

Watertown Commission on Disability

149 Main St. Watertown, MA. 02472

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 24th, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Kim Charlson, Chair.

ROLL CALL- Kim Charlson, Chair; Lisa Feltner, Town Councilor; Lissa Gifford; John Hawes; Carol Menton; Megan O'Halloran; Naomi Ridge; Elan Rohde; Gayle Shattuck, Town Personnel Director and ADA Coordinator; and Carol Wilson-Braun.

Guests- Carole Katz, Marshall Home Fund and Sgt David Sampson, Watertown Police Dept.

Guest Speakers- 1) Carole Katz came to request funding for CART services for a couple of upcoming public meetings by the Marshall Fund, which supports non-profits and individuals 55 and over. They are having an awards ceremony on 5/22 at 3:30 p.m., and are awarding \$75,000 to 17 organizations. In the fall, they will have an educational speaker event, and have had topics in the past such as marketing to older adults. They are hoping to have CART services for those meetings, but can't afford the full price, and are hoping for help with half. Kim told her we would vote in our next meeting, and asked that they make it known that WCOD is a supporter.

- 2) Sgt Sampson came to talk about parking enforcement. He has been on the Traffic Division since 2012 and on the force for 20 years. They have a liaison with the RMV. He said there are 2 reasons for decreased income from parking tickets, which are the source of our income-staffing and observed violations. They are working on getting a 2nd staff member, but it takes a while to get the right person. The Arsenal mall had been a place for many tickets, but is under construction. The police are moving one more officer to the traffic division who will help with enforcement. They will check the malls, Stop and Shop parking lots, municipal lots, etc. He had been in contact with our new member Naomi, who had concerns with parking enforcement at the middle school, and told us that enforcement there is difficult. Lisa commented that there may not be much future revenue in the Arsenal Project. John was wondering about spaces in the garages.

CHAIR'S REPORT-

- 1) Kim wanted to talk about 464 Main St while Sgt Sampson was there. A HP parking request was made on Main St by a disabled business owner. Sgt Sampson wanted feedback from us. There was discussion about general vs individual use of a handicapped parking space, and it was generally agreed that the commission would support a HP space, acknowledging that the business owner does not have an exclusive right to the space.
- 2) CVS Parking Lot- The primary focus is on the streetlight obstructing a sidewalk. John said that the town suggested to address the issue when the community path renovations take place, which are only in the design and funding stage. John said the light doesn't

even work. And maybe it could be replaced with one that has a narrower base. Gayle suggested talking to Matt Shuman the town engineer and that Ed Baptista (Highways), Gideon Schreiber, Senior Planner, and Gerry Mee have been to review the light pole. Kim said it was a general safety and access issue.

- 3) How Dog Park- John looked at the gravel samples of How park, Fillipelo dog park and Athena. It is all the same gravel, but the latter 2 have solid surfaces with gravel on top. Fillipelo has concrete with accessible benches then gravel. John and Kim will write up a recommendation that the gravel be removed and to put in stone dust, as a more accessible surface, and send to Gideon and Steve Magoon.
- 4) Pedestrian-Bicycle Plan- Lisa said that the council committee would like to have a WCOD person be part of the steering committee- a 9 month period (about 5 meetings). Lissa expressed interest. Lisa will send her info.
- 5) Follow-up on Watertown and Coolidge Square Parking Plans- there will be a meeting on 5/7 at the library. Kim encouraged people to attend.
- 6) Kim gave an update on the Braille Trail. The new facilities director is committed to it. It is on the WCF list for volunteers on Community Service Day.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES- It was moved, seconded and VOTED unanimously to accept the minutes as corrected 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 VOTED 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-

- 1) Plans- John reviewed that the Bldg G in Arsenal Yards would not be apartments but lab space. It will need accessible spaces in the front. Arsenal Park will be able to be accessed from the Home Depot lot, and will need HP spaces there. Lisa mentioned that there will be a meeting about a planned housing development at 101 N. Beacon on site on 4/30. There are general concerns about curb space, parking, lighting and traffic.
- 2) Closed Captioning- Carol M spoke about how cable itself is now at risk of decreased funding. Our closed captioning is as reliable as it is going to be and we need to talk about getting funding from the town and businesses. It is not in this next year's town budget. Megan emphasized that we are supporting it for the benefit of town residents, so it should not be our financial responsibility. It is not sustainable. Lisa said that a request went out for assessment of IT town-wide. It should include captioning. She will talk to Tom Tracy. Section 508 has web accessibility guidelines. Every video needs to be captioned, and have audio description. Kim will work on this issue.
- 3) Special Ed- Elan said that there would be a Special Ed Parent Advisory Council awards ceremony tomorrow night (4/25) at 6 p.m. in the library meeting room.
- 4) Safety and Access- Gayle has not heard back about the Lexington St issues concerning audible pedestrian signals and detectable warnings. She will email Matt Shuman and talk to DPW.

NEW BUSINESS-

Lisa brought up the Greystar project at Irving and Arsenal Sts. The sidewalk is closed, and there is inadequate signage to redirect people. It is not safe. She wondered about the oversight in this area. She wanted the commission to weigh in, besides her as a councilor. Kim voiced concerns about Perkins employees walking to work down Irving. Someone suggested doing a walk through the area to see for ourselves. John thought there was bad project management at that corner. It comes back to the Planning Dept and the DPW- and common sense! Kevin Duffy is a project engineer. Megan suggested that John write a general statement about our concerns to the town manager, and wondered if Perkins could also write. Kim said that the director of Perkins didn't tend to write unless it was a larger issue. John said that Watertown needs to be responsive to complaints, and will think about writing. Lisa will talk to the group Walk Boston, to get their input and support.

The next meeting will take place on Wed. May 15th at 7 p.m.

Kim adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

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