



Roxann Wedegartner  
Mayor

City of  
**GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS**

**COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ACCESS**

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*Members:*

Lynne Kelley – Chair  
Douglas Mayo  
L'aura Jordan  
Virginia DeSorgher  
Robert Williford

**GREENFIELD COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ACCESS (CDA)**

Remote Via WebEx

DRAFT Minutes of Thursday, October 14, 2021

\*\*\*1:00 p.m.\*\*\*

**Members present:**

Lynne Kelley, Chair  
Douglas Mayo  
Bob Williford

**Members absent:**

L'aura Jordan  
Virginia “Ginny” DeSorgher

**Also present:**

Lindsay Rowe, ADA Coordinator  
Sal Garozzo from UCP  
Pamela McBride, Greenfield Public Library

LK called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM.

**Approval of the minutes from September 9, 2021 and October 1, 2021**

Motion by DM, 2<sup>nd</sup> BW - Roll Call - Unanimous

**Treasurers Report**

LK states budget still \$300. HP Fund \$3,421.05.

## **Ongoing issues**

### **Guest speaker –MassMatch with Sal Garozzo, executive Director of UCP Berkshire County**

Helping people with disabilities building a life as fulfilling and independently as possible. Goal is to educate people and make assistive technology as available as possible. They provide services throughout Berkshire, Hampshire, Hampden and Franklin Counties. MassMatch funds the AT and the educational pieces.

They have a mobile Assistive Technology Roadshow. It's a big truck they take to bring AT demonstrations and trainings to the community. They just need a parking space and a spot for the tent. Also includes a generator and the ability to remotely connect to the staff.

UCP also has a technology support center through MassRehab to help people with disabilities connect to technology. Biggest challenge UCP had during the pandemic is connectivity issues.

Over 1,400 devices they work with. UCP has a loaner program and can do minor repair of wheelchairs.

Typical categories include seating and mobility (adjustable workstations, slant boards, wheelchairs). Worked with someone who was in danger of losing their job and a device similar to an adjustable workstation helped them keep their job so they didn't have to bend. The costs of wheelchairs can be prohibitive, so loaners help get people through the repair or waiting period.



Assistive technology for Communication and Speech - they work with devices and speech therapists to tailor devices to the individual. Low tech picture boards and switches.

AT for computer access. They are now so integral to our lives that they make it so important to be able to access. Massachusetts is moving for a Technology Forward program to help people access and afford the devices they need. High tech includes eye gaze equipment that lets people use their eyes to navigate the computer screen.

AT for writing helps people suffering from arthritis or CP, there are many modifications to pens and pencils that can help or speech-to-text software. Also provide training to help people use the devices. Very important to introduce the technology in ways that are comfortable. They do a lot of tech support to help people get through glitches. The support is required to make it work well and find the right fit.

Story - Community College student who had suffered a stroke as a kid was struggling and failing school. He had been referred to MassMatch and had never used AT. Once they connected him to some assistive technology, he was able to express himself and made the Dean's List. Later he went on to get a Masters Degree in assistive technology and works helping others.

AT for Reading - can highlight text and read to them. Great products that read materials to people, including Kurzweil products. Some of these products - computers reading written material - were used by law students because they could process more information, faster.

AT for Blind/Low Vision - magnification devices, large button devices, lights, etc.



AT for Deaf/Hard of Hearing - hearing amplification devices (especially while hearing aids are being repaired); flashing lights for alarms, door bells, and phones; vibrating alarms, etc.

Smart Technology - with bluetooth and voice activated technology there are so many things that can now do this. For example, voice activated microwaves. Some of their products are now commercial generic products available in the Apple Store. Smart thermostats, plugs, blinds, speakers, etc. One trend is moving away from single devices to workstations. One device that can control many parts of the home.

Remote Support - UCP has a contract with DDS to provide remote monitoring for people with intellectual disabilities to help when they need it. On-demand assistance to the remote staff to see if they need further assistance or if it can be helped immediately. Some telehealth connections, including blood pressure or glucose monitors. These devices can be connected with families and help them be included in the support too. Social features that can help people connect with friends, plan their day, or see an assistive facility's newsletter. Helps people provide relationships with landlords, so they don't need a specific apartment owned by a nonprofit.

UCP has a 3 bedroom apartment that they're piloting to help people previously in group homes to live as independently as possible.

With the smart technology, UCP staff come and help set it up, do training, and then provide ongoing technical support.

UCP can work with the VA if they have a MassRehab connection. They don't have a formal connection with the VA.



BW - Housing is such a big issue and groups in Greenfield are looking at how to make affordable housing and accessible housing.

UCP is working with developers/landlords to embed technology into existing homes. They hope that in the future they will be able to work with developers in a way that is consistent with the community's plans. Aware of concerns with group homes that reduce taxes when owned by nonprofits. So, UCP is trying to work with landlords, and people might not even be aware that UCP is working in their own backyard. This is the wave of the future that makes good economic sense.

DM - In past work did see a lot of the "not in my neighborhood" sentiment, but now with technology, people are able to leave group homes and live independently.

SG - There were some group homes that had lots of great staff and it was consistent, but others had lots of instability. UCP is working to pay some of their remote staff well enough to provide stability.

DM - does the family need special equipment?

SG - The remote system is with its own VPN network for security purposes. The software is all web based and so no one needs special equipment. They can use it on the phone, computer, tablet, etc.

LK - thank you so much for providing this information and we'd love to take advantage of the Roadshow. How do we make this work in our community?

SG - Long term vision is to establish AT centers in Greenfield and Springfield. They do so much "walk-in" business. They're fighting for funding to do this. There is a hard sell for brick and mortar, but



he feels it's a disservice if they can't see all the things that they've been looking for. Companion pets, virtual reality training, etc. The preference is to have the AT center in conjunction with other services. They have a satellite office in at Berkshire community college and it's worked very well. 1,400 square feet in Pittsfield.

### **Building accessibility/library**

There had been an outstanding question at the last meeting about the Fire Station demolition. DM - at the last historical commission meeting it was voted to be demolished.

PM - the Library is moving ahead. The fire station is still being abated. The demolition will begin after - two or three weeks. They are talking to Greenfield Savings Bank about a few spaces, but there aren't great options. At some point they're going to close the back door.

So, the library is talking about how they can increase their services for the building while people can't access them. The front door steps are being shut down in the next week or two.

There will be a more formalized assistance program with curb-side pickup. Also working on trying to find a 15-minute space in front of the library. This is for 18 months, which is a short period of time.

The sidewalks around the library aren't going to be rebuilt as the construction will destroy them.

BW - Has pictures of the Handicap Parking at Greenfield Savings Bank. The path to the library connects to a piece of sidewalk that has no curb cut. Additionally, the asphalt path has a large lump.

On the side of the library, the sidewalk was never used by people, as they'd walk on the road instead. There's a duct taped gap.



Doesn't think there's a solution, as in a few weeks there will be no door to take the sidewalk to.

PM - They're really encouraging people to use home delivery services and trying to advertise this in better ways.

LK - sometimes they have rubber mats that can be laid down on the sand. Could something like this be used to cover the gaps and sidewalks to help. They have mats at the Green River swimming area. It goes from the bathhouse to the water. This might be a temporary fix.

### **COVID-19 information**

Reminder that on the Commission's site that there was a link to the COVID information.

### **Update on street repairs Fiske Ave.**

Bob - got grumpy that the ADA access isn't great at the site. But there is a phase 2 for this project that will rework the access and change the parking. Mesa is concerned about delivery of products.

### **CDA email address/ Business card**

Mayor's office - email forwarding to ADA coordinator, similar to the physical mail.

LK - disabilityaccess@ which is short, but may seem too narrow.

BW - thinks it needs to show that it's the Commission. Suggests commissionondisabilityaccess@ or disabilityaccesscommission@

LK - Likes disabilityaccesscommission@ do we want to wait for everyone or vote now?



Motion - To make it the [disabilityaccesscommission@greenfield-ma.gov](mailto:disabilityaccesscommission@greenfield-ma.gov) by LK, second BW - Roll Call - Unanimous

LK will follow up on business cards.

### **Hybrid meetings**

Mayor is having a listening session for ARPA money on Monday. We talked about using it for hybrid meeting equipment.

### **Downtown rapid recovery program**

Also part of the ARPA discussion and LK would like to include it in that VD and DM both brought up that Court Square is not a major priority for townspeople.

### **Site plan review of 95 River St., - community action offices/food pantry**

Thank you BW for his work on this and DM for chairing the meeting. BW sent notes from the planning board.

### **Massachusetts office on disability - municipal ADA improvement grant**

The City did submit for the Four Corners lift for the stage.

### **Transition plan update**

LK is looking at the training for departments on creating plans. MOD does have trainings they could do. They've done individual towns for training. Not sure how it would work in Greenfield.

Has anyone had a chance to look at it?





BW - it's like War and Peace! It's going slowly. The transition plan is out of date due to COVID. There are meeting places that have changed. Additionally, he's interested in Streets and Sidewalks.

## **Announcements**

Next meeting in November falls on Veterans Day. The commission will need to find an alternate meeting time for November.

Is there another day that works? Either Wednesday the 10th or Friday the 12th? Tentatively Wednesday the 10th at 1 pm.

## **Adjournment**

Moved to Adjourn by LK, 2<sup>nd</sup> DM - Roll Call - Unanimous.

Meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm

