



**Town of Sheffield**  
**Commission on Disabilities**  
Town Hall – 21 Depot Square  
P.O. Box 325  
Sheffield, Massachusetts 01257



**Friday, January 26, 2018**  
Town Hall Downstairs Meeting Room  
Meeting officially opened at 10:34 AM

**Commission Members**

**Present:** Laura Grunfeld, Chair  
Gail Mullen  
Dale Alden  
Priscilla Rueger  
**Guests:** Rhonda LaBombard

Grunfeld called the Commission on Disabilities (COD) meeting officially open at 10:34 AM. Per request of the Select Board, the COD records its meetings.

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

**1.) Approval of December 15, 2017 COD Minutes:** *Members had not had a chance to review the minutes so it was agreed to defer approval of these minutes until the next meeting.* Grunfeld reported that she called the Attorney General's Office and learned that one person on the COD may review the minutes after they are written. That person may make suggestions for revision. Then the minutes may be sent out to all the members but no more feedback is allowed until the meeting.

**2.) Meet with LaBombard:**

- a. There was discussion about the Select Board's concerns about the COD's request for a Facebook page. They do not see a way to monitor the page 24/7 and are concerned that offensive comments may be posted. LaBombard offered alternative ways to build a community including: occasional email blasts from the Town for individual items that may be time-sensitive, a Town emailed COD newsletter for less time-sensitive items, inclusion in Town mailings, posting items on the COD page of the Town website, business cards to hand out, and a demonstration at the Sheffield Fair showing some of the obstacles faced by persons with disabilities. Grunfeld voiced concern that many residents are not on the Town Hall mailing list and that the COD may want to campaign for more people to sign up for the list.
- b. LaBombard confirmed that the COD is not required to conduct its meetings using Robert's Rules of Order.
- c. Playground update: LaBombard stated that the project is temporarily on hold but that they are hoping to have something in place by the time the weather breaks. Grunfeld and Rueger reiterated that when designing the playground, the COD is hoping that the Town will look at more sources than just a playground vendor's offerings. People using the playground should have a voice, including kids with disabilities and their parents. Additional resources were offered in an email sent to LaBombard and the Select Board on December 12.

- d. LaBombard reminded the members that she needed the COD's budget request. By vote, all members agreed to keep the budget request at \$300, the same amount as the previous year. Grunfeld submitted the request to LaBombard during the meeting.
- e. The COD received notice about H.R. 620, pending legislation that curtails the efficacy of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The COD wanted to know if the Commission is authorized to take action on such matters. LaBombard said that, yes, the COD may voice their opinion and suggested that the COD write a letter to representatives in Congress and copy the Select Board. Mullen agreed to write a draft letter stating the COD's objections to H.R. 620, and to bring the letter to the next meeting.

**3.) Police Station Accessibility update:** LaBombard said that the Town has not yet been notified if the grant has been awarded. As notification has been delayed, there may not be enough time to complete the project by the deadline and the Town may need to turn down the grant if awarded. The Town would need to "spend, build, and bill" by June 30, 2018.

**4.) Disabilities Legislative Breakfast:** This annual breakfast is to be held March 23, 7:30-9:00AM in Pittsfield. It is an opportunity to meet with legislators and with organizations and agencies that serve people with disabilities in the Berkshires. Alden, Mullen, and Grunfeld agreed to attend. Grunfeld motioned to approve paying for the cost of three members to attend the Legislative Breakfast including \$16 attendance fee each plus mileage for one vehicle, a total of approximately \$84. Rueger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**5.) Sheffield Times:** Alden agreed to write an article for the Sheffield Times profiling our members, mentioning the Disabilities Legislative Breakfast, and including the COD meeting location and hours. The draft article will be brought to our next meeting for review. Grunfeld wrote an article in the January issue of the Sheffield Times asking businesses and residents to take special care with snow and ice removal in pathways and access aisles used by people with disabilities and seniors. Rene Wood wrote an article in the same issue about the Police Station grant application.

**6.) Open Meeting Law receipts:** All members have turned in their Open Meeting Law receipts.

**7.) New Business:** Summary of Conflict of Interest Law memo delivered to the COD mailbox.

**8.) Items for the February 16th meeting agenda:** Approval of December and January minutes, Police Station update, Sheffield times article, H.R. 620 letter, budget planning.

**9.) Date, time, place for next meeting:** The next meeting will be Friday, February 16, 2018, 10:30AM, at Bushnell Sage Library.

**10.) Communications:** Memo: Dec 29, 2017, Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law.

**11.) Adjournment:** Mullen moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Rueger. The motion carried unanimously. Grunfeld adjourned the meeting at 12:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted:



Laura Grunfeld  
Chair, Commission on Disabilities