

Watertown Commission on Disability

149 Main St. Watertown, MA. 02472

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, Jan.19th, 2022

The meeting was held by Zoom online and called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Kim Charlson, Chair.

ROLL CALL- Kim Charlson, Chair; Lisa Feltner, Town Councilor; John Hawes; Megan O'Halloran; Naomi Ridge; Elan Rohde; Gayle Shattuck, Town Personnel Director and ADA Coordinator; and Carol Wilson-Braun. Absent- Carol Menton.

Guests- Susan Klaw, resident, and Nicole Gardner, town councilor for District A.

AUDIENCE ISSUES- 1) Susan Klaw brought up concerns about handicapped parking at Arsenal on the Charles and availability of accessible seating at the Majestic Theatre there. She said there were only 3 handicapped spaces in front of the building that had the theatre, and 2 more around the corner. She felt there should be more spaces available. She also said there was one row of accessible seats in the theatre and that they weren't labelled. She thought they were being used by able bodied people. John pointed out that the parking garage has 6 spaces on the 2nd floor, but they are a distance from the building. Lisa mentioned that there are ongoing meetings with the planning board and the issue of the number and locations of spaces could be brought up. Kim mentioned that the theatre is also having issues with assisted listening and captioning, made worse by high employee turnover. It was decided to send a letter to the theatre about the issues, and cc it to the licensing board (per Lisa's suggestion). Megan said she thought the seats were labelled. Naomi thought seats could be pre-booked, but it was the honor system as to need for handicapped seats. Was management enforcing?

2) Nicole Gardner, councilor from District A, spoke about the upcoming remodeling of the Watertown Mall and two adjacent buildings to the west, and encouraged commissioners to attend a community meeting about it on Jan 27th at 6:30. She said the RMV would be invited to stay and some other stores, but that Best Buy would be relocating. She brought up the issue of no back door near Target.

CHAIR'S REPORT-

- 1) Kim had material sent out to us about the meeting about the Riverfront Upgrade.
- 2) Knowles Delta- Naomi said it has been too cold recently for her to get out to all the sidewalks. But that it was looking good from what she could see.
- 3) Watertown Sq. Delta- Naomi took photos. Gayle will send them to the DPW tomorrow.
- 4) Detectable Warnings behind Library- Naomi had no report yet.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES- It was moved, seconded and VOTED unanimously by roll call to accept the minutes from the December meeting. Copies of the minutes may be requested from the Town Clerk's Office.

TREASURER'S REPORT- Some parking fines that are being paid via credit card are going through a third party company. Commissioners found that confusing, and Gayle said she would ask the treasurer about it. It was moved, seconded and VOTED unanimously by roll call to accept the Treasurer's Report for December. Copies of the Treasurer's report may be requested from the town's ADA Coordinator in the Personnel Office.

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

- 1) Plans- John said that the 66 Galen St development is installing the sidewalk railing that we recommended.
- 2) Special Ed- Naomi reported that the new Hosmer School will have an open house on Feb 1st. Students will move in the following week. There is much better accessibility now.
- 3) Safety and Access- Kim said there was nothing new concerning Lexington St.

NEW BUSINESS-

- 1) Kim said the town manager is retiring at the end of January and thought that WCOD should send an appreciation. Lisa said she was in favor of expressing thanks for support of COD and budget changes. Kim was thinking of artwork or something unusual. Lise wondered about something in Braille. Kim will do some brainstorming and send out an idea or two to the commission. She asked Gayle to check on a potential monetary limit. Lisa said that a party has been postponed to mid-March.
- 2) Naomi mentioned that the Watertown Public Library director is also retiring. There is a drive to fund a bookmobile, and money is being collected to honor her. Commissioners thought it would be good to support that cause. Kim made a motion to donate \$500 for the bookmobile in recognition of Leone Cole, retiring director of the WPL. The final vote will take place at the next meeting, but tonight, it was VOTED unanimously by roll call to accept the recommendation for the donation.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

There will be no meeting in February.

The next meeting of WCOD will take place via Zoom at 7 p.m. on Wed, March 16th, 2022.