

Town of Amherst Committee on Disabilities
Meeting Minutes January 13, 2025
6:41 PM - 8:05 PM

I. Introduction:

Chair called the meeting to order at 6:41 PM.

II. Roll Call Present:

- Erica Rodman (Chair)
- David V. Whalen
- Chong Cheng
- Luci Miranda
- Jamie Mobberly
- Barbara Robertson
- Tom Roetzer
- Jamie Sheldon
- Jeffery Zeplowitz
- Frances Knab

Absent:

- Lindsey Cassick (excused)

Town Representatives:

- Angela Marinucci (Town Board Liaison)
- Robert McCarthy (ADA Coordinator)
- Bill Prenevau (Building Department)
- Marty Taggart (Secretary to Council Members)

Guests:

- Alex (he/him) Buffalo
- Rayna
- Endell Osuna

III. Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve November 2024 minutes passed unanimously.

IV. Old Business:

A. Amherst Police Department Training

Erica Rodman reported that she and former Vice Chair David Wantuck will conduct in-service training for Amherst Police in February. Topics include interacting with Deaf individuals, using Video Remote Interpreting, and handling service animal situations.

B. Bike Path Emergency Phones

Erica Rodman informed the Committee that only one emergency phone on the bike path is currently operational. The Committee agreed to retain this as an ongoing project.

C. Website Accessibility Updates

The Committee agreed to continue working with the IT department to improve accessibility of the Committee and town websites.

D. Town Disability Awareness Training

Dave provided an update on the proposed mandatory training for town employees. The Committee voted to keep this item on the agenda.

V. New Business

A. Officer Elections

1. Erica Rodman was re-elected as Chair for the 2025-2027 term.
2. Vice chair and Secretary positions remain vacant; Elections tabled until February meeting.

B. 2025 Meeting Calendar

The Committee set the following meeting dates for 2025: Feb 10, Mar 3, Apr 14, May 5, Jun 9, Aug 11, Sep 8, Oct 6, Nov 3. No meetings in July and December.

C. In-Person Meeting

Luci proposed planning one in-person meeting in 2025. The Committee voted to add this to the agenda for further discussion.

D. Inclusive Playground Equipment

Jamie Sheldon raised concerns about the lack of inclusive playground equipment in schools and parks. The Committee agreed to address this issue in future meetings.

E. Snow Removal Concerns

Bill from the Building Department explained the process for reporting uncleared sidewalks. The Committee discussed exploring potential assistance programs for homeowners with disabilities.

F. Annual Report

The Committee approved the 2024 annual report. Erica Rodman will present it at an upcoming town board work session.

G. New Member Appointment

The Committee voted to recommend Endell Osuna for appointment to the Committee.

VI. Motions Passed

1. Motion to approve November 2024 minutes (Luci Miranda/Jeffrey Zeplowitz)
2. Motion to elect Erica Rodman as Chair for 2025-2027 term (Barbara Robertson/unanimous)
3. Motion to set 2025 meeting dates (various motions for each date)
4. Motion to retain Amherst bike path emergency phones project (Erica Rodman/Jeffrey Zeplowitz)
5. Motion to continue website accessibility updates (Tom Roetzer/Jamie Mobberly)
6. Motion to continue town disability awareness training initiative (Dave Whalen/Erica Rodman)
7. Motion to add in-person meeting to 2025 agenda (Luci Miranda/Chong Cheng)
8. Motion to approve 2024 Annual Report (Erica Rodman/Dave Whalen)
9. Motion to recommend Endell Osuna for Committee appointment (Erica Rodman/Tom Roetzer)
10. Motion to adjourn (Luci Miranda/Tom Roetzer)

VII. Next Meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2025, at 6:30 PM via Zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Erica Rodman, Chair