

**TOWN OF AMHERST
COMMITTEE on DISABILITIES MINUTES
November 15, 2021**

Present:

Tom Roetzer (Chairperson); Councilmember Deborah Bucki;

Voting members: Kathryn Barillari; Rachel Martin; Erica Rodman; Susan Zummo; Chris Minkler; David Wantuck ("David"); Barbara Robertson; Patrice Freeman

Resources: Luci Miranda; Robert McCarthy; David Whalen ("Dave")

Interpreter: Barbara, Deaf Access Services

Excused: Quinn Bushen

Guest: Ann Demopoulos (Deputy Town Attorney)

Public Attendee: Helaine Sanders

The meeting was called to order at 18:33.

I. Minutes

- a. September 2021 minutes
 - i. Minutes approved as read
 - ii. Chris – first; Rachel – second

II. Guest Speaker

- a. Ann: Addressing questions related to Committee rules of order and process
 - i. Debbi: Section on Membership Composition
 - 1. Why was this section removed?
 - 2. Ann: Removed to avoid redundancy as it's already spelled out in local town code
 - 3. David W.: Is this following Robert Rules of Order?
 - a. Ann: Yes
 - 4. David: If there is a 2 yr term limit, is there the possibility of an extension? The Deaf Community is very small. How can we represent them?
 - a. Ann: We are reviewing all Committees and trying to make them self-explanatory; Working on clarifying how to renew members; Positions must be offered to community members first before re-appointments;
 - b. Helaine: How can we run the meeting according to Roberts Rules of Order if Committee hasn't adopted them?
 - c. Ann: With a small committee like this one it's not so much a problem, but if there are issues with voting then Roberts Rules of Order is something to fall back on; This is a recommendation Committee; All Committees follow Roberts; More formal committees have parliamentary; Tried to establish how to run the meeting and how to vote; Lots of

people do not understand the basic rules; This committee is required to have rules;

- i. Ann: There is an issue with terms; Limited by local law, but Committee can do what it would like beyond that
- d. Debbi: Clarification on Roberts Rules of Order
 - i. if something out of the ordinary occurs then we fall back on these rules to know how to proceed
- e. Ann: Yes;
 - i. Example: If you make a vote and decide to “unvote”, the members who made the motions have to take them back
- f. Luci: As a resource person, I do not vote, is this a Committee rule? What is my term limit?
 - i. Ann: According to town law there is a 2 yr membership term; Committee can decide to reappoint; We are working to define “resource person”, etc
- g. Tom: Definitions for Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary; Are the definitions finalized? Can we have co-chair instead of vice chair?
 - i. Ann: You can have whatever you’d like; Trying to follow open meeting law; Can work with co-chair and redefine this in Committee rules; Only requirement is to have a Chair in local law
- h. Helaine: Glad the Board is doing this; I’ll follow them all; What is my status of the Committee? Request to be re-appointed;
 - i. Debbie: Helaine resigned on September 30th; Subsequently sent an email to Town that she resigned as Co-chair only; September 30th email confirmed resignation; Researching term limits, we have allowed three 2 yr terms; Town Attorney is reviewing this;
 - 1. Helaine: Sending the email was a mistake
 - 2. Debbie: Email is an official record
 - 3. Helaine: Intention was to resign as co-chair; Would like to remain a member
 - 4. Tom: Suggestion to revisit this matter in January
 - ii. Ann: Does the Committee want a Co-Chair?
 - 1. Tom: Either way is fine; Vice Chair model is ok
 - iii. Barbara: Is our goal with this process to establish a blueprint?
 - 1. Ann: Goal is to make sure Committee can run regardless of who is on it

2. Barbara: Does each committee have an Statement of Purpose that can be discussed and voted on
3. Ann: I've done several already, and I suggest people do a work session to review the rules; Certain things must be in the rules; Annual report must be made to Town Board and this hasn't happened
4. Barbara: Thank you to Dave W. for presenting to the Board in the past
5. Dave: Happy to offer guidance moving forward
6. Debbie: Is the Committee ready to vote on the proposed rules of order now?
7. Tom: Yes. Any questions?
 - a. Helaine: Am I allowed to ask questions?
 - b. Barbara: Make motion to adopt the Amherst Committee on Disabilities Rules of Order as modified by Ann
 - i. Ann: Under Section Q, some committees have suggested adding that the annual report is filed with the Town Clerk; Motion to include this as well
 - ii. Barbara: Under "keeping minutes" it says to get names and addresses of people; Is this a violation of privacy?
 - iii. Ann: This is important for preserving the record; If someone is attending a meeting and making suggestions but they don't live here, their suggestion won't hold weight
 - iv. Debbi: This requirement is only for guests
 - v. Sue: Is a zip code only ok?
 - vi. Ann: No, we need the record clear
 - vii. David W.: Second Motion
 - viii. Chris: All in favor
 - ix. Tom: Call for vote
 - x. Unanimous
 - xi. Debbie: Thank you to Ann for attending.

xii. 19:10 Ann left meeting

III. Old Business

a. Tom: 2022 Event

- i. Sue: Interested in creating a brochure to email to Committee in early 2022
 1. Facts about autism; Information about autism in the community
- ii. Barbara: Lots of children transitioning into adulthood on the spectrum and considered “high functioning”; Should still have the opportunity to be more visible in the community; Increase awareness of the life-long challenges
- iii. Sue: Can work “stages” and resources based on ages of individuals
- iv. Dave W.: How are we coordinating with Summit/Autism Services? We should have consistency with information sharing; Should include them in content
- v. Sue: Both should be listed as primary resources; Valuable for school-age child
- vi. Helaine: Ensuring there is inclusion in the community with advertising and gaining expertise for the event
- vii. Sue: Expressed she is not comfortable organizing an event right now
- viii. Helaine: Dave and I will organize the event if I’m allowed
- ix. Sue: Events can easily get out of hand; Start with a brochure
- x. Rachel: Offer to help with brochure language
- xi. Luci: Recently went online to see what the Committee is supposed to be about (Statement of Purpose) and the website talks about how it was created to ensure the Town is accessible; What is the main focus of the Committee? What is the role of the Committee?
- xii. Barbara: I love the baby step approach that is awareness based, but in terms of events I am hesitant to host an event; Perhaps best to support other organizations with what they’re doing
- xiii. Luci: Health Fair presence; Trying to work with UB; Committee focus is to be a liaison to Town Board
- xiv. Debbie: Preparing a brochure would be related to awareness on disability issues
- xv. Sue: A brochure is good for the community, but an event would be too much
- xvi. Debbie: Reads Mission Statement
 1. Improve Town compliance with ADA; Consider other issues relevant/important to disabled Town residents
- xvii. Chris: This was discussed at length – hosting an event – paired down from various events to one event

- xviii. Barbara: We are still in a pandemic; Brochure can be made available at events that are already in community; Would like to make motion to support Sue in the brochure and that the Committee will not host private events
 - 1. Patrice: second
 - 2. Tom: call for vote
 - 3. David W.: Need to clarify motions
 - 4. Debbie: This is one motion
 - 5. Barbara: Clarified motions
 - 6. Helaine: Wants to host an event; Vote is unnecessary; Other people in the group want to host an event; I don't want to vote there cannot be an event moving forward; No reason to have this vote
 - 7. Tom: Motion to vote on creating a brochure on autism
 - a. David W.: second
 - b. Tom: Call for vote
 - c. Unanimous
 - 8. Erica: The Committee is not currently functioning seamlessly; Excessive amounts of time being dedicated to arguing and rehashing old ideas; There are issues with accessibility (curb cuts, APS signals not working, access issues with service dogs) in Amherst that should be taking precedence over what is essentially a "party"; Several other agencies that are already spreading awareness on autism; As notetaker, it is very frustrating when the conversation in the meeting is not respectful as it is difficult to follow
 - 9. Barbara: Motion for Committee to not sponsor any events as an independent Committee for the year of 2022
 - a. Tom: Call for vote
 - b. Unanimous
 - 10. Debby: Back to Patrice for meeting dates
 - 11. Patrice: Motion to establish 2022 dates January 10th, February 15th, March 14th, April 11th, May 9th, June 13th at 6:30PM
 - a. Rachel – second
 - b. Tom: Call for vote
 - c. Unanimous

IV. New Business

- a. Tom: Stepping down as Chair in January
 - i. Please submit accomplishments for the annual report
- b. Debbie: Selections for Chair, Vice Chair, etc will be in January
 - i. Ending terms for 2021; Patrice, Barbara, Tom; Once resource person is clarified you may determine if you'd like to do that
- c. Chris: Question regarding continuing as a member
 - i. Debbie: This depends on Town Attorney's decision and clarification on terms
 - ii. Chris: Offered resignation
- d. Luci: Can a resource person be reappointed?

- i. Debbie: Clarification from attorney coming
- e. Luci: Thank you to Erica for note-taking
- f. David W.: Suggestion to up transcript for captions for future secretary via 3rd party
 - i. Debbie: Will look into it
 - ii. David W.: Must be done pre-meeting; Will increase accessibility
- g. Debbie: Thank you to Bob McCarthy

V. Closing

Adjourned: 19:55

Tom: Motion to adjourn

First: Chris

Second: Sue