

**Watertown Commission on Disability
April 21, 2010**

Attendees: George Donahue, Chair; Kim Charlson; Anne Doughty, Fred Isaacs; Alex Liazos; Carol Menton, Gayle Shattuck, Carol Wilson-Braun

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

Guests were Paul Doerr, a mobility instructor; Judy Herzberg, a prospective new commission member; and Beverly Shank from the Watertown Public Library.

Paul Doerr is a potential teacher for our program to teach the visually impaired how to navigate Watertown Square. He has taught at the Perkins School for over 30 years. We would probably need about 2 hours per month of his time. We might over time have some repeat customers because the Square does change. Students would get a take-home diagram, a general orientation, and guidance and instruction at getting to specific places where they might like to go. We would have a sign-up list for the course. The students would meet near the Square. The course would not just be for the blind; we would want to include the mobility impaired and elders who were beginning to experience vision problems.

We would announce the course at The Perkins School and by doing a mailing to all registered blind people in the Watertown area. We would also announce it on our website. We also expect to get students who work in Watertown as well as those who live in Watertown. The Senior newspaper and the Watertown Tab are both good follow-ons.

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to authorize the expenditure of up to \$5000.00 per year for this project.

Kim will create a pamphlet describing this course in the next couple of weeks. We will also need to make release forms so that the students can hold both Mr. Paul Doerr and the Watertown Commission on Disability harmless.

Judy Herzberg introduced herself. She is a Professor at Northeastern's graduate school with a PhD in Human Services Administration. She has been teaching Human Services for 14 years. She herself has been disabled; she had a blood clot in her leg which kept her bedridden for 18 months.

Dr. Herzberg has applied for membership on the commission and she has been interviewed by commission members. We need to vote on recommending her membership to the Town Manager.

We have no update on who will fill our ex officio Town Councillor seat.

Minutes - Fred Isaacs

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to accept the minutes of the March 17, 2010 meeting as corrected. Copies of our minutes may be requested from the Town Clerk's office.

Treasurers Report - Gayle Shattuck

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to accept the Treasurer's report. Copies of the Treasurer's report may be requested from the town's ADA Coordinator in the Personnel Office.

Safety and Access - Kim Charlson

Things are relatively quiet. Alex reported signal issues which we've reported to the DPW. The loudest signal was at Main Street and Mt. Auburn Street. We need to keep the locator tone to one that can be heard within 3 or 4 feet. The locator tones tend to be too loud or too soft.

Lexington and Main needs an audible signal. At Irving and Mt. Auburn the walk signal is out.

Special Ed Report—Fred Isaacs

Carol Menton congratulated the SPEDPAC on its recent events.

We had Sarah Ward speak on Executive Function disorder at the Hosmer School auditorium and drew an audience of about 200.

Our April Annual Awards Ceremony at the Mosesian Theater drew about 100 to 150 people. Stephanie was the star of the show with her CART setup. Charlie Appelstein, our speaker, was amazed and fascinated at seeing his words appear as text on a screen as he said them. Charlie was a very dynamic speaker.

Our May meeting is the Melmark autistic spectrum consultants speaking on playground behavior.

Closed Captioning - Stephanie Farrell

We met with Mitch and Tamara at the Watertown Cable Access Channel on Friday April 10. Stenograph had said that we needed a caseview cable. We got one. It didn't work. Getting it was not that easy; Stenograoph canceled our order for no reason. It took us a month to actually get it. We ran a diagnostic program and that worked. We need to turn the encoder's input light on. We tested it 3 times; it now works. Stephanie is not available in May, though she might be able to do some testing. We will caption the first June Town Council meeting. There is a lag time

with the captioning and the camera could be on someone else by the time that the caption appears.

Stephanie has discovered that you cannot make corrections when you are captioning. It's all on the fly and you just have to let errors go.

Library.

Ms. Beverly Shank told us about the library's process to generate a new 5-year plan. They are looking for what they should do better. They are having several ten-person focus groups, each group from a different segment of the community, meet and discuss the same ten questions. One of these will be an accessibility focus group. The groups will meet sometime in May for one or two 1.5 hour sessions. The library is for everyone. E-mail the names of any volunteers to Gayle Shattuck. The 10 questions will be posted on the library's website.

We discussed funding an ASL interpreter.

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to provide up to \$500 for an ASL interpreter at the people with special needs library planning focus group.

The Quincy Commission on Disability is new and has funding. We should mentor them..

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to recommend to the Town Manager that he appoint Judy Herzberg as a member of this commission.

Fred Isaacs was assured that his membership counts as a disabled one because he is the parent of a disabled child.

Kim Charlson went to the new police station to proofread their Braille signs. They were topnotch. Only 1 was wrong.

We received notice from the Arlington Commission on Disability that they will be hosting a regional conference of commissions on disability on May 13 from 10 AM to 2 PM at Arlington Town Hall. In the 17 years since the legislature authorized commissions on disability, we have all worked independently. This is an attempt to start some coordination.

Kim Charlson is going to a conference in Des Moines. She will miss our May meeting.

We should have a vice-chair to moderate meetings in the chair's absence. We have relied on the previous chair to remain active enough and available enough to fulfill this role, but that might not always be true.

Ms. Laine Tulipano thanked the commission on behalf of the SPEDPAC for providing support, ASL interpreters, and Stephanie and CART interpretation for the SPEDPAC's Annual Awards meeting.

There is a bill in the legislature which would require that the money used by the disability commissions be spent on town building ADA compliance.

George will invite Jeff Dugan and key disability commissions in our area to our next meeting,

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to adjourn at 9:14 PM

These minutes are respectfully submitted by Fred P. Isaacs.