

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 24, 2023 MEETING OF THE WESTPORT COMMISSION  
ON DISABILITY

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING; Brian Gallagher, chairman, Sue Sherman, Martin Costa, Rick Grundy.

THE MEETING OPENED AT 3:50 p.m.

REMOTE PARTICIPATION: There was none.

THE MINUTES OF OUR LAST MEETING; They were approved without change.

NEW MA BILL TO EXTEND WARRANTY PROTECTION FOR POWER WHEELCHAIRS.

- Extend the period from 1-2 years.

- Reimburse out of pocket costs.

- Holding providers to reasonable timelines for evaluations in emergency situations.

- Providing loaner chairs while a chair is inoperable.

- Requiring providers to stockpile common parts.

- Authorizing the AG to intervene when necessary.

There was a discussion about whether the WCOD could provide assistance like purchasing a chair to be used as a loaner chair or purchasing parts such as controllers to give to people in need. Further thought and discussion is required.

TOWN BEACHES AND WORK THAT WILL BE DONE: Installation of GeoGrids and mobility mats. The GeoGrids have been installed and they work as we hoped. Many thanks to Chris Gonsalves and the members of the Highway Department. Martin has also had conversations with Chris Gonsalves, Chris Capone of The Conservation Commission and Ross Moran of the Land Conservation Trust concerning the placement of the mobility mats.

North Beach AKA Baby Beach: Martin will speak to Sean Leach of the Beach Committee about a wheelchair accessible table and fixing the gully that forms after heavy rains.

ADA TRANSITION PLAN: Although Westport has a plan in place it will need updating once the town decides what to do with the old high school and if there

is a decision on whether to make Main Road more pedestrian friendly and placing a sidewalk from the mall to Hix Bridge Road.

THOUGHTS/CONCERNS: Relative to our prior conversation about discrimination against disabled people in medical offices Sue Sherman reported that she had a very productive conversation with the head of SouthCoast Health about the issue and the need to update facilities and practices to accommodate individuals with disabilities. He seemed receptive to her suggestions.

There was a conversation about collecting receipts from Lees supermarket and giving them to Sue or Kim who will return them to Lees since Lees donates to the WCOD based the receipts.

NEXT MEETING; 5/22/23 AT 3:45 AT THE TOWN HALL ANNEX.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.