



Town Clerk Date/Time Stamp

## Merrimac Commission on Disability Meeting Minutes

# TOWN OF MERRIMAC

Meeting Date: March 4, 2020

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Meeting Location: Merrimac Public Library, 86 West Main Street, Merrimac, MA 01860

### Members Present:

Christopher Gaudet, Chairman  
Robert Hart, Vice Chairman  
Kathleen Sullivan, Secretary  
Charlotte Eileen Stepanian, Member  
Anne Brown, Member  
Margaret Sullivan, Member  
Bob Sinibaldi, Member/ADA Compliance Officer

### Members not Present:

John Joseph Murphy, Treasurer  
Ann Marie Murphy, Member  
Jeffrey MacLeod, Member

### Agenda Item No: 1

#### **Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Margaret Sullivan made a motion to accept the agenda for the March 4, 2020 meeting. Charlotte Eileen Stepanian seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion. The agenda was accepted.

**Agenda Item No: 2**

**Approve Minutes February 5, 2020 Meeting**

Commission on Disabilities members considered the minutes. Anne Brown made a motion to accept the minutes. Robert Hart seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion. The minutes from the February 5, 2020 meeting were accepted.

**Agenda Item No: 3**

**CODA Conference Call Update- Anne Brown**

Call was cancelled today. No action needed.

**Agenda Item No: 4**

**Proposed DPW Snow Removal By-Laws**

Robert Sinibaldi explained that in town there has been an issue for years regarding snow removal from sidewalks in Merrimac. According to Article 5 Section 5 of the town by-laws, no one is allowed to deposit anything on town sidewalks. In further exploration of how to get snow removed from sidewalks, Mr. Sinibaldi developed the proposed Merrimac Snow Removal Bylaws based on Brookline's policy. The draft of the Merrimac Snow Removal Bylaws was presented at town meeting but there was no action taken. Mr. Sinibaldi proposes that the Commission on Disabilities and the Town support Merrimac Snow Removal Bylaw which include the provision that property owners are responsible for removing snow from the sidewalks adjacent to their property. Property owners are responsible if someone gets hurt on their property, including the sidewalk. The town does not have the money or equipment to remove snow from sidewalks. Charlotte Eileen Stepanian reminded the Commission on Disability members that Merrimac has increasingly large aging population, including many who are physically unable to remove snow. Kathleen Sullivan asked if there is a provision in the Merrimac Snow Removal Bylaws to exempt people with disabilities. Margaret Sullivan wondered about provision of salt and sand for sidewalks. Robert Sinibaldi shared that he is open to modifications to the proposed bylaws. Christopher Gaudet wondered if the fine limit of \$350.00 was too low. People might just pay the fine and not bother shoveling. Charlotte Eileen Stepanian suggested that shoveling sidewalks could be a community service project. In related discussion, Robert Sinibaldi explained that even if the town had the equipment and funding, town employees would not be able to clear the sidewalks because they are too uneven, have poles installed on them, and are not wide enough. Christopher Gaudet shared that technically, sidewalks are town property and snow is an obstruction. Members discussed the new bylaws at length and determined that if the Merrimac Snow Removal Bylaws are adopted by the town, fines should be used to replace existing sidewalks. Robert Hart made a motion to approve and support the proposed Snow Removal Bylaws with the changes outline above (exemptions for people with disabilities and fines go toward replacing sidewalks). Margaret Sullivan seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the amended Merrimac Snow Removal Bylaws.

**Old Business:**

Power Door Openers are being installed at Town Hall and should be operational by the end of the week.

**Open Discussion**

Commission members agreed that over the next year, a goal of the Commission on Disabilities should be to raise awareness of ADA compliance issues in Merrimac. Currently curb cuts and sidewalks are not ADA compliant. A reasonable goal would be for sidewalks near schools and library to become ADA compliant. Members were informed that the AAB has legislation that if their funds are utilized, sidewalks need to be included. New roads need to have at least one sidewalk.

Robert Sinibaldi explained that his department is planning on asking residents at Town Meeting to support a \$250,000 override for road replacement in town.

**Agenda Item No: 5**

**Adjourn**

Next Meeting: April 8, 2020 at 6:30 at the Meeting Room at the Merrimac Public Library, 86 West Main Street, Merrimac, MA 01860.

Charlotte Eileen Stepanian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Margaret Sullivan seconded the motion. Members unanimously accepted the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

List of Documents and Other Exhibits Used at Meeting:

Merrimac Snow Removal Bylaws

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kathleen Sullivan, Secretary

Minutes Approved by Committee on:

Chairman Signature:

Vice Chairman Signature:

Secretary Signature: