

Watertown Commission on Disability

149 Main St. Watertown, MA. 02472

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 19th, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:11 p.m. by Vice-Chair Fred Isaacs.

ROLL CALL- Fred Isaacs, Vice-Chair; Steven Corbett, Town Councilor; George Donahue; Tabitha Freeman, Intern; John Hawes; Carol Menton; Jeanne O'Connell; and Carol Wilson-Braun. .

Kim Charlson, Judith Herzberg and Gayle Shattuck were unable to attend.

Guest- Stephanie Loo from Asperger's Assoc of New England (AANE)

GUEST SPEAKER- Stephanie Loo was invited to educate the Commission on what AANE does. She works in child and teen services which provides information, education, resources, referrals and parent support. The adult services section offers direct services such as social groups, cultural events, employer outreach, mock interviews, one on one coaching. There are great individual differences, and needs change with different ages. Aspergers has been a category in the DSM since '94, but now is being incorporated into the Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis, and they are wary of losing their identity.

CHAIR'S REPORT- Memo from Gayle noted that the Target handicapped parking recommendation letter was sent to the Town Manager and will be shared with the Town Council, and was sent to the mall and to Target.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES- It was MOVED, seconded and passed unanimously to accept the minutes as corrected from the May meeting. Copies of the minutes may be requested from the Town Clerk's Office.

George proposed that WCOD have a column in the Watertown Tab summarizing information of public interest from our meetings, especially when we have a guest speaker, to educate the public about our existence and what we do. We will discuss this further.

TREASURER'S REPORT- It was MOVED, seconded and passed unanimously to accept the Treasurer's Report for May. Copies of the Treasurer's report may be requested from the town's ADA Coordinator in the Personnel Office.

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

- a) Plans Review- John said that 33 Mt Auburn Street is mixed use for commercial and residential, and looks OK. The Pleasant St. variance was passed by MAAB.

- b) Closed Caption- Carol M. said it is working. A backup person has been found, Janet Mahoney. Carol made a proposal for funding. It was MOVED, seconded and passed unanimously to authorize up to \$800 to cover cross-training of Janet Mahoney with Stefanie as back-up closed captioner for town council meetings.
- c) Special Ed- Fred announced that Elizabeth Schaffer is retiring as Director of Student Services (nurses, Special Ed). The June planning meeting turned into a farewell, so there will be another meeting held for planning. There will also be a meeting with candidates Jill Fantasia and Martin Kennedy.
- d) Safety and Access- Update by memo from Gayle. Regarding automatic doors for the senior center, no update because the attorney has been busy. This should be on the agenda for July. Gerry Mee spoke with Brian Coppola about vibrating audible signals and an outside vendor was called.
- e) Emergency Preparedness- Tabitha went to the meeting in which inventory and location for shelter were discussed.
- f) Web Stats- 59 visits between 5/10-6/9, most through the town website. Minutes from '09-'10 and dining guide on town website.
- g) Restaurant Guide- Gayle has everything she needs to submit.

ONGOING BUISNESS-

- a) Gore Place- Proposal has not been updated with more details. It was MOVED, seconded and voted to table the discussion.
- b) Watertown Riverfront Project Update- Steve said that meetings and fundraising continue. Phase I is on target to begin next spring for pedestrian signals at the intersection of Charles River Rd and Irving St.
- c) Handicapped Parking Locations Update- Jean said that Victory Field spaces need better signage. George said that the CVS parking lot needs more spaces, and four spots need to be re-done.
- d) Proposed MAAB Regulation- George stated that all HP parking will have stenciling on the ground.
- e) Watertown Comprehensive Plan Update- Steve said the meeting was well attended and covered economic development, walkability, trees, open spaces. Website available through the town.

NEW BUSINESS-

- 1) Interviews are being set up for a new intern. Tabitha thanked the Commission for this experience.
- 2) George discussed accessibility issues around Watertown Open Arts. The Able Arts exhibit will be on a map. There is a fee.
- 3) Several members are monitoring public feedback and difficulty with trash toters.

Next meeting will take place on Wednesday, July 17th.

It was MOVED, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:02 p.m.

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