

**Watertown Commission on Disability
May 20, 2009**

Attendees: George Donahue, Chair; Anne Doughty, Chair-for-the-meeting; Kim Charlson; Bob Hall; Fred Isaacs; Alex Liazos; Carol Menton; Gayle Shattuck

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by tonight's Chair Anne Doughty.

Roll Call

Raymond Isaacs told the commission about receiving an International Scouting public service award from King Gustav XVI of Sweden.

Alex Liazos brought up the issue of cars blocking sidewalks by parking in the sidewalk part of the driveway. This is bad if you are visually impaired or pushing a stroller. Bob Hall has had better luck in reporting offenders and getting their cars ticketed. We discussed sending a letter to the police department or the traffic commission. Alex will write a first draft of this letter. Kim Charlson will refine it in her role as chair of the Safety and Access Committee. The letter will be done by our next meeting.

Fred Isaacs brought up the comments made by a lady at the World in Watertown meeting about encountering drivers for The Ride with very bad attitudes. The MBTA has a complaint process and people need to complain. There is a complaint line.

There was brief discussion of an American Sign Language course for first responders. It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to subsidize tuition for first responders from Watertown at the American Sign Language course for first responders.

Chair's report - George Donahue

We received notice of a workshop on the state of civil rights in the Commonwealth on June 10 from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. It will be held at Roxbury Community College in the Media Arts Building.

WGBH is having a day long event on the arts on May 26. There is also an evening event which is fully accessible. The concert is free; the workshop is \$25.00.

George went to the East Watertown meeting at the Coolidge School Apartment Building. There are Braille signs on the bathrooms and a handicap bathroom. Many town councilors and police were there, as was Gerry Mee.

George announced that he had sold his house and is moving into the Coolidge School Apartment Building. There are several handicapped parking spots. The bad news is that there is a park and baseball field adjacent to the school and parents use the handicapped parking spaces during games.

There will be a site plan review for the Perkins School lower classroom renovation.

Once George finishes his transition from a house to an apartment he will be working on mapping all of the handicapped parking spaces in town and updating the restaurant guide.

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes of the April 15, 2009 meeting.

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to approve the Treasurer's report.

Special Ed Report—Fred Isaacs

We had a presentation on Bullying by Dr. Steve Imber. It might be a topic for the Commission.

There is a new Watertown Out of District Parents Yahoo group.

Lori Thomas, the Watertown Schools Out of District Coordinator, has been laid off as part of the budget staff cuts.

May election. We will need to rerun this in the Fall. There were only 2 of us eligible to vote remaining at the end of the meeting and we were candidates.

Closed Captioning—Carol Menton

Marilyn Devaney helped organize a meeting with the Town Council and the Cable Board and got them to take ownership of the closed captioning project. We are now getting buy in. There is real interest in creating a more accessible Town Council. We had a technology advocate there as well so we had critical mass. Captioning will be included in stage 2 of the renovation of the council chambers. John O'Dell offered his experience to help. Bob Kaprelian from the Cable Access Board had called Gayle Shattuck a couple of weeks ago and had invited Carol Menton and John O'Dell to the meeting.

Kim Charlson reported on Safety and Access

People are out and about in the warm weather again. Kim will organize the reports that she has. She will get more information on the Square and what needs to be tweaked.

The Saltonstall statue on Charles River Road will be rededicated on June 6. There will be a sensory trail. The committee has asked for a 30-foot mockup of what a real Braille sensory trail would be like. Kim has volunteers from Sasaki Associates architecture and landscaping and some grounds crew from Perkins.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Already done.

The task force for artists with disabilities will speak to us in July.

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn at 8:44PM.

The next meeting is June 17. Fred Isaacs will be Chair.

These minutes are respectfully submitted by Fred P. Isaacs.