



TOWN OF GRAFTON
GRAFTON MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER
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2019 REPORT OF THE GRAFTON DISABILITY COMMISSION

The Grafton Disability Commission (f/k/a Commission on Disability) was reconstituted, pursuant to a vote of the Grafton Select Board on August 13, 2019. The Commission had not met since 2011 and lacked membership. This discussion was initiated by Roger Trahan, Jr. in a letter to the Select Board on May 28, 2019, who subsequently presented during its meeting of June 11, 2019. During its meeting of August 13, 2019, the Select Board appointed a new slate of seven (7) members and updated the charge of the Commission as follows:

“The Grafton Disability Commission is to assure that all people in Grafton have an equal opportunity to participate in all functions involving living, working and enjoying recreation activities. The Commission will work toward this end by informing, educating, monitoring and advising the public, including the business community and the Town administration.

The Grafton Disability Commission shall consist of seven members appointed by the Select Board for overlapping three year terms and be responsible to the Select Board through the Town Administrator.

Six (6) members shall consist of people with disabilities, people with and immediate family member with a disability, residents with professional experience working with people with disabilities, and/or residents with an interest in this area. One (1) member shall be either an elected or appointed official of the town.

The purpose of the Commission shall be to cause the full integration and participation of people with disabilities in the Town of Grafton, such commission shall:

1. Advise and assist municipal officials and employees with state and federal laws and regulations that affect people with disabilities;
2. Coordinate or carry out programs designed to meet the problems of people with disabilities in coordination with programs of the Massachusetts Office on disability;
3. Review and make recommendations about policies, procedures, services, activities and facilities of departments, boards and agencies of the Town of Grafton as they affect people with disabilities;
4. Provide information referrals, guidance and technical assistance to individuals, public agencies, businesses and organizations in all matters pertaining to disability; and
5. Help raise awareness and sensitivity to the needs of the people who are disabled.

The Commission shall meet at least once every month. Minutes will be kept and filed with the Town Clerk for posting.”

The Disability Commission met on four occasions in 2019 (9/19, 10/17, 11/21, and 12/19). During those meetings, our primary activities included:

- Review of Grafton’s June 2019 ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan, which did not include school facilities, as well the need for Grafton Public Schools to have a similar plan.

- Updates by Grafton Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC).
- Met with and supported Grafton Historic District Commission's plans for brick pavers to replace the asphalt on the walkways on Grafton Common, adhering to ADA and AAB guidelines, and proposed updates to MA 521 CMR.
- Applied for a Municipal ADA Improvement Grant (\$50,000 request) through the MA Office on Disability, as coordinated by Assistant Town Administrator, Rebecca Meekins. This pertained to accessibility improvements to ramps and entrances in the rear of the Grafton Municipal Center. Although Grafton was not selected, we look forward to grant opportunities during FY 2021.
- Discussed personal tax exemptions with Principal Assessor, Mary Oliver during our meeting of November 21, 2019. These exemptions include but are not limited to the categories of Disabled Veteran (Clause 22) and Legally Blind (Clause 37A).
- We set up workshops in order to operationalize the Town of Grafton's ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan, in order to develop a long-term strategic plan.

All of our meetings have been videotaped by Grafton Community Television (GCTV) for later viewing on our local community access TV stations and on-line via link from GCTV's web page. Along these lines, we extend our thanks to Jack Kelly for his time and technical assistance.

Also of great assistance were Joann Duncan and Cindy Ide in the Select Board/ Town Administrator's office, and Kandy Lavalley (Town Clerk) and her Administrative Assistant, Jayne Zwicker.

We also extend our thanks to Doreen DeFazio for having volunteered to serve as the initial Select Board representative to the Commission. Also, to Alex McCullough for his service on the Commission during 2019.

We look forward to an active and productive 2020 in helping create a more informed and accessible Grafton.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger R. Trahan, Jr., Chair
Kristie Proctor, Vice Chair
Daryl Rynning, Clerk
Donna Stock, Select Board Rep
Catherine Dore
Melissa Lackey