

Town of Dedham Commission on Disability Meeting

June 10, 2019 Town Hall First Floor Conference Room – 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Tricia Whitehouse, Diane Loud, John Tocci, Ken Cimeno, Vicky Berg, Bernie Chirokas, Ellen Conway

Absent: Mac Sterling, Bob Winston

John Tocci chaired the meeting.

May 2019 minutes were not yet submitted, and will be reviewed and voted upon at the July meeting.

Treasurer's Report:

April 1: \$64,345.93

April 30: \$63,583.82

April interest: \$137.89

April debits: \$900.00

Ken will speak with Jane Lepardo to find out what the \$900 debit is, as no one on the Commission knows.

Handicapped Parking issues at Dedham Middle School

John and Ken represented the COD at a meeting at DMS, which included Joe Flanagan, Mike Welch, Jason Mammone, Karen Hillman and Sam Rippin. The meeting was overall positive and addressed the following issues:

- The current parking situation at DMS had been put into place without the Planning Board's input and over objections presented by Ken.
- There are many issues which are not addressed by Dedham Police, who say that this is a matter for the School Committee to resolve.
- The HP spaces are in the side lot, which requires traversing a significant distance, presenting a dangerous situation, especially during school drop-off.
- The group acknowledged that there need to be both short- and long-term solutions implemented, including a redesign of the parking lot. Will likely take some of the green space in front of the school and create 4-6 angled HP spots as the long-term solution.
- Ken went to the Planning Board and proposed a short-term solution of 2 parallel 16x24 spaces in front of the school with a crosswalk between them. Both spaces will have van access.
- The Planning Board voted and approved this solution and the plan is for Joe Flanagan to implement this over the summer. The Planning Board will do a more comprehensive review for the fall, which will include the results of the traffic study that the school district has undertaken (involves the middle school, high school and Avery elementary school).

Hertz Rental HP violations:

Ellen Conway wrote and circulated a letter to Hertz's President & CEO to address the frequent and continuing HP violations at the Dedham Hertz location, which is co-located at Pep Boys on Providence Highway.

The letter was approved with minor edits and the COD discussed the following:

- Town letterhead: Ken suggested copying and pasting the town seal. John will help with final formatting and will mail the letter.
- Return address: the return address needs to be PO Box 306, with 02027 as the zip code.
- CC the Planning Board. Ken will represent the COD at any Planning Board meetings addressing this.

Scholarships:

Vicky and Tricia reviewed over 100 applications for scholarships. The number of applicants who meet at least one criteria has increased year over year. 5 scholarships were awarded this year (3 DHS graduating seniors, 1 non-DHS graduating senior, and 1 adult returning to school).

We discussed the following:

- We do feel that we have enough applicants. In addition to district guidance counselors, Vicky had sent the application to 17 guidance counselors at schools that are outside of the district.
- We will be changing the order of the criteria for eligibility going forward.
- Vicky re-wrote the award letter to emphasize that the awardees will need to fill out a W-7 to receive the funds.
- The money is awarded in the 2nd semester.

Resources for Deaf athletes:

John has been contacted by other town organizations interested in accommodating Deaf participants.

- Cost is a major consideration.
- John brought up the possibility that there may be organizations which provide ASL interpreting at a lower cost to municipalities or non-profit groups. Diane will reach out to her friend who is an ASL interpreter to inquire about this.
- Diane had some correspondence with the coach in Franklin whose team had 2 Deaf athletes who were provided ASL interpreters. Cost was a major factor there, and the league did significant fundraising to cover half the cost, with the league covering the other half. Fundraising included donations from businesses, philanthropic groups and individuals. The cost per season was \$8000-\$9000.

CART:

- John has confirmed that the town will process the \$270 invoice for CART services at the MLK Day event in February.
 - This 3+ month delay in paying the provider for the services is not acceptable.
 - Ken proposed that the Town Clerk or someone on the Select Board should have a separate line item that allows them to pay for CART. Ideally the Select Board would cover the cost, as it would allow for full participation in Board activity.
 - John will follow up on appropriation and how this could be set up.

- Discussion about maintaining continuity now that Jeff Bolduc and Nate Haywood are both leaving the district.
 - Diane to email Don Langenhurst to see if there are people in his department (Technology) who can learn the system.
 - Diane to email Jeff Bolduc to get information regarding login and Skype.
 - Diane to send Tricia the recommendation for the brand/model of equipment.
 - Town had suggested partnering with Dedham TV, but when Tricia spoke with them, they said they need the encoder at their facility, and this is not a transportable piece of equipment.

New Business:

- Town Accessibility Best Practices: John will restart this process by reaching out to the state to find out what is involved with adopting Best Practices.
- Schools are seeing increased numbers of students with significant need for support/accommodation. Bernie suggested reaching out to the district to get more recent stats regarding students with disabilities. We will need to discuss this further, as previous attempts at this had significant limitations (e.g., FERPA guidelines limit what information schools can share; the statistics only reflect those students who have disclosed/whose parents have disclosed and are therefore not as accurate as they could be; there are students with disabilities who attend schools other than those that are part of DPS).

Future Meetings:

July 15, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

August 19, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

September 16, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. (tentative)

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Loud