

Town of Amherst Committee on Disabilities Minutes

Date: June 9, 2025 on Zoom

Start Time: 6:32 PM

End Time: 8:05 PM

Roll Call (Present)

Members:

Erica Rodman – Chair

Jeffrey Zeplowitz – Vice Chair

Dave Whalen – Member

Tom Roetzer – Member

Chong Cheng – Member

Lindsey Cassick - Member

Jamie Sheldon – Member

Fran Knab – Member

Jamie Mobberly – Member

Luci Miranda – Member

Endell Osuna – Member

Town Officials:

Angela Marinucci – Liaison

Zach Garlick – HR Department

Robert McCarthy – ADA Coordinator

Excused:

Barbara Robertson – Secretary

Guests:

Mary-Diana Pouli (Youth and Recreation Department)

Guest Speaker Presentation: Mary-Diana Pouli, Youth and Recreation Department

Mary-Diana Pouli provided an extensive overview of the Youth and Recreation Department's adaptive programs and accessibility initiatives:

1. Adaptive Programs:

- Adaptive Social and Wellness Club for adults 18+
- Teen adaptive recreation program
- Adaptive swimming program at Clearfield Pool
- Culinary programs for teens and adults with disabilities
- Homeschool PE program including students with physical disabilities

2. Park and Playground Projects:

- New accessible playground at Audubon Library

- Inclusive Challenger baseball field at Dellwood Park
 - Royal Parkway reopening with accessible features
 - North Forest Park renovations
 - Potential therapy pool at North Forest
3. Amherst Central Park Updates:
- Ice ribbon removed from plans
 - Accessible playground still planned
 - Ongoing discussions about park ownership with county

Old Business

1. Amherst Bike Path Emergency Phone Update:
 - Erica Rodman reported on meeting with Chief Chamberlain
 - Full system upgrade deemed not practical due to high cost
 - Suggestion to focus on signage for remaining operational phones
2. Town Disability Awareness Training:
 - Bob McCarthy reported no significant updates
3. Guest Speakers for Remainder of 2025:
 - Chief Chamberlain confirmed for August 11th meeting
 - Committee brainstormed topics to discuss with Chief Chamberlain
 1. Bike path phone follow up
 2. Disability awareness training follow up
 3. Train the trainer follow up
4. Email Address Update:
 - Erica Rodman reported on conversation with Dave Willer from IT
 - Proposal for a separate contact form on the Committee's website
5. Service Animal Registration at Town Hall Update:
 - Erica Rodman reported on conversation with Dawn Cera
 - Discussed difference between service animals and emotional support animals
 - Provided resources on U.S. Department of Justice guidelines
6. Senior Health Fair Table:
 - Scheduled for July 26th from 9 AM to noon
 - Lindsey Cassick and Chong Cheng volunteered to assist

New Business

Angela Marinucci provided additional updates on:

- Amherst Central Park plans
- Accessible playground funding and implementation
- Challenger baseball diamond concerns raised at town board meeting
- Pool accessibility questions

Motions Passed

1. Motion: To request that the Town install accessible signage on the remaining operational phones on the Amherst bike path.
 - Moved by: Erica Rodman
 - Seconded by: Luci Miranda
 - Passed unanimously
2. Motion: To ask Dave Willer and IT to set up a separate contact form on the Committee's website page for residents to contact the Committee directly.
 - Moved by: Erica Rodman
 - Seconded by: Jeffrey Zeplovitz
 - Passed unanimously
3. Motion to adjourn the meeting.
 - Moved by: Erica Rodman
 - Seconded by: Luci Miranda
 - Passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM

Respectfully submitted by Erica Rodman, Chair