

**Acton Commission on Disability
Minutes
April 10, 2008**

Members Present: J. Brako, L. Franklin, B Maimone, J Nigro and B. Viola. **Guest:** K. Bell.

Meeting was called to order at 7:08 pm.

March Minutes were reviewed and accepted as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: Not expenditures.

OLD BUSINESS

Voting Place Access: Parking was not a problem at the most recent voting. The League of Women Voters decided to have elderly use non-handicapped spots unless they have a valid handicapped placard. For the upcoming presidential election, all the schools will be closed so ample parking should be available.

Touch-screen Voting Machines: The town has 3 machines available to voters with disabilities. This accessible voting machine provides several different ways to cast a ballot. Voters can make ballot selections using a touch-screen and review their selections on a paper record before casting their vote. It provides an audio ballot feature that allows voters to listen to instructions and ballot selections while voting. The touch-screen machine further assists voters by providing a zoom feature to increase the text size on the screen; an option for voters to use their own personal assistive device such as a sip/puff switch; offered at a wheelchair accessible height; and ballots and instructions in English, Chinese, and Spanish. For audio voting, the accessible voting machine is equipped with headphones and a Braille embossed hand-held keypad. Eva Bowen, Town Clerk would like our feedback on the machine. We approved for Eva to attend a meeting to demonstrate the accessible touch-screen voting machine.

Dining Guides: 20 guides were sent to Minuteman Arc Early Intervention Program per request of Liza Maugham, Social Worker, in response to her email.

Comprehensive Community Plan: Lisa participated on the Vision Outreach Steering Committee on Saturday March 29th. Transportation to this meeting would be beneficial to get input from other people with disabilities. The next meeting is May 31st, 1:30 to 4:30 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

Playground Enhancement Grant Application: Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director, has a proposal for the application for a Boundless Playground. Jean will write a letter to Cathy noting our support and assistance.

Personal Emergency Preparedness Guide: The AB High School is the designated shelter. John Murray, Assistant Town Manager is the Emergency Manager Director. This information along with more needs to be printed onto a one page insert then placed into the guide for distribution. A plan for distribution needs to be formulated.

Town Emergency Preparedness Plan: Lisa and Doug Halley, Health Department, are attending a MOD training on May 15th. After this meeting, we need to have Doug attend one of our meetings. Some questions will be...What needs to be done to the High School to make it accessible? Will there be provisions for service animals? How does information about the shelter get to individuals with disabilities? How will people with disabilities be transported to the shelter? Again, how do we find out who those individuals with disabilities are? Is there a section on the dog license for service animals? Should there be?

Materials Displays/Shelving: We approved and allocated \$40. for additional pamphlet holders to be placed in the Building Department for the display of COD literature.

Town Website 508 Compliance: Beatriz to investigate accessibility of town's website. She will contact the Commission of the Blind for compatible reader programs.

Town Meeting: "People First" Language: After attending the last Town meeting, Lisa was unsettled by the terminology of "the disabled" or "problem child" used by Town officials when speaking about individuals with disabilities. A letter was approved to be written by Lisa to request that Town Officials become aware of the "People First" language and approach at Town Meetings and in Town documents.

Kids On The Block Puppets: The Medway Commission contacted Lisa concerning a KOTB puppet trained person who could train one of their members. We do not have anyone who is trained. It is believed that training must be done by the KOTB organization. It was suggested that Medway check the KOTB website for this information. Lisa approached one of the board members of the Open Door Theater to see if a group of actors would be interested in learning how to use the puppets. Jean has agreed to follow this contact.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Viola,
Secretary