

Watertown Commission on Disability

149 Main St. Watertown, MA. 02472

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 15th, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. by Kim Charlson, Chair.

ROLL CALL- Kim Charlson, Chair; Lisa Feltner, Town Councilor; John Hawes; Carol Menton; Megan O'Halloran; Elan Rohde; Mohammad (Mo) Sayed and Carol Wilson-Braun. Absent- Jeanne O'Connell and Gayle Shattuck, Town Personnel Director and ADA Coordinator. Guests- Sargent David Sampson and Captain Ray Dupuis of the Watertown Police Dept.

GUEST SPEAKER- Sargent Sampson oversees the traffic division and was invited to speak about handicapped parking. There are 1 ½ officers devoted to enforcement, one working M-F 8-4 and the other in afternoons from Wed through Sat. They cover municipal lots, on-street parking, public ways, and go onto commercial properties for fire lane and handicapped parking issues. They issued 230 tickets last year for cars illegally parked in handicapped spaces. Officer Sampson observed that they have seen a deterioration of drivers' attitudes and a decrease in common courtesy recently. Kim asked about signs for deaf or blind children, and he responded that they are reviewed on a regular basis by the Watertown Traffic Commission. The DPW is in charge of the signs. Kim said she would ask DPW for a follow-up on the sign inventory. Upon hearing of the Commission's list of handicapped spaces, Officer Dupuis asked for a copy, and said he would ask Gayle. Kim asked about the process for identifying the need for more handicapped spaces. Officer Sampson said it goes first to Community Development Planning then to the Traffic Commission. Officer Dupuis invited recommendations from the Commission for safety issues, public service announcements etc.

CHAIR'S REPORT-

1) Kim said she attended the annual meeting of the Marshall Fund today, during which Perkins received a grant. It was moved, seconded and VOTED to pay up to \$800 for CART for 3 meetings of the Marshall Home Fund. Will Twombly is talking to Stefanie about fees. John mentioned that CART is still needed even if people have T-coils and the meeting is in a place with T-coils. Carol M. is educating them about hearing loss.

2) The Watertown Public Library is requesting a contribution for the installation of a loop system in the meeting room, which is now being used. It was moved, seconded and VOTED to pay \$2500 to WPL to help with the installation of a T-coil. Megan suggested a sign acknowledging our help in funding since it is a large amount. Lisa commented that the Massachusetts Cultural Council lists its funders. Kim stated that the Marshall Home Fund listed funding by WCOD. Fliers should advertise the T-coil. Mo wondered about the possibility of a logo for WCOD.

3) There was a funding request for CART for the Housing Forum on May 4th. We said we would help but want other funding organizations to be asked as well. We will fund half. Carol M suggested we be the billing party and organizations would send in what they pledged. Kim will work with Gayle on figuring out how other amounts will be collected. It was moved, seconded and VOTED to support 50% of the cost of CART services for the housing forum.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES- It was moved, seconded and VOTED unanimously to accept the minutes with minor corrections from the April meeting. Copies of the minutes may be requested from the Town Clerk's Office.

TREASURER'S REPORT- John presented the report. It was moved, seconded and VOTED 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 that nothing was going on right now, but 3 cases were coming up: the Arsenal Yards hotel, the fitness building on Arlington and a building on Pleasant St. The planning board needs to get more detail for specific projects. They will become a more prominent part of the process. Kim mentioned that she got a letter about the Waverley commuter rail station in Belmont. They want an extension of 10 years for making the platforms accessible. This was OK'd but they need to give an annual review of progress. Belmont's reasoning was that it is a low-usage station.

Arsenal Street Public Safety- Lisa said the public safety committee got a referral about the construction on Arsenal Street. They are looking at bike and pedestrian access, on-street parking and bike lanes. Planting strips will be eliminated for commercial zones. Public Works and Public safety will meet on June 12th, and will have input from police and DPW. They will look at more safe pedestrian crossings, the location of signals related to crosswalks, concern about narrow parking and conflicts with delivery vehicles, and the location of bus stops and shelters. Kim suggested having a "walk-along" with Perkins mobility specialists on Arsenal and especially Beechwood. John is interested in joining and Lisa said Jon Hecht would also be interested. Kim will organize a base team from Perkins. Lisa said this needs to be done by June 12th.

B) Caption Update- Carol M. said that the captioning test on DVDs fizzled. Gayle talked to Helen about finding another way. Carol will follow up about next steps.

C) Special Ed- Elan said that the Parent Advisory Council has a new chair, Julie Cotton and a returning chair, Mona Baya. There is a new Student Services Director, Dimaris.

NEW BUSINESS- Elan announced a yard sale on Frank St this Saturday benefitting the Autism Family Support Group.

The next meeting will take place on June 21st at 7 p.m.

It was moved, seconded and VOTED unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 p.m.

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