

Watertown Commission on Disability

149 Main St. Watertown, MA. 02472

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, Jan. 20th, 2016

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

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

Audience- Ellen Bey, Irene Magzelci and Maria Baia from Watertown SPEDPAC; Mike Mena from Zoning Enforcement/Local Building Inspector; and Galita Schwartz, Owner of Power Café, and George Donahue, former WCOD member.

GUEST SPEAKERS- 1) Mike Mena presented a Reasonable Accommodation request for a resident of 267-269 W. Boylston St. to park her car in the front yard of her house. The Commission discussed the request, and it was moved, seconded and VOTED unanimously to approve the citizen request for Reasonable Accommodation from zoning regulations. 2) Galita Schwartz shared that the Power Café has been open for 2 months. She has gotten publicity in the Tab, the Globe and will be mentioned in Spare Change. She has 3 employees through Triangle of Malden, and will be hiring a 2nd manager. The café specializes in employing and serving the disabled population, but all are invited. She wants to empower the community, and says groups of 12-16 are welcome to have meetings there, such as seniors and homeschoolers. They offer breads, muffins, pastries, but also soups, sandwiches and salads, specialized, allergy-free foods, vegan, etc. She is talking to Perkins about getting the menu printed in Braille and talking with the town about a request for a handicapped parking space either on Main St or Lexington St.

CHAIR'S REPORT- Kim reviewed SPEDPAC's request and their budget submission. It was moved, seconded and VOTED unanimously to authorize and approve the request for \$5000 (\$2500/yr) for 2 years for Watertown SPEDPAC budget. Fred Isaacs abstained. WCOD is invited to the April awards ceremony.

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

TREASURER'S REPORT- After discussion of the report, Gayle was asked to find out specifically what the \$14,000 encumbrance was for, and report back next meeting. It was also agreed to give the Autism Family Support group guidelines for spending the money given by WCOD. It was moved, seconded and VOTED unanimously to accept the Treasurer's Report for December. Copies of the Treasurer's report may be requested from the town's ADA Coordinator in the Personnel Office.

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

- 1) Plans- John said that nothing specific is happening at present. The Council is working on getting citizen participation on Mixed Use. Athena Health is presenting their plans for the Arsenal site.
- 2) Closed Caption- Gayle said that we need a contract with Caption First, but hasn't been able to set up a meeting yet with Town Auditor and Finance Manager Tom Tracy due to December holidays and vacations. The town budget process is happening now and will be done within the next couple of weeks. No captioning now until the new arrangements are in place. Carol M mentioned that we want places like Athena and WSB to help sponsor the captioning so we won't continue to spend our funds on it. Kim emphasized that the system has to be up and running and stable first.
- 3) Special Ed and Safety and Access- Nothing new to report.

NEW BUSINESS-

Carol M reported that Stacy Corin, of the Commission for the Deaf, and formerly of the Resiliency Center can come to our March meeting. Gayle read a thank you from the Watertown Food Pantry for our donation last month.

It was moved, seconded and VOTED to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

The next meeting will take place on March 16th at 7 p.m. There is no meeting in Feb.

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