

Town of Dedham Commission on Disability Meeting
August 3, 2020 Town Hall First Floor Conference Room – 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: John Tocci, Vicky Berg, Ellen Conway, Bernie Chirokas, Lee Jensen, Diane Loud

Absent: Bob Winston, Ken Cimeno

John Tocci chaired the meeting.

Town Meeting Update: John and Diane reported that they attended an in person view of the High School field and have had several Zoom meetings with Dan Driscoll, Jim MacDonald, Paul Munchbach and other stakeholders regarding the August 10 Town Meeting to be held at the DHS field. Headphones have been obtained for the hearing impaired. Lee asked whether there would be enough in number. John indicated that 12 headphones would be made available. Diane continues to work with Town Manager Leon Goodwin to make sure the CART system can be utilized. A tent will be set up for use of the CART system. John will be volunteering in that tent. License has been renewed and Leon has been in touch with Don Langhorst about the technology transfer. Golf carts will be available to transport those with mobility challenges. A first aid tent will also be on site. In addition to John and Diane Loud, Ellen Conway indicated that she would volunteer at the town meeting.

Scholarship Report: Vicky reported that she was unable to reach members to break the tie between two non-DHS seniors. Vicki moved that the COD award scholarships to both college-bound students. Ellen seconded the motion. Discussion ensued. Ellen pointed out that the COD has substantial funds in its account. She also suggested raising the scholarship award amount. John indicated that that should be a consideration for a future meeting. Bernie pointed out that this has been a difficult year for many families due to COVID-19 and awarding an extra scholarship would help a student in need. Vote was taken by roll call and was unanimous to award two scholarships to the two non-DHS applicants with John abstaining.

Vicky then indicated that a student had been awarded a scholarship in 2018 but had not been issued the scholarship because he deferred college. That student has now completed one year of college and was on the Dean's list at Curry. John moved that we pay the scholarship to that student, given that he had already been awarded a scholarship and had demonstrated progress in college. Lee seconded the motion. The Motion unanimously passed by roll call vote.

Anti-Racism Coalition Report: John reported that two anti-racism groups have been organized in Dedham in the aftermath of the George Floyd killing: The "Anti-Racism Coalition of Dedham" which was organized via Facebook. That Coalition has formed several subcommittees designed to address various issues of race and discrimination in Dedham, including issues relating to school curriculum, town police training and employee hiring. John also reported that another group has been organized by residents of Newbridge and Chaired by Evelyn Botkin, the "Dedham: A Town for All of Us Initiative." John attended a Zoom meeting as COD representative on July 27. John pointed out at the meeting that the Anti-Racism Coalition was up and running and perhaps the two groups could discuss coordinating efforts so they are not at

cross-purposes. Ms. Botkin subsequently indicated that she intended to do so and asked for volunteers for her efforts. Lee Jensen indicated that she would be interested in serving as a COD designee. All agreed that disabled residents of color may face unique hurdles in our community and it would be beneficial to have a member involved in efforts to address such issues. John will provide Lee with the contact information for both the Facebook Coalition and the Newbridge group.

New Business: John will reach out to Nancy Baker after Town Meeting to advertise for new member to replace Mac Sterling..

Future Meetings:

September 14

October 19

Respectfully submitted,
John Tocci