

Watertown Commission on Disability

149 Main St. Watertown, MA. 02472

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 21st, 2022

The meeting was held by Zoom online and called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Kim Charlson, Chair.

ROLL CALL- Kim Charlson; Lisa Feltner, Town Councilor; John Hawes; Rachel Kay; Carol Menton; Naomi Ridge; Gayle Shattuck, Town Personnel Director and ADA Coordinator; and Carol Wilson-Braun. Absent- Megan O'Halloran.

Kim began the meeting by giving condolences to Gayle, whose mother passed away last week.

CHAIR'S REPORT-

- 1) Curb Cut Update- Rachel reported that the DPW said they still do corner curb cuts, but know it's an issue. John said that the curb cuts are done at different time periods and that some corners are peculiar. Kim asked John to take a look at the Mt Auburn St plans.
- 2) Crosswalk Signal at N. Beacon and Louise- Lisa said that the light is operational but doesn't have a countdown. The City Council has asked DPW for a list of pedestrian lights in town.
- 3) Cannalonga Park- John's recommendation was to send our recommendations to the Recreation Dept, and Lisa said to copy them to the chair of the budget committee, the city manager and the DCR. Watertown owns the skating rink and DCR owns the park. Kim said we should be a part of the decision making process, and asked John to work on 2 letters with her in January.
- 4) DPW Trash Removal- Kim said there was no update yet.
- 5) Arsenal Yards Automatic Door Research- Lisa recommended sending a letter to the Planning Dept. Kim asked Naomi to help draft a letter. Naomi asked if the theatre could ask for grant money, but they can't because they are a for-profit business. Kim mentioned that we can't financially help private businesses, but we can ask for follow-up. Gayle will email them.
- 6) Consideration of Donation for Watertown Community Fridge- Kim wanted us to consider. She said it was a registered non-profit, but not tax-exempt. It is located at the Methodist Church on Mt Auburn St, which is where the food pantry is. Gayle said she needs more information for the organization and will talk to the city auditor about whether city funds can be used. We will follow-up in January. Kim wants to donate in January. John said that the Watertown Community Foundation is the major backer.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES- It was moved, seconded and VOTED unanimously by roll call to accept the minutes from the Nov meeting. Copies of the minutes may be requested from the city's ADA Coordinator in the Personnel Office or viewed on the Watertown website document center.

TREASURER'S REPORT- It was moved, seconded and VOTED unanimously by roll call to accept the Treasurer's Report for Nov. Copies of the Treasurer's report may be requested from the town's ADA Coordinator in the Personnel Office.

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

- 1) Plans- John discussed the general accessibility concepts that he had sent out, and said they need to be a part of every plans review. He sent them to Giddeon. John commented that plans received recently have been less detailed. They need to address travel paths, and distances inside and outside. Lisa brought up the multi-use paths, parking lots and traffic management at Arsenal. Also traffic management at Mt. Auburn. The planning needs more oversight and detail. John commented about the ramp behind Home Depot, and said it looked good. Lisa said we should look at the plans. There is a shared driveway, no curbing or clear transitions. Kim will ask Peter Centolo to come to our Jan meeting. Carol M said that accessibility needs to be a departure point instead of a destination. Lisa also mentioned the new pavilion at Saltonstall Park.
- 2) Special Ed- Naomi said that a "re-think" was done about the playground at the Hosmer School. It will be expanded to include swings. Kim said that in January, folks from the High School will come to give us an update on their plans.
- 3) Safety and Access- Kim said that work continues on detectable warnings. Naomi mentioned that the path behind the library has been resurfaced. However, she said she had been on the pathway from Whites to Waverly Ave and that her wheelchair wheels got stuck in some cracks. It is a danger. Lisa said we need to bring it to the attention of Greg St. Louis of the DPW. Photos would help. John had walked around the west end and said that conditions vary quite a bit- at the Lexington/Belmont St intersection and around the Cuniff School. He said that the streets going down the hill toward Orchard have been updated. Lisa said that the public works meeting recently addressed sidewalks and curbing. The DPW can use asphalt for curbing. The Commission should weigh in on granite curbing. She felt the language should change because asphalt curbing doesn't work. Kim asked Lisa to pinpoint where the problems are. She said corners could be tripping hazards. Naomi said that asphalt sidewalks are uneven. Lisa said there is a map that needs to be updated of conditions of sidewalks.

NEW BUSINESS-

- 1) Kim wanted to recognize Stephanie's husband John O'Dell, who recently received the Paul Celluci Award for Leadership and Mentoring in State Government.
- 2) Councilor Nicole Gardner was in the news yesterday. Boston has a new ordinance that places with public TVs need to have closed captioning. Nicole wants Watertown to do the same thing. Kim will prepare a statement in favor and we can vote in January. Lisa said that John Gannon is chair of Rules and Ordinances. Send also to Sideris.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55p.m.

The next meeting of WCOD will take place via Zoom at 7 p.m. on Wed, Jan. 18th, 2023.

