

Watertown Commission on Disability

149 Main St. Watertown, MA. 02472

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, Oct. 21st, 2015

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

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

GUESTS- Natasha Pierre from Wayside Youth and Family Services, Will Twombly, Susan Flint. Also Ray Clark and Kate from Westford COD.

GUEST SPEAKERS-

- 1) Natasha Pierre spoke of the Mental Health First Aid Training that she and co-worker Stephanie have been doing for about a year through Wayside Youth and Family Services, with the goal of helping the community understand how mental illness affects people. They teach signs and symptoms of mental illness or emotional crisis, and how to assess, listen, give reassurance, encourage help and self-help for people. They have done 8 or 10 8-hr trainings in the past year averaging 35 people for a course, and have gotten a grant for youth mental health first aid training, starting next month. The courses cost \$800, or \$35-45 per individual, which they subsidize. Kim proposed that WCOD contribute to the school program, and we will discuss it next month. Carol M expressed interest in taking a course and having one for deaf and hard of hearing populations.
- 2) Westford COD- Ray Clark said they have met twice now, and that the process was started by a resident who had a child with disabilities. Kim and the commission gave them suggestions for funding and budget ideas, including Jeff Duggan from the MA COD. ADA mandated activities are funded by the town.

CHAIR'S REPORT-

Kim mentioned the funding request by Watertown Prosperity. It was MOVED, seconded and voted unanimously to approve \$1500 for Watertown Prosperity for their snow shoveling program. The Watertown Social Service Resource Specialist position was the next topic, and Will T. stated that the town is \$14,000 short of the total needed, but that the goal was to have it fully funded by the town by next year. \$25,000 is coming from the town, and \$15,000 from Perkins, Mt Auburn Hospital, Athena, Watertown community Foundation. They are asking us and the Rotary, and other places. Kim proposed a contribution of \$7000 to help fund the position. Food Pantry request- It was MOVED, seconded and voted unanimously to contribute \$1500 to each pantry to assist Watertown families with disabilities. The 2016 calendar was reviewed and approved, with monthly meetings except in Feb and Aug.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES- It was MOVED, seconded and passed unanimously to accept

the minutes from the September meeting. Copies of the minutes may be requested from the Town Clerk's Office.

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

- 1) Plans Review- John said there was nothing new.
- 2) Closed Caption- Megan spoke with Helen, who got some of the equipment she was waiting for, but was still waiting for more. Carol M. spoke to Caption 1st who can talk Helen through the process. There are still problems with ComCast. Megan will follow up with Helen.
- 3) Safety and Access- Kim said that DPW has been replacing the detectable warning strips around Watertown Square. There was a comment about the detectable warnings pointing people into the middle of the intersection, which happens when there is only one curb cut on each corner. John said they aren't supposed to use apex curb cuts unless there is an obstacle to the other placement.
- 4) Special Ed- Fred said there is an interim director now, brought out of retirement from a neighboring town. He said he would get her name and invite her to a meeting.

ONGOING BUSINESS-

- 1) Watertown Riverfront Project- Kim said the Braille signs are being fabricated. John said that goats were brought in several weeks ago to eat the poison ivy.
- 2) HP parking- nothing new.
- 3) Comprehensive Plan Update- Steve said another initiative is being started- discussions about residential neighborhoods (character, teardowns). John said that responsibilities for different parts of the plan are being assigned to different town groups. Design standards have been published and are part of the ordinances. He tried to include language about accessibility (not just community access).

NEW BUSINESS-

Carol M received an email from Raya Stern from the League of Women Voters requesting assist and funding for Cart for their candidates' forum this Sunday. No one was available at short notice. There was a MOTION, seconded and voted to fund \$500 to support Cart at the League of Women Voters' forum pending finding a recorder, and they will be encouraged to start looking sooner next time.

Carol W requested that last initials be placed after Carol M and Carol W's names in the agenda and emails, besides the minutes to reduce confusion.

The next meeting will take place on November 18th at 7 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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

