to assist with downloading the app to smart phones; others welcome to join.

Kathleen gave an update on **AndoverTV**. She said the Andover police are scheduled to do a segment on Project Lifesaver either April 18 or a Tuesday in May due to a recent snow cancellation. Also, on **May 2**, Janet will talk about ADA and the self-evaluation transition plan and how IHCD played a role in Andover. Valerie Fletcher will also be there from IHCD.

Kathleen said a session on autism is currently on hold until possibly September, and that Fred Snell, program director has been very accommodating. Justin said having the various sessions on the ACOD website has been great for accessing the series and that it is going well. Also, Kathleen noted Janet did a show a few years ago. Justin said members or liaisons are welcome to think about and/or present a segment.

Eileen asked if there was an updated document showing older terms versus current ones for the spectrum of disabilities, and if so, this might be a good subject for

AndoverTV. Kathleen agreed and said programs should strive to be interesting and this would be a good topic.

Action Item: Justin has the “Preferred Disability Terminology document” Eileen referred to and he will distribute it to members. Individuals may differ, but ACOD decided on a “person first” methodology. Members are invited to review and provide updates.

Carlene said even people with various disabilities might differ with respect to terms used and how people choose to identify.

Trish said she prefers to be identified by her name and Carlene clarified appropriate terms would not be a substitute for names but rather would be used in discussions, for example. Eileen added that it is about making things as comfortable as possible for people.

The **next Andover Commission on Disability meeting** is scheduled for April 26, 2023, with Zoom at 6:30 P.M.

Adjournment

It was moved by David, seconded by Eileen, and voted 8-0 to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 P.M.

Roll call: Eileen, Y; David, Y; Carlene, Y; Katherine, Y; Stephen, Y; Kathleen, Y; Trish, Y; Justin, Y.