

Watertown Commission on Disability

149 Main St. Watertown, MA. 02472

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 16th, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Chair Kim Charlson.

ROLL CALL- Kim Charlson, Chair; Steven Corbett, Town Councilor; John Hawes; Judith Herzberg; Jeff Holman, Intern; Fred Isaacs; Carol Menton; Rachele Natale; Jeanne O'Connell; Gayle Shattuck, Town Personnel Director and ADA Coordinator; and Carol Wilson-Braun.

Audience- Susan Brefach, from Neurodevelopment Associates, Lisa Chiango, a Perkins Employee and deafblind consumer, George Donahue and Tony Palumbo, Town Councilor.

Guest Speakers- Susan Brefach was invited by Gayle to come speak about her organization Neurodevelopment Associates in Lexington, which does testing, reports and advocacy for children with learning disabilities. She is a clinical psychologist who has been in the field for 32 yrs. She does cognitive, neuropsychological and academic testing with school aged children who have learning disabilities, sensory integration and communication problems, hearing loss, and emotional and behavioral problems. She represents the interests of the child before school boards and towns.

Lisa Chiango is a technology coordinator for deafblind students at Perkins, and wanted to present to the Commission community navigation safety issues. Her concerns were about a number of intersections from the Watertown Square area all the way to Perkins, on Main St., Arsenal and N. Beacon streets, where the signals were not long enough, were broken, crosswalks not visible, etc. She also wondered about the adequacy of curb cuts for wheelchairs. Jeanne assured her that we had done a survey of all these intersections and have reported the findings to the town and DPW. John stated that the planning board is going to be starting a study on Arsenal St. The Commission's study will be shared with the Planning Board and Town Council. Tony P also recommended sharing the results with a group working with the MBTA.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES- It was MOVED, seconded and passed unanimously to accept the minutes from the March 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 March. 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 reported that the Grace Chapel variance was approved by MAAB. Nothing active right now, but a large 300 unit project on Arsenal St is coming. A surrounding walk will not be done at the Hanover project and signage will be needed to warn of stairs.
- b) Closed Caption- discussion tabled until next month
- c) Able Arts Show- Rachele reported that the Library exhibit area is already reserved for this October. Turtle Studios will vacate their location at the end of September and the building will be razed. There was discussion of whether we should try to organize something for this fall, and it was generally agreed that we should wait until Turtle Studios is up and running again and continue our collaboration. Rachele will continue to research. She was instructed to put in a reservation at the Library for Oct of 2015.

ONGOING BUSINESS-

- a) Screening of “Going Blind” next Wed. Judith reported that everything is set. The DVD is 7-9 p.m. and the movie is 82 mins and has captioning and audio description. Jeff and Gayle will email promotions to community sources.
- b) Riverfront Project- Construction is starting soon at Irving St and Charles River Rd.
- c) HP Parking Locations- We will try to invite Gerry Mee to come soon or get his input.
- d) Comprehensive Plan Update- John reported that it should be done by summer. One more public meeting, then review by the town council and planning board. There need to be enough action items included, more than just vision and goals.

The next meeting will take place on Wed., May 21st at 7 p.m.

It was MOVED, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:44 p.m.

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