

## **Watertown Commission on Disability**

149 Main St. Watertown, MA. 02472

### **Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, May 21st, 2014

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

ROLL CALL- Kim Charlson, Chair; John Hawes; Judith Herzberg; Jeff Holman, Intern; Fred Isaacs; Carol Menton; Rachele Natale; Jeanne O'Connell; and Carol Wilson-Braun.

Absent- Steven Corbett, Town Councilor and Gayle Shattuck, Town Personnel Director and ADA Coordinator.

Guests- Will Twombly. Ellen Bey and George Donahue.

### **GUEST SPEAKERS-**

- 1) Will Twombly is on the board of the Marshall Home Fund and spoke about it. He stated that George Donahue just became a member of the board. Established in 1908, the Marshall Home was a small retirement home with a family-like atmosphere. It closed in 2002 and was sold to a non-profit developer who renovated it with apartments for 10 people. CASCAP and Watertown Community Housing manage it now. Eight apartments are Section 8 and the others are low income. It continues to have a family atmosphere.

Proceeds of the sale and remainder of the endowment are managed by the Marshall Home Fund, a non-profit, whose purpose is to serve seniors 55 and over. It provides program grants and grants to individuals who need help with emergency situations or quality of life issues (walkers, wheelchairs, dental care, air conditioning, etc). The grants have been given to the Arsenal Project, Perkins, COA, Watertown Family Network, the Housing Authority, Windsor House (adult day health), and Health Dept (hoarding issues). They encourage collaboration between agencies with similar goals. The web address is [marshallhomefund.org](http://marshallhomefund.org).

- 2) Ellen Bey- Board member for SPEDPAC. The Parents' Advisory Committee is a resource for families of children with special needs. They sponsor 9-10 lectures each year, including meeting with the special ed director, basic rights and the awards ceremony at the end of the year. She came to make a request for funding in the amount of \$9000 for the next 3 yrs. Their only other source of funding is from the school district and Mass PAC dues. Their budget is spent on speakers, food and child care for their meetings. There is a plan for teachers to be able to obtain continuing ed credits from these sessions. There was a sense from the Commission that this would be approved, but a formal vote will be taken next meeting.

There was no CHAIR'S REPORT this evening.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES- It was MOVED, seconded and passed unanimously to accept the minutes from the April meeting 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 for April. 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 there were none this month. Next month they will be looking at the hotel plans for the Arsenal site. It will be six stories built up to the street line.
- b) Closed Caption- Carol said that Gayle would talk about outreach at the next meeting.
- c) Special Ed- Fred said there is a new director for special ed in Watertown public schools. It was suggested that we invite him to a meeting in the fall, after he has had a chance to settle in.
- d) Safety and Access- Kim stated that Gerry Mee responded to Lisa Ciango's concerns from last meeting. He is going through the deficiencies one by one and the DPW subcommittee will address them. Jeff was instructed to invite Mee to our June meeting.
- e) No Website update.
- f) Able Arts- Rachele emailed Dawn Scaltreto of the Watertown Art Association, who will bring up the topic of collaboration at the next board meeting.

#### ONGOING BUSINESS-

- a) Watertown Riverfront Project Update- There was an email about the project beginning. DCR is awarding the low bidder, which was \$99,000 over the approved funding.
- b) HP Parking Locations- Jean said there was nothing new. The council has the map and will get back to us.
- c) Watertown Comprehensive Plan- John said the draft is available for review. The Planning Board will review it soon and a public forum scheduled for comment, then to council for approval. John said that 1-2 bedroom apartments will attract young people. He didn't think there was enough focus on families (and thus schools) and the elderly. We need to address the "glue that holds the community together". John said the document is 200 pages. Kim said maybe the Commission could get a copy, but asked Jeff to send out a summary for us to look at, so we can comment and discuss at the next meeting.
- d) MBTA Delta- George D stated that if a person using a w/c wants to get on the 71 bus, the bus pulls forward and "kneels". He talked with Tony Palomba and will meet on Friday. The MBTA Commissioner will be coming to the next town council meeting to address several concerns. Several of our legislators and the DPW subcommittee are involved.

#### NEW BUSINESS-

Kim presented a funding request from the Disability Policy Consortium seeking co-sponsors for the Gubernatorial Candidate forum on Friday 6/26 from 1-3 p.m. at Perkins. There will be 10 candidates present, and the money would help with accessibility and live streaming. It was MOVED, seconded and voted unanimously to co-sponsor the Gubernatorial Candidate forum for approximately \$200-300.

The next meeting will take place on Wed., June 18th at 7 p.m.

It was MOVED, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:13 p.m.

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