

Watertown Commission on Disability

149 Main St. Watertown, MA. 02472

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 15th, 2013

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

ROLL CALL- Kim Charlson, Chair; Steven Corbett, Town Councilor; George Donahue; Tabitha Freeman, Intern; John Hawes; Fred Isaacs; Carol Menton; Gayle Shattuck, Town Personnel Director and ADA Coordinator; and Carol Wilson-Braun. . Judith Herzberg and Jeanne O'Connell were unable to attend.
Guests: Helen Chatel and Tamar Agulian.

GUEST SPEAKERS- Helen Chatel is the new Executive Director for WCAC and introduced herself and spoke of getting to know Watertown. She discussed contract issues with Comcast regarding cable, and is working with department heads and a lawyer. She also spoke about closed captioning. It is working at the present. One person is charged with watching closed captioning during the meeting. Stefanie wants one person who understands the technical piece of it (encoder, cables). Is also looking for a back-up person and having difficulties finding someone. Potential substitutes are wary of the technical glitches that can happen. The internet connection needs to be live, per Stefanie, which is a problem when there are other local wifi connections. Helen wondered about hard-wiring Stefanie.

Tamar Agulian is an Education Specialist at Gore Place and spoke of her attempts to make tours more accessible. She is trying to design a tour involving sound, scent and touch by the fall, and would like to request funding from WCOD, for example a touchable mansion model for \$4000-6000, a column stove for \$6000 and touchable objects for \$1000. She will also look into grants from Mass Humanities and Mass Cultural Council and the Waltham COD. She was encouraged to present a formal proposal at the next meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT- Kim spoke of Jeff Dougan's survey and asked for feedback. She will respond on behalf of us.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES- It was MOVED, seconded and passed unanimously to accept the minutes from the April meeting. 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 for April. Copies of the Treasurer's report may be requested from the town's ADA Coordinator in the Personnel Office.

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

No updates from Plans Review, and Closed Captioning was already discussed.

- a) Special Ed- Fred said that the May meeting presentation was by an organization that does group therapy in middle schools on emotional and social interaction issues. The June meeting will be an informal planning meeting.
- b) Safety and Access- Kim is going to write a letter to the state highway dept requesting an audible signal at Lexington and Main Streets, and requested funding for assist from someone who knows the regulations. It was MOVED, seconded and voted unanimously to authorize up to \$150 for a consultant for the purpose of drafting a letter to the state requesting an audible signal at the above intersection.
- c) Emergency Preparedness- Kim said we all just lived through an emergency! Carol M wanted a renewed effort to send out text messages to deaf, hard of hearing and deaf/blind residents. This needs to be a priority, and training needs to be done.
- d) Website- George said that the website hits could be from IT. Agendas are being posted, as is our Annual Report.
- e) Restaurant Guide- Memo for hard copy distribution will go out to the Tab, Departments and library, and electronically to the Town Council. Braille and large print versions available.

ONGOING BUSINESS-

- a) John will send the Target/Watertown Mall HP parking recommendation letter.
- b) Watertown Riverfront Project Update- Commitments from all players have been confirmed. Meetings are taking place about maintenance plans and advocacy.
- c) List of HP parking locations- George said municipal lots are being looked at. He will follow up a question about Jon Hecht's proposal concerning state approved signs.
- d) Watertown Comprehensive Plan Update- John and Steve will attend a meeting on May 20.

OTHER BUSINESS-

John asked about automatic doors for senior center, Gayle said she sent info to town attorney and will look at the authority for the funding of the doors. Steve said the town has to vote to accept a specific donation, such as from WCOD and this will be addressed next month.

Next meeting will take place on Wednesday, June 19th. Kim will be away.

It was MOVED, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:41 p.m.

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

