

Watertown Commission on Disability

149 Main St. Watertown, MA. 02472

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 19th, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chair Kim Charlson.

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

Audience- Megan O'Halloran (candidate for board member) and Brian Charlson.

GUEST SPEAKER- Brian Charlson (who was a past chair of WCOD) came representing the Charles River Chapter of the Bay State Council of the Blind, which is an organization for blind and visually impaired people. He reported on their fall meeting, which was held this past Saturday. 60 people attended, including 10-15 from Watertown. He was involved in a seminar on fire safety, attended by 15 people, which included hands-on experience with actual fire extinguishers. Home Depot contributed one of each type of extinguisher, but he and Kim decided to buy one extinguisher for each person, a total of 10 extinguishers for the amount of \$330, and requested help from the Commission to pay for them. Kim will bring the receipt next meeting and we will vote.

CHAIR'S REPORT- Kim reported that last Saturday that on the way to the conference, she discovered that the audible signals are now functioning at Lexington and Main and Main and Hersom. She asked Gayle to inquire of Mr. Mee and Mr. Sheehan if there are any other state intersections that need audible signals. She also reported that we will need to support CART reporting services for the MLK Unity Breakfast which takes place on January 19th, 2015. We will vote on a motion next month to fund CART for up to \$500.

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

TREASURER'S REPORT- Gayle stated that later this month, \$1,500 each will be paid to the two Watertown pantries. Carol W-B suggested that we will need to look at our debits vs income next year, as total monthly income has been decreasing. It was MOVED, seconded and passed unanimously to accept the Treasurer's Report for October. Copies of the Treasurer's report may be requested from the town's ADA Coordinator in the Personnel Office.

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

Plans review, Closed Captioning and Special Ed- No new reports. Safety and Access was included in the Chair's report.

- 1) Website- Gayle stated that the WCOD page now includes mention of closed captioning for council meetings.
- 2) Able Arts- It was recommended that the Commission reach out to Rachel to see how she is doing. Jeanne offered to do that.

ONGOING BUSINESS-

- 1) Watertown Riverfront Project- John said there was an update at Perkins on the 6th. Braille trail signage needs to be done. The walkway has a slightly steeper grade than it is supposed to, which may be a problem. Another project, Greenough Blvd is being narrowed to increase green space and bike paths.
- 2) HP Parking- Gayle said there was no update.
- 3) Comprehensive Plan Update- John compiled a short list of plan recommendations that WCOD would be interested in and have input on.
- 4) Delta Bus Island- John feels that buses pulling forward to pick up/discharge passengers is unsafe. Wrote letter to the T, which will be attached to the minutes. Brian C suggested forwarding the letter to ACCT (Access Advisory Committee to the T)
- 5) Food Pantry Update- given above.

NEW BUSINESS-

- 1) Kim recommended a donation to the Watertown Prosperity for their snow shoveling program. She met with Ken Woodland, and there are 62 middle school students who have volunteered and been trained for the program which runs from 11/1-3/31. They will be assigned to homes of the 20-30 people who have applied, were interviewed by Ken and been accepted to the program, most with disabilities, and who live near the students. Kim MOVED that we allocate \$1000 for Watertown Prosperity for their snow shoveling program. It was seconded and passed unanimously.
- 2) Megan O'Halloran has a degree in health care administration from Stonehill and a masters from Simmons, was in sales at Blue Cross for 12 years and is now the director at the Watertown/Belmont Chamber of Commerce. She wanted to become more involved in her community and saw the position advertised. She likes how effective the Commission is. Gayle and Jeanne recommended her to the board members. It was MOVED, seconded and voted unanimously to recommend to the town manager the appointment of Megan O'Halloran for the position on WCOD vacated by Judith Herzog.
- 3) Jeanne briefly reported on attending (along with several board members) a celebration of the new social service program. She said more hours are needed.
- 4) Intern- Gayle said she interviewed a student from Emmanuel College, Christine Russo, who is a Watertown resident, and will offer the position.
- 5) Gayle reported that this is the 3rd year with no voting issues around accessibility.

The next meeting will take place on Wed. Dec. 17th at 7 p.m. There will be food.

It was MOVED, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:11 p.m.

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