

Watertown Commission on Disability

Minutes

April 18, 2012

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kim Charlson at 7:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL- Kim Charlson, Chair; Counselor Steve Corbett; Ann Doughty; John Hawes; Judith Herzberg; Fred Isaacs, Vice-Chair; Carol Menton; Jeanne O'Connell, WCOD Intern; Gayle Shattuck, Town Personnel Director and ADA Coordinator; and Carol Wilson-Braun.

Guest- Mike Mena, Watertown Zoning Enforcement Office.

AUDIENCE ISSUES- This was a follow-up about the process and enforcement of requests for "reasonable accommodation". Mr. Mena presented a flow chart for the application process (attached to the minutes). Regarding process, a questionnaire will be submitted with a building permit to see if a person falls under ADA and Fair Housing Act. The Zoning Office can help a person appeal if they don't come under the act. Enforcement- How to remove the improvement or change when the individual is not living there anymore. They will track Reasonable Accommodations through permits and proof of residency. Most cases will be straight forward, so not too many would need to be referred to WCOD. They will come to us with questions about eligibility. Mr. Mena agreed to a request to keep the Commission informed. It was MOVED, seconded and voted unanimously to accept the memorandum and procedures/process for reasonable accommodation for zoning.

CHAIR'S REPORT- Kim stated that our new intern Jeanne is working with George on the Restaurant Guide. The guide will include hours. It won't include take-out places, only restaurants with table service. A separate guide for bakeries and markets may be included on the website. Jeanne is also working on the audible signal project, and organizing WCOD files with Gayle, and helping with the Treasurer's report and posting on the website. Kim will be on a Boston Cable disability program with the chair of the Boston COD talking about closed captioning of the town council meetings and other projects.

MINUTES- It was MOVED, seconded and passed unanimously to accept the minutes for March as corrected. Copies of the minutes may be requested from the Town Clerk's office.

TREASURER'S REPORT- 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. Gayle will work on restoring a chronological format.

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

1)Art Exhibit- Anne has contacted 14 new artists interested in submitting work. She will work on getting the invitations out earlier in May requesting contributions. She'll have the invitation done for the May meeting so we can get the publicity out.

2)Closed Captioning- Carol M. said there were technical snafus related to live streaming video on the website. It is not happening yet. Captioning on Comcast Channel 99 has problems. It is believed that the captions are not showing up on Comcast, even though they are showing up on our cable station. Carol M will find out if the meeting is playing on Comcast 99 and RCN Cable. We will invite Tamara and perhaps others to the next meeting. We will discuss a trouble shooting protocol, once the system is moving smoothly. Kim will talk to George.

3)Special Ed- Fred announced the Awards meeting is May 3rd at 6:30 in the Hosmer auditorium. They voted to support CART and ESL translation for that. Carol Menton will give Fred contact information for Mass Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing for interpreters. The speaker is Sarah Warren, who will talk on executive function disorder. Six awards will be given out, one to Julianna Duff, intern at Church of Good Shepherd. At the March meeting, a representative from Easter Seals spoke about the assistive devices they loan out. They have a small library of i-pads. Sped Pac is drafting a request for 5 i-pods and 5 i-pads for \$25,000. Easter Seals is giving advice to keep the cost down.

4)Safety and Access- Kim reports that she was able to report a broken auditory signal online in the DPW website. And the problem was fixed!

5)Plans Review- John reported that the 24 Bridge St. project was withdrawn.

OLD BUSINESS-

1)Jeanne reported that the Victory field plaque being purchased is 6×8” and will say “Watertown Commission on Disability Dedicated to Ensuring Equal Access to All Since 1994”.

2)Watertown Riverfront Project update- Steve reported that since our last meeting, another family foundation has committed to \$50,000. Municipal \$120,000, local commitment of \$220,000. Next, the stewardship group will communicate this to the DCR. He is optimistic that something will happen now with the state, that they will approve the project of \$600,000. The project will be managed by the state and the DCR. It will be a great project for the Watertown community.

3)Fred mentioned the community gardens and handicapped access. They are encountering high costs. Fred has reminded them that we can help. Kim said that Perkins can help advise, as well.

NEW BUSINESS-

Kim requested that information from the last town council meeting be shared. She asked Gayle if she could be given the town council agenda each month. She asked Steve and Gayle to fill us in on a couple of topics.

1)Steve and Gayle talked about a discussion about a town social worker position. The human services sub-committee is recommending public and private support for a social worker. The COA and Springwell may also be involved. The social worker would work with the police department and the Board of Health for families in need. They previously used someone from a non-profit but the position was cut due to lack of funding. Judy mentioned that not only a social worker, but someone with a social services degree could be considered. It was suggested that we invite Tony Palumbo or someone on the subcommittee to come talk to us. This can relate to disability. Gayle and Steve will try to get more information for next meeting.

2)DPW Update for Summer Road Repair. Steve said there were plans this summer for major work to be done on Waverly and Carroll Streets. He will get more information. We will see if Gerry Mee is available.

It was MOVED, seconded and passed unanimously to adjourn at 8:19 p.m.

The next meeting will be on 5/16 at 7 p.m.

These minutes are recorded and respectfully submitted by Carol Wilson-Braun,
Secretary