

# COMMITTEE CONCERNING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES MEETING MINUTES

City of Middletown

61 Durant Terrace

January 6, 2026

6:00 PM

**1. Members Present:** Marty Knight/Chairperson, Phil Cacciola, Keith Vinci, Richard Pelletier, Laurie McFadden and Emily McEvoy

**Absent:** Molly Carta, and Joe Bibisi

**Staff Present:** Catherine Lechowicz – Director of Recreation and Community Services

**General Public:** None

**2. Meeting Called to Order:** Called to order at 6:03pm.

**3. Public Hearing:** None.

**4. Approval of Minutes:** *A motion to approve the meeting minutes of December 2, 2025, was made by Keith Vinci and seconded by Richard Pelletier. The motion carries*

## Departmental Reports:

- Phil Cacciola stated that he has nothing to report but that he is listed as present in the December meeting when he was actually absent. Laura will make this correction.
- Keith Vinci stated that things have been very quiet and that he has nothing to report.
- Richard Pelletier stated that while watching the common council meeting he realized that he was nominated to an additional committee. He asked the CCPD if anyone else on the committee wanted to be nominated to the new committee. The new committee is pertaining to the City Yard Infrastructure. It seems as though Richard is always the person from CCPD that is nominated for each new project. He has no objection to serving on this committee but just wanted to offer to other members in the event that they were interested in serving on this committee. It appears as though no one else from CCPD is interested in serving on this new committee. Richard will call them and graciously accept his nomination. Richard stated that things are moving right along with the school building committee. Most, if not all, of the air conditioning work has been completed. Invoices have been received and have been paid. A discussion ensued.
- Laurie McFadden reported on mutual aid groups focusing on food insecurities as well as medical appointment accompaniment. A discussion ensued.
- Emily McEvoy stated that she is going to share an article regarding underutilized autism case management slots due to staffing issues. The Democratic Town Committee is holding a Legislative forum next Thursday evening, January 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30PM at the Russell library with Senator Lesser and Representatives Chafee and Belton. There will be discussion about housing affordability and electricity costs amongst other things. Emily will share the flyer and the information to RSVP to this forum. A discussion ensued.
- Cathy Lechowicz stated that there was an ADA issue. Laura Runte received a phone call from a physician's office regarding a patient that is blind that needs transportation. Laura worked with the doctor's office and patient to set up transportation through Dial A Ride. Laura was able to assist the resident with filling out the application for Dial A Ride over the phone online. She also scheduled the phone interview between River Valley Transit and the disabled resident.
- Marty Knight stated that there was an issue with voting because the machine was not accepting his ballot. Marty used to vote at MacDonough School but this year his polling station was the Community Health Center. A discussion

## Old Business:

**New Business:**

- Phil Cacciola stated that the new 911 Center committee has met and this is going to be a process. This building will be on Mile Lane next to the Armory building. They are waiting to be presented with building plans.

**Miscellaneous:**

- Phil Cacciola asked Keith Vinci about his conversation with Ben Bare. Keith felt that Ben did not go strictly by the book pertaining to Monarca Place. There was discussion on how things have changed a lot in terms of criteria for disabled housing. Keith stated that it used to be very strict in that there was very clear criteria that needed to be met in order to live in Monarca Place. Monarca was initially slated to be for those disabled individuals with hearing impairments. In time, it switched to people with varied disabilities. Monarca Place has 16 apartments and in the beginning there were 6 deaf families living there. Over time as people passed away and units became vacant, they were being occupied with people of other disabilities. In fact, Ellie was the first blind person to reside in Monarca Place. Over time that has changed. Ben has indicated to them that they cannot work with that criteria anymore. There was much discussion that touched on challenges faced by disabled individuals in accessing housing services and support systems.
- Cathy Lechowicz will follow up with Ben Bear to inquire about the current number of residents with disabilities in the facility and how many vacancies are available. Cathy Lechowicz will check on the date for the legislative breakfast in January or February and share it with the group.

**Adjournment:** *A motion of adjournment was made by Phil Cacciola and was seconded by Emily McEvoy. The motion carries. The meeting adjourned at 6:29pm.*