

**Watertown Commission on Disability
June 15, 2011**

Commission: George Donahue, Chair; Kim Charlson; Ann Doughty; Fred Isaacs; Carol Menton; Gayle Shattuck, Town Personnel Director and ADA Coordinator; Carol Wilson-Braun

Guests

**Jim Dunham; Judy Cannon; Brian Charlson; Al Gasper.
Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair George Donahue.**

Roll Call.

Newsline Newsline is a service which allows audio access to daily newspapers. We funded adding the Watertown Tab to Newsline The service converts the internet version of the newspaper to speech; the visually impaired may then dial into Newsline to use the audio version of the Tab. We have heard that it would be helpful if we could add the TV listings and the classified ads.

Jim Dunham moved to Watertown four years ago. He really likes and uses our restaurant guide. He accesses the Tab via Newsline to get local information which affects him; for example, he heard an article about Walmart coming to Watertown and then had interesting discussions about it. Judy Cannon says that she is very interested in local politics. The Tab via the Newsline service allows her to find out what is happening in Town Hall. She downloads it to a listening device and then listens to it at work.

Brian Charlson is the president of the local blind citizens group. He finds out about things like water flushing using the Tab via Newsline. He also use it to find events going on at the Cunniff school which is next-door due to his house.

Al Gasper was formerly active in the community. He keeps up on local events by using the Tab via Newsline; it helps him stay better informed as to what is going on in the town. There is an annual maintenance fee of \$5000 to keep the Tab on the Newsline service. The Perkins school pays \$50,000 per year to carry the Newsline service. It was moved seconded and passed with one abstention (Kim Charlson) to appropriate \$5000 to continue the Tab on the Newsline service for another year. Kim will write an article about this for the Tab.

Chair's Report - George Donahue Our website has been up since June 2007. George will e-mail statistics. There were 127 visits in March 2008. There were 65 visits in March 2011. We've been running about 65 visits per month. The number of visits has tapered off . We should take some steps to build traffic: We should emphasize our online dining guide. We should update it more often. We should do things so that we are more findable such as search engine optimization. We cross-link other websites but we need them to cross-link to us. The new search engines look for the title of the page. We should come up with 24 questions we would like people to ask us. We should ask around for web nerds to help us with our site.

Minutes - Kim Charlson

It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to accept the May minutes as corrected.

Thank you for doing them, Kim.

Copies of our minutes may be requested from the Town Clerk's office.

Treasurers Report - Gayle Shattuck

We are nearing the end of the fiscal year. We want to close purchase orders for the year.

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.

Art Exhibit - Anne Doughty

The press release has been passed on to Gail's intern. Anne should resend the final file please.

We suggest putting the deadline off to September 1.

Closed captioning - Carol Menton

We are blazing a trail! Councilor Cecilia Lenk has heard good things from her constituents about our captioning of the town Council meetings; so has Councilor Steve Corbett. Stephanie reports that we had some problems getting signal connection or dropping the signal occasionally. She was able to troubleshoot it last night and the port settings were reset; then all worked. Stephanie now knows how to fix dropout if it happens again.

We asked our town councilors for written testimonials from their constituents

Snow Update

No report.

Special Ed Report—Fred Isaacs

There will be an end of year review of the understanding our differences program as well as a discussion of the partners programs for children with disabilities at our July commission meeting.

Old business

WE WILL POSTPONE REVIEW OF THE MARCH AND APRIL MINUTES TO THE NEXT MEETING ON JULY 20. FRED WILL REBROADCAST THOSE MINUTES