

Watertown Commission on Disability Minutes for Public Meeting November 28, 2007

Attending: George Donahue, Chair, Carol Menton, Andrea Greenwood, Alex Liazos, Kim Charlson, Bob Hall, Ann Doughty, Gayle Shattuck, Lisa Bing and Patti Medbury ASL

Called to Order at 7:05

Nominating Committee: Arturo Delucca was recommended for appointment at the October meeting. Gayle has talked with him to let him know that a letter will be submitted to the Town Manager.

A Discussion on Disability Commission memberships, amount of meetings per year required by state rules. Need to verify whether it is 6 or 10 meetings per year is required.

Bob Hall read information about Massachusetts Disability Commission Chapter 40: Section 22G. Funds received from fines for handicap parking violations; deposits in account; expenditures.

Correspondence from Executive Office on Transportation about hp placard fine program in Waltham was read by George Donahue and discussed.

Minutes:

The October minutes were not emailed prior to the meeting. Gayle will email those and the November minutes for approval at the December meeting.

Treasurer's Report:

Revenues as of 10/31/07 were \$2,069 and expenses paid were \$170 to Arlington for the training attended by some WCOD members. Fred Isaacs has submitted a receipt for SPED expenses which will be paid soon. Alex moved to accept the Treasurer's report, Kim seconded; motion carried.

Bus Stop report: This issue was assigned to the Public Works Committee, Marilyn Devaney Chair. A meeting was held on November 7th in which George and Gayle attended. Minutes of that meeting were provided by Greg Watson and distributed. Alex agrees that the delta is the better place for the bus stop but doesn't believe that the MBTA will move the stop in a reasonable amount of time. He'd like the Commission to be more proactive to get the bus stop moved soon. George will contact Jerry and Gregg to find out where the Committee's recommendation stands regarding the traffic consultant, Traffic Solutions and recommendation. Kim made a motion that George as Chair will contact officials in Town and write the WCOD position to the newspaper. Motion was seconded and passed. Gayle will invite Jerry and Gregg to the December meeting to provide an update.

Break: 8:00 - 8:15pm

Special Education Report:

The calendar for SPED is available on the WCOD website. Andrea gave an update regarding about new committees working with the Director of Student Services. There are three teams visiting other school systems to determine what services work well and how to create programs in our schools. Alex commented that Jim Early had 3-4 programs that were dismantled under the previous SPED Director without opposition from anyone. Was this a desire by the school committee to control costs? Kim suggested that we invite the School Dept. back after the holidays as a follow up to their invitation earlier this year. Bob commented that their budget has a \$300,000 set aside and they have not reported on what corrections they are making from the Audit findings. The set aside money are for outplacement, therapists, counselors but the therapists and counselors serve the whole school population, so the money is not earmarked just for the special needs students. Alex suggested that we invite the Parents' Advisory Council and the Town Council Committee on Schools to the same meeting. George asked everyone to email him questions for the School Dept. and he will facilitate that discussion in January.

Safety and Access Report: Kim said things are going smoothly there have been no complaints about signals. Carol suggested that the Pleasant Street project will need watching. Alex said he will check if the new traffic signal at Russo's has an audible signal. He would also like a review of the past minutes regarding trees and bushes overhanging public ways.

Chair's Report: The Regional COD meeting will probably be held in May - the library is holding the Watertown Savings room for us and will cater. Discussion about supporting closed captioning of the Town Council meetings in 2008. Gayle had a discussion with Tamarah Green, Executive Director of Cable Access. She said that Peter Z. told Tamarah that only a few school committee meetings and two of Mind You Own Business shows were done in closed captioning. They stopped last summer because the costs were more than Peter had predicted (i.e. about \$250 per one hour show v \$150 per hour). The Cable Access wasn't able to continue to support it.

Tamarah hopes to find another vendor who can do the closed captioning for less than \$250 but I get the sense from her that it is a time consuming project and in the few months that she has been the Executive Director, it was not a top priority. I told her that the WCOD is committed to supporting cc for the town council meetings in 2008 and please let me know as soon as she finds other vendor. She offered to meet with us any time.

George asked for input from everyone for the end of year report.
Dining Guide will probably need an update in 2008, a suggestion was made to collaborate with Lisa Williams and her blog.

Invitations to report at the December 19th meeting to John Flynn, Town Clerk regarding the voting machines, and Jerry Mee regarding the consultant's study of the bus stop and recommendations from the DPW Committee.

Motion to Adjourn was made and carried at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted
Andrea Greenwood