

**Watertown Commission on Disability
September 16, 2009 Revised Minutes**

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

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair George Donahue.

Roll Call

Guests were Bob Kaprielian from the Cable Access Board; Tamarah Green, Director of the Cable Access Center; and Shannon Fitzpatrick, an ASL interpreting student.

Cable Access Discussion .

There was a meeting in August of our Cable Captioning Subcommittee with representatives from the Cable Access Board.

Captioning can be done either on-site or off-site. On-site the captioner can actually see the participants; this would be better for Town Council meetings. Off-site is better for scripted things.

The Cable Access Board will purchase 2 digital encoders at approximately \$2300 each. They will also get 2 dedicated phone lines which we would need for either on-line or off-line captioning. There is a delay of a couple of seconds between the speaker and the captioning.

The captioner is a lot like a CART provider. Tamarah Green has gotten some estimates from them. One is a remote captioning business run by Phil Hysong. His business would charge \$97 per hour with a 1 hour minimum. A 4-hour meeting would be \$388. This seems to be typical. The cost for 26 4-hour meetings would be \$10,088.00 per year.

The Cable Access Board would be responsible for updating and maintaining the encoders.

It is proposed that we try captioning Town Council Meetings for a one-year trial period with the Cable Access Board providing the hardware and with the Commission providing the captioner. During this period we will try to attract sponsors. At the end of this period we will invite the Town Council to join in the funding. Since the Cable Access Board will own the equipment, they are welcome to ask others if there are programs that they would like to have closed captioned. We will ask Stephanie what the cost and terms would be for having her service provide a CART reporter for captioning. We should also ask the Town Manager to review what we are doing and present it to the Town Council. Once we approve this the Cable Access Board will need to fund their part. The Cable Access Board will make the arrangements and we will pay the bills for our share.

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously for the Watertown Commission on Disability to spend a maximum of \$15,000 to fund a CART reporter as a captioner for a one year project to closed caption Town Council meetings. During this period we will search for sponsors. We would also like to see other programs

closed captioned such as the new disability program and the weekly Watertown news.

Bob Kaprielian suggested that our meetings should be closed captioned.

We will need regular progress reports from the Cable Access Board, either written or delivered in person.

Chair's report - George Donahue

The website is being freshened up.

George's term as Chair is coming to an end. The Chair has to have a disability. George doesn't want to be the chair while doing his cable show. George's term is up November 1. So is Carol Menton's. It is a 2 year term. We think it is now November to November due to the Town Council's decision on when Boards and Commission staffing is approved.. It used to be April to April.

E911 forms will be available at our booth at Faire on the Square,

Future guests will include the Chair of the Waltham Commission on Disability and Representative Hecht.

We will move the dining guide on-line. There was some discussion and we concluded that we still needed some number of print and Braille copies. However, we can cut down on the number of hard copies. We can keep the on-line version up to date and update the hard copies as needed.

Should we move our Holiday Celebration off-site?

The Chair will write our annual report to the Town Council.

Closed Captioning—Carol Menton

Thank you.

Terms

George, Carol, and the unfilled term all expire Nov 1.

Chairmanship.

Before the Town Council realigned appointments, we had a time line and an election procedure. Candidates should prepare a statement about their strengths and weaknesses. The Nominating Committee would get letters of interest in the December - January time frame for an election in April - May. The Nominating Committee should come up with a slate and report to us at the next meeting.

There is a straw man proposal to make the Chairmanship a three-year term starting in November.

Meetings.

It was moved and seconded [but not passed] to stay with our current ten meetings per year meeting schedule.

It was noted that we can always call a special meeting if we need to. Executive session was discussed; that doesn't affect our meeting schedule or special meetings. Under the public meetings law we must meet and then go into executive session.

Minutes.

Councilor Marilyn Devaney submitted an amendment to the minutes of the July 15 2009 meeting.

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

Councilor Devaney then complimented Mr. Isaacs on the minutes.

Faire on the Square.

We have our banner. We will find out if George the custodian will be working. Do we have freebies to give out? Pens? We will have the SPEDPAC calendar. We will also have the updated business-friendly brochure. The Faire opens at 10:00 AM. We would like to have teenage help for tear down. What about ASL interpreters?

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to appropriate no more than \$500 to provide ASL interpreters for the Faire on the Square.

Treasurers Report - Gayle Shattuck

FY10 started July 10. \$129,400.01 was carried over on our budget. Our current balance is \$131,211.45 After we pay for the newsline service for the Watertown Tab it will be \$120,961.45.

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to accept the treasurer's report.

Safety and Access - Kim Charlson

The audible pedestrian signal at Galen St. and Nonantum Rd. is not functional. The town website has a tracker program for reported problems. You can monitor your requests.

Special Ed Report—Fred Isaacs

Our new calendar will be available shortly.

We have new officers: Laine Tulipano, co-chair; Elan Rohde, co-chair; Myrto Flessas, vice-chair; Brenda Manning, secretary; Fred Isaacs, treasurer.

Our April Awards Ceremony meeting will be at the Arsenal Center for the Arts again and we will have Charlie Applestein as a speaker.

The SPEDPAC has formed a committee to explore and implement disability awareness education and would like to work together with the commission on this.

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn at 9:04 PM

These minutes are respectfully submitted by Fred P. Isaacs.