

**TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD**  
**DISABILITY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**May 14, 2025**

A meeting of the Disability Advisory Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held at the Township building on May 14, 2025. Chairperson Huchler opened the meeting at 6:07 pm.

Those present:

Lisa Huchler, Chairperson (in person)  
Abbey Yeatts, Vice Chairperson (in person)  
Michele Williams, Member (absent)  
Kierstyn Zolfo, Member (in person)

John Lewis, Supervisor Liaison (in person)

**APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 12, 2025 MINUTES**

Ms. Zolfo moved, Ms. Yeatts seconded, and the March 12, 2025 meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

**OPEN POSITIONS**

Ms. Huchler stated there is currently 1 Member and 1 alternate position open for the Disability Advisory Board (DAB). Member Cynthia Lang resigned and we would like to thank her for her commitment to the Board.

If anyone is interested, please send a letter of interest with a current resume to the Township Manager at [admin@lmt.org](mailto:admin@lmt.org). For further information about the DAB, please email [dab@lmt.org](mailto:dab@lmt.org) or leave a message at the LMT main number at 267-274-1100. You can also reach out to any LMT Disability Advisory Board Member.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment this week.

**SUNSHINE ACT**

Reviewed the email sent by Township Manager, David Kratzer reminding committees of the Sunshine Act Law. It has many requirements including public notice of meetings, agendas posting requirements, recording of meeting minutes, how to conduct public comment, etc. Chairs of committees in the township should review and be mindful to follow the statutory requirements under the Sunshine Act.

**UPDATE BROCHURE**

Ms. Zolfo had sent the brochure to all committee members for review. The Board spent time updating and editing the grammar and wording in several sections. Ms. Huchler proposed that Ms. Zolfo make the changes discussed at this meeting and include several topics regarding Emergency Management being presented tonight. Ms. Zolfo suggested including a QR code. Ms. Zolfo will complete the updates and forward for review. We will try to finalize at the June meeting.

## **EVENTS ATTENDED**

### **Disability Fair**

On April 10, 2025, a Disability Fair was held at New Hope–Solebury High School sponsored by State Senator Steve Santarsiero and Representative Tim Brennan. Ms. Yeatts and Ms. Huchler attended and found the event to be very informative. Many government agencies and support organizations currently providing services for adults and children with disabilities and their caregivers attended. Ms. Huchler will reach out to State Senator Santarsiero to see if it would be possible to hold this type of event in Lower Bucks County. We may be able to hold at the Community Center.

### **Memorial Park -Secret Garden Ribbon Cutting**

On April 17, 2025, there was a Ribbon Cutting at the Secret Garden Memorial Park for the completion of the new surface. Ms. Zolfo, Ms. Yeatts and Ms. Huchler attended. This event was sponsored by SoFi surface and they gave a demonstration showing the ability of the soft surface to absorb the impact of falls. This provides protection for children that may hit the surface from the equipment.

There was also a ribbon cutting for the updated basketball courts which now includes an accessible pathway from 2 newly stripped handicapped parking spots.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

5 K Color Fun Run for Accessibility will be held Sunday, September 28, 2025 for all interested in volunteering and supporting. This is the fifth year for this event. A portion of the funds raised will be allocated to the ADA Transition Plan. Parks and Rec is asking the DAB members for volunteers. Reminder that the color thrown at stations is elective for runners.

### **Bucks County Center for independent Living (CIL)**

The CIL is a cross disability non-profit organization based in Bucks County, PA that provides services and support to people with all types of disabilities. The organization holds many events such as Young Adult group, Peer Support (Virtual and in person), Employment Symposium and Job Fair – 10/1/25 at the Sheraton Hotel. Their contact is [www.buckscil.org](http://www.buckscil.org), email at [info@buckscil.org](mailto:info@buckscil.org) or call 215-781-5070.

## **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

Ms. Yeatts attended a meeting with Police Chief Kelly and discussed the 'Emergency Management Special Needs List' form. He mentioned that the information that is given on the form goes to the Bucks County dispatch so that when emergency services are dispatched to an address any of the information given is also relayed to those responding. He also said that they have a system called 'records management' and would like to get the information there to be accessed locally by officers if needed. The LMT Police Department has a spreadsheet that officers can currently access with the information.

He mentioned that the last application was 8 years ago and that it has been dormant - however he wants to bring it back and plans to get some more information and post to social media. Discussed whether we can make it an online form to be more accessible.

#### Update: Handle with Care Registry

After the meeting the LMT Police Department posted on their website and social media and new form called "Handle with Care" registry. Ms. Yeatts already completed and has received confirmation that it was received and in the system.

The Handle with Care program is a multifaceted approach to effectively serve those with mental health and/or special needs. This program implements a special needs registry while giving focus to training officers on mental health / special needs response. Handle with Care Registry, a registry has been created for Lower Makefield residents that allows one to submit information which can be used to aid law enforcement when engaging with those who have mental health / special needs. Once collected, this information would be readily available to first responders upon dispatch. The program formerly required registering in person or via mail, but now registrations may be made on-line. Those interested in submitting mental health / special needs information can do so by using the following link:

<https://bucks.crimewatchpa.com/lowermakefieldtwppd/17384/slideshows/handle-care-registry>

Ms. Yeatts also asked about training for the officers and if they received training pertaining to disabilities or ID/IDD. He mentioned that they do continuing education every year and that the past year or so had been a course pertaining to disabilities. He said that they all have extensive crisis intervention training and that nearly 100% of the officers have the training.

Ms. Yeatts suggested that Chief Kelly and potentially the Fire Chief, attend a future meeting to express the importance of the forms and signing up for these types of alerts.

#### Blue Envelope Program

The Blue Envelope Program provides packets where people with autism and related disorders can keep their license, registration and other key documents. The envelopes feature tips for both drivers and officers to help navigate the encounter.

Police departments across the country have introduced the program in recent years to improve interactions between law enforcement and people with neurological difficulties.

Some people with autism struggle to communicate, and those challenges can be made worse in scenarios such as an unexpected traffic stop because of fear or anxiety, sensory overload from bright lights or sounds, and other factors.

The envelopes also remind officers to expect behaviors associated with autism, such as repetitive motions and avoiding eye contact, and to give simple, clear instructions.

Anyone can pick up an envelope at the police station at 1100 Edgewood Rd. Available in their lobby.

Mr. Lewis said the police will be using professionally trained co-responders to help with mental illness and intervention.

We will include the information about the Emergency services in the updated Brochure.

Ms. Huchler asked about the current info in our brochure concerning smart911. We will look into the difference between registering for smart911 or the new Handle with Care registry.

### **ADA TRANSITION PLAN UPDATES**

The ADA Transition plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors in April 2021. Monica Tierney had asked the DAB to look through the plan and update as needed. Detailed updates to each section of the plan were sent to Monica Tierney along with some issues we noted while reviewing each of the parks. We may need to consider addressing some of the improvements/maintenance sooner while waiting for the larger, long-term projects to get started and funded.

The Parks and Rec department has been busy with the pool and summer programs. We will continue to follow up.

### **LMT PROJECT UPDATES**

Several Parks and Rec projects were included in the ADA Transition Plan completed in 2021. The Disability Advisory Board (DAB) will review plans, work with Parks and Rec in any planning, suggestions and monitor as progress is made.

Parks and Rec Projects and items to follow up in 2025:

- a. No updates-
  - a. Pool Bathrooms
  - b. Macclesfield Field
  - c. Bike Paths
  - d. Community Center door/parking
  - e. Kids Kingdom
  - f. Veterans Park
- b. Parks and Rec working with a pool member who has found a way for staff to teach lessons to special needs swimmers at the LMT Pool. They are in the very initial phases of this discussion and may offer it as a smaller pilot program this year and continue to grow from there. Have to see if staff can be trained ahead of time or if it is better to contract out these services. Ms. Yeatts will be following up with the Pool manager to help find a program. She stated that the lessons will be provided at no cost since they are utilizing funds from an association that will cover expenses.

### **BUILDING PLAN REVIEW**

Prickett Plan Updates -DAB will continue to review plans as they come in for other retail establishments.

Ms. Huchler visited the new building next to the Chase bank. It was noted that the parking lot had been stripped and the 2 handicapped spots are located in an area far from the entrances to the stores is this location. Pictures were sent to the LMT Community Development Director, Jim Majewski and he will follow up.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Marketing Plan Revisions- make sure we stay in the loop to help with a strategy for better outreach and education. Goal would be to ensure individuals with disabilities are aware of and educated about available services.

Mr. Lewis stated that the township has started to look into ways to get information out to residents and improve their social media presence. There are so many different methods that are being used but trying to determine the most effective way. Township has newsletters, email lists, social media pages by various departments, etc. however, we are not sure who is receiving and is it targeting the right audiences?

This would help the DAB get information to people regarding the emergency management forms, events and assistance for the community. Kelly Frain is the new township employee that we can contact for information.

We also will ask Monica Tierney to include in the newsletter, at least annually, the programs offered to children with disabilities along with the other sports program listings.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Yeatts presented information on a grant available through The American Academy of Dermatology. She was thinking this would be a good fit to apply for shade structures at the Secret Garden and Memorial Park. The grant would be up to \$8,000 and does not have a matching requirement. <https://www.aad.org/public/public-health/shade-structure-grants>

We can apply in October 2025 and would need a letter of recommendation from a dermatologist. Mr. Lewis and Ms. Yeatts suggested reaching out to local offices in the LMT. Will look in to any additional grants.

### **MEETING SCHEDULE**

Next meeting June 11, 2025 at 6:00 pm at the Township Building meeting room.

July 2025 meeting cancelled.

### **MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Zolfo moved and Ms. Yeatts seconded to adjourn, approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lisa Huchler  
Chair, Disability Advisory Board