

**Norwich Commission on Persons with Disabilities
Regular Meeting**

Minutes

February 9, 2026, 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Norwich City Hall, Room 319

Present:

Commission members: Wendy Fenner, Aiyana Jenkins (Vice Chair), Mark Marcy, Elanah Sherman (Chair)

ADA Coordinator: Robert Scalise

Member of public: Felix

Recording Secretary: Ivery Stakely

Absent (without notice):

Commission member Joanne Philbrick

Call to Order

Aiyana called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM. (Aiyana ran the meeting because Elanah was masked, with the result that her voice was muffled.)

Public Comment

Felix, a student from Bacon Academy, introduced himself. He is doing a civics project for school and was present to learn about the Commission. He had numerous questions, some of which Commission members answered, but Elanah told him the business of the Commission needed to take precedence. She encouraged him to observe the meeting and urged him to call her at any time so she could explain the Commission's purpose. She also offered to talk with him after the meeting.

Approval of January 12, 2026 Minutes

On a motion from Mark, seconded by Wendy, the Minutes were unanimously approved.

Old Business

Brochure Revision: At the last meeting, Aiyana had asked that language be added to the brochure that specified the range of disability covered by the ADA. In response, Elanah added the ADA definition of disability to the new brochure. Because the definition references activities of daily living, she also added language describing examples of activities of daily living. Mark, Aiyana, and Wendy disputed the providing of examples, saying that doing so was "not inclusive." Elanah disagreed, but said she would take out that sentence. In regard to the reference to Human Services in the brochure, Rob offered to get an updated email address and phone number.

More on Bylaws: Elanah brought up the issue of absences without prior notification. After much discussion, all present agreed that such absences should be noted in the Minutes. The term decided upon was 'absent without notice.' The group also agreed upon the term 'absent with notice.' Mark made a motion to add these 2

categories of absence to the Bylaws, seconded by Wendy; the motion passed unanimously.

Continued Discussion - Six-Month Plan of Action: Members provided names of organizations they have contacts with, including the Arthritis Foundation, Disabilities Network of Eastern CT, and Hearing Loss Association of America (CT Chapter). Elanah clarified that outreach refers to Commission members *going out* to speak about the Commission's work, rather than *bringing in* organizations to speak at Commission meetings. She added, though, that having guest speakers is a valuable use of meeting time.

Report on Communication Access Issues: ADA Coordinator Rob Scalise

Rob reported that the City Manager has approved use of Zoom and phone for members who can't attend a meeting in person. Because the meetings are held after hours, a Commission member would have to run the Zoom. Conference call would be the simpler method. Rob would provide the phone number and equipment, upon request. Wendy said that both methods would provide accessibility for her.

In regard to Council meeting accessibility for people with hearing disabilities, Rob said that 1) two citizens regularly and successfully use the existing assistive listening system in Chambers, and 2) although Civic Plus does not provide live captioning, closed captions are available retroactively on YouTube.

New Business – N/A

Adjournment

On a motion by Mark, seconded by Wendy, the meeting unanimously adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Minutes taken by Ivery Stakely and revised by Elanah Sherman

Next meeting: Monday, March 9 2026 from 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM in Room 319.