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The Newsletter of the Andover Commission on Disability

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May, 2022

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Andover

Commission

on Disability

1995 – 2020

ACOD Celebrates 25th Anniversary

Justin Coppola Co-chair

Kathleen Dolan Co-chair

David Kahan

Nancy Audesse Katherine Ananis

2020 marked the 25th Anniversary of the

Andover Commission on Disability (ACOD).

Founded in 1995, the ACOD was the vision of people

including Mark J. Walker, Michael A. Warshawsky,

and David E. Ray, who felt passionately that Andover

should be a model community for people with

disabilities.

Jemma Lambert

Trish Leelman

Bernadette Lionetta

Eileen Reilly

Rebecca Schnopp

Stephen Surette

Judy Wakefield

Susan McKelliget clerk

Other founding members of the ACOD – one of

the first municipal commissions on disability in

Massachusetts – were Gina B. LaFortune, Paul A.

Clinton, Neil R. Gordon, David E. Ray, Joanne J.

Stephen, James J. Wiseman, and Timothy J. McCarron.

Liaisons:

Also, among the pioneers of the ACOD is Justin Coppola, Sr., a 22-year member

who received the Thomas P. Hopkins Disability Access Award in 2019 as

Massachusetts’ Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advocate of the Year.

Annie Gilbert,

Select Board

Molly Bicking,

Council on Aging

Janet Nicosia,

ADA Coordinator

Ellen Townson,

Conservation Comm

During its 25-year history, the ACOD has:

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Monitored and improved the ADA plan for municipal buildings;

Reviewed all schools for ADA conformance;

Website

Acod.mhl.org

Advocated for curb cuts and sidewalks for wheelchair access;

■ Funded the library for disability related materials, including books, hardware and software

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Planned for Americans with Disabilities (ADA) training for town employees;

Increased collaboration and liaison with the Robb Center, Facilities, and others;

Built a collaboration with the Massachusetts Office on Disability;

Conducted ADA monitoring of the Main Street Project;

Email

acod.mhl.org/contact-us

**M**eetings

4th Wednesday

of the month.

6:30 PM Virtual

Conducted ADA monitoring of the Merrimack Valley Regional Transportation

Authority (MVRTA);

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Sponsored artists with disabilities at the Andover Artists’ Guild Art Show; and

Mission

Introduced programs such as Project Lifesaver, Lock Box, the Kids on the

Block, MVRTA’s extended hours, and My Own Voice (see page 2).

To address Andover’s

disability needs for the

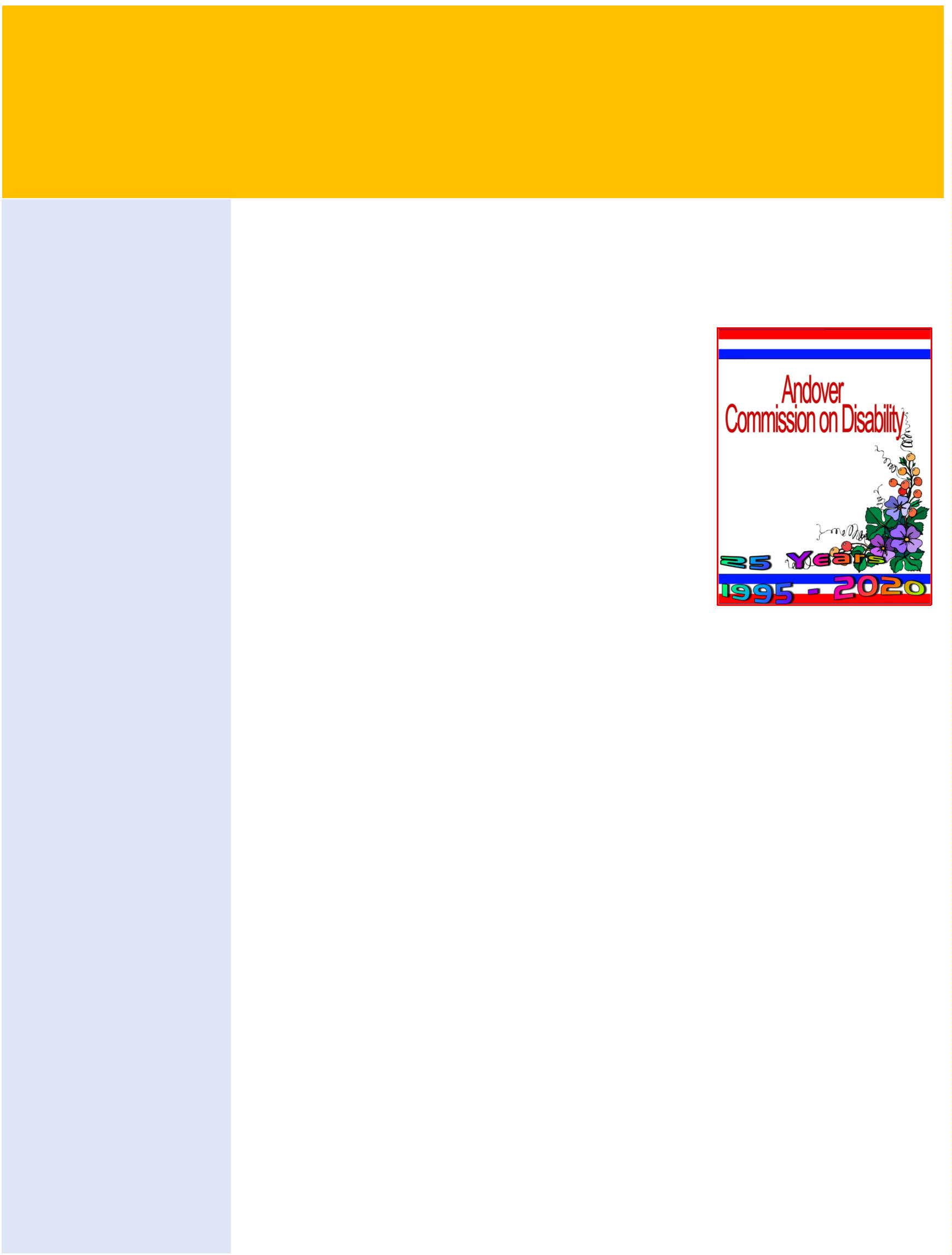
town and its residents,

visitors and families with disabilities.

The ACOD’s initiatives that increase accessibility benefit not only people with

disabilities, but other Andover residents and visitors as well, especially senior

citizens, new parents, children, and people with temporary physical disabilities.



Resources in Andover Benefit People with Disabilities

Project Lifesaver (PLS), the premier

search and rescue program operated

internationally by public safety

Library Accessible Resources can be

obtained at https://mhl.org/disabilities

or by calling 978-623-8430 or emailing

rdesk@mhl.org.

agencies, is designed for “at risk”

individuals who are prone to the life-threatening

behavior of wandering. For more information

about PLS, please contact Officer Robin Cataldo of

the Andover Police Department, 978-475-0411

x1004, rcat@andoverps.net.

Senior Center Accessible

Resources are available to

seniors in Andover. The ACOD

was instrumental in ensuring

that the renovation of the center, renamed The

Robb Center, meets Americans with Disabilities

(ADA) requirements for accessibility. For more

information, go to andoverma.gov and search for

Senior Center or call 978-623-8320.

The Residential Lock Box Program assists

firefighters and emergency service

personnel in gaining rapid entry into

the home of a person with a disability

in an emergency, saving time and property by

eliminating the need for forced entry. For more

information, go to andoverma.gov and search for

Residential Lock Box.

Veterans Services Accessible

Resources and programs are available

to Andover’s veterans. For more

information, go to andoverma.gov and search for

Veterans or call 978-623-8380.

My Own Voice is a

community-based

choir for children and

adults with cognitive

Accessible Transportation is

available through “EZ Trans”

and physical disabilities. Contact Bernadette

Lionetta at BLionetta9@verizon.net or go to

https://www.facebook.com/treblechorusne.

Service, a public transportation bus/van service

978-469-6878, https://www.mvrta.com/special-

services), as well as by MBTA commuter rail, buses,

and subway, https://www.mbta.com/accessibility,

617-222-3200. Access guides are available.

Emergency 911 also allows people to

individually register with the Police

Department by filling out a Disability

Indicator Form, available at

Free IDs for those who don’t have a

driver’s license are issued by the Essex

County TRIAD and the Council on

https://www.mass.gov/how-to/request-a-

disability-indicator-landline-telephone-service-

subscribers-only or by calling 978-475-0411 X3028.

Mail or drop off the form at the Public Safety Center

or email Chuck Jessico, cjes@andoverps.net.

Aging, through the Senior Center, 978-623-8321.

The Masons’ Hospital Equipment

Loan Program (HELP) loans medical

equipment, wheelchairs, and/or

School Accessible Resources

include Andover Public Schools

Special Education Procedural

walkers for home use. Equipment may

be dropped off or picked up on Saturday mornings,

9:00AM - 12NOON at the Masonic Building, 500 West

Cummings Park (Rear), Suite 1150, Washington

Street, Woburn, MA 01801. For more information,

call 781-322-1052 on Saturday mornings or go to

https://smd-help.org.

Manual and Andover Public

Schools Special Education Parent Guide. Go to

http://www.aps1.net or call the Office of Student

Services, 978-247-7040.

