

WATERTOWN COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

Minutes

January 18, 2012

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kim Charlson at 7:08 p.m.

ROLL CALL- Kim Charlson, Chair; Councilor Steve Corbett; George Donahue, Anne Doughty, John Hawes; Judith Herzberg; Fred Isaacs; Carol Menton; Gayle Shattuck, Town Personnel Director and ADA Coordinator, and Carol Wilson-Braun.

There were no guests present.

CHAIR'S REPORT- Kim. The inauguration of town officers was held on Jan. 3rd. Steve was sworn in again for another term. Town Manager Driscoll spoke favorably about WCOD. Kim presented several items of interest from his remarks. The Watertown Road Plan is an inventory of all roads and sidewalks, and is updated on a regular basis. We should have Gerry Mee come in April. There will be a new bus for the senior center, and Kim wondered if it was going to be accessible. Gayle will check. Plans for unused town buildings (police station, libraries)- accessibility will continue to be an issue for them. John will speak with Steve Magoon.

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

TREASURER'S REPORT- Discussion about audit results and closed captioning line items in December. 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.

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

Art Exhibit- Anne is talking to the library about this next fall. It was suggested that the exhibit take place in November to incorporate the Open Art Studios weekend. The reception with the artists could take place on Nov 10 or 11th. Anne will book the exhibit space and coordinate with Open Art Studios so we can be included in their publicity.

Website- George reviewed stats from our website. And they will be emailed and

attached to the minutes. There has been an increase in new visits. The top pages visited included the dining guide and events. Signing up for "RSS feed" on the website will notify people of upcoming events of interest. The website is up for renewal.

Closed Caption- Carol M. said that the Salem and Lowell CODs have approached them for info. A lengthy discussion followed about continuing problems with closed captioning for town council meetings. Stephanie continues to have major problems with the equipment and the availability of someone knowledgeable who can help fix the situation. She said that things haven't worked well since the carpeting was changed. Also, other groups come in and move the equipment. Kim recommended we document any solutions we find. A plan was devised to set up a meeting with Tamara before the next town council meeting on Tuesday. Gayle will ask her about obtaining the help once again of Nick Palm, who helped set it up initially, and that WCOD could offer to split the cost of his services. George volunteered to come to the town council meeting, and help label cables when Nick is there. Tamara should also be asked to be at the next council meeting. John suggested the next step would be to meet with the Cable board if Tuesday doesn't work. George proposed a joint meeting in Feb between WCOD (or at least a Closed Caption sub-committee) and the Cable station. The sub-committee would include Carol M., Steve and George. The meeting would include Stephanie, Gayle and Tamara. A special meeting about closed captioning was tentatively planned for 2/23 if the issues aren't resolved.

Snow Update- Steve said the issue will be addressed at the next Town Council meeting on 1/24. There wasn't time during the last meeting.

Special Ed- Fred said their calendar was back in synch. A speaker from Family Connection was slated for January. He mentioned that the schools have representatives to help choose a new superintendent, but that special ed parents don't. They want a voice in the process and will go to public hearings. They want someone who will be an advocate.

Safety and Access- No new issues, per Kim.

OLD BUSINESS- George has sent a draft of the 2011 end of year report. The date of our Nov meeting is changed from 11/21 to 11/28. Gayle will arrange.

Watertown Sq assisted living plans- making sure there are enough accessible parking spaces, bathrooms for common spaces, and 2nd egress for 1st floor. Two other projects on Pleasant St. are being reviewed, and St Stephens is making their playground more accessible. John said that the building inspector does the final review of plans, but that he will offer his services to be a resource at that stage.

NEW BUSINESS-

Coolidge Village Condos Variance- a ramp is being constructed in the garage from the elevator and needs a variance due to the steepness and no rails.

It was MOVED, seconded and unanimously approved to support the 9.2% in place of the normal 8.3% slope for the ramp in the garage for the Coolidge Village Condos. This will be sent to MAAB.

As mentioned earlier, Watertown Open Art Studios will take place on 11/10-11, 2012.

Victory Field Renovation Fund- Kim mentioned that there will be ramp seating. She asked the Commission to consider a donation for a plaque. It was MOVED, seconded and unanimously approved to contribute \$1000 for a 6x4" plaque for the Wall of Fame on Victory Field.

Gayle said the Commission received a letter from Mark Sideris, Town Council president thanking us for participating and helping out with the inauguration earlier this month. We also received a letter of thanks from St. Patrick's food pantry and a card from our Carol M. thanking us for our support.

Kim talked about the MBTA public hearings about service cuts and fare increases. Hundreds of people were at the hearings, and lots of media coverage. The #52 bus is slated to be eliminated, which travels from Watertown to Dedham, through Newton past the Carroll Center for the Blind. The Newton mayor wrote a letter, and we should also consider sending a letter.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is Wed., March 21st. A full WCOD meeting or sub-committee meeting to address closed captioning issues is tentatively scheduled for Thurs., Feb 23rd.

It was MOVED, seconded and passed unanimously to adjourn at 9:03 p.m.

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