

Minutes
Town of Acton
Commission on Disabilities

May 19, 2015

9:30 am, Town Hall, Room 126

Members Present: Madeleine Harvey, Cindy Patton, Lisa Franklin, Danny Factor, Ann Corcoran

Associate Member Present: Leslie Johnson

Guest: Kevin Antonelli

Call to Order: 9:30 am

Citizens' Concerns: Alma Sandman approached Kevin at the Fair. She complained that the High School HP parking (handicapped parking) was too far from the front door. Danny will talk to JD Head about future accessibility changes.

Updates: None

Announcements: Leslie and Lisa met to rewrite the letter to businesses for the welcome packet. Franny had suggested calling the EDC (Economic Development Commission) about the welcome packet. Lisa will write to the EDC chair to see if she has any suggestions about disseminating the letter to businesses. Lisa said that perhaps what we need to make is a business directory, like a phone book. As we agreed last July, Lisa will be speaking to the editor of the Beacon about writing an article on the history of disability rights to be printed in July. We received an e-mail from Jennifer Saxe about Discover Day at the Playscape at Ripley Field which is for the opening of an accessible outdoor play area. She was asking for our help in publishing the event. Mady will return e-mail the places where we advertised and where we put up flyers. The date of Discovery Day is June 14. Leslie said she has been thinking of starting a Friday Night Fun (FNF) social club in the Acton area. She is trying out this idea by having a group go out for lunch together. It was mentioned that Acton Continuing Education may be able to get some space for FNF. The COD will help Leslie whenever she needs it. Danny was speaking to Frank Ramsbottom about a new nail salon near the Dunkin Donuts on Main Street. Frank will be writing to the Architectural Access Board (AAB) to find out if there are any access issues that are specifically for nail salons.

Board of Selectmen's report: None

De-briefing on two Acton-Boxborough School items: 1) meeting with Pupil Services Coordinators; and 2) buildings and grounds update: Danny had a meeting with Acton Boxborough Pupil Services. At the meeting, the major things discussed were 1) they consider themselves to be a public entity and they could not send a representative to the Fair

because they are an entitlement. They also indicated that there is a 75% increase of students that are low income. Mary Emmons gave Danny a list of organizations that we should invite to another Fair. The list consisted of: Department of Mental Health, Social Security Administration, Federation for Children, Mass Health, Mass Rehabilitation Commission, Work Opportunities Unlimited, Doli Atamian Campership Fund and Easter Seals (their division that helps students with disabilities and drivers education). They also indicated that they would be okay about meeting with us. 2) Danny met with JD Head about access issues at the Douglas school. There are only stairs to get to the second floor and the only wheelchair access to the second floor is from outside. New students with PWD can't go to Douglas. The school system is doing a ten year capitol study. This study will include all of the access issues at all of the schools. It could be done in two or three years. There is currently a bid out. Ann will join with Danny to work on this. JD Head said that they would like the COD to be involved at the public level. Mady, made a motion that Danny and Ann will work together on this issue, Lisa 2nd, 4 in favor, one abstention. There are still issues with the lower field snack shop. There is a slope that is at least 8 percent grade. Mark Barbadoro thought flower pots could steer people to the lower percentage slope. JD Head said that he is not willing to put in the flower pots because of concerns about safety. Frank Ramsbottom believes that a time variance is needed to coincide with the ten year study.

May Minutes Review: The minutes were accept without corrections.

Resource Fair review/evaluation: Leslie thought that it was great and it was nice to see all of the representatives in the same room. There was good energy and it was worth all the work. Ann thought they should have the Fair in a more high traffic area and it should be held every other year. Mady said it was a good job and the best part was that representatives got to talk with each other. The video will need captioning. Ann said that the Council on Aging (COA) used to have a wellness fair every year. The first two years attendance was good, but after that there was poor attendance. The question about have the Fair on the weekends came up. Problems expressed were: would representatives come on a weekend and that there is no transportation on weekends. Danny said it went well and he liked seeing so many people coming together for the Fair. He also said that a survey would be good for both representatives and participants. There was a problem with the Beacon and there was no announcement before the Fair. Danny said that he left messages with the editor and nothing happened. Danny will call again. The Beacon at one time wanted the COD to have a monthly column. Lisa said that she felt there was a need to have the Fair and that there is a need to have an event just for representatives to speak together. She also said that on the video the interviews should have been done by a COD member. The video needed more oversight. We were reminded that they were volunteers. Kevin thought that there should have been more practice with the questions. Ann suggested that the raw footage should be put into a PowerPoint. Lisa said that the cable channel owns the footage. Kevin said that he would call his contact at the cable station about obtaining the raw footage. Lisa also mentioned that in future years perhaps we could have electronic registration. Kevin said that the Fair was a success and the COD did a great job. Cindy commented that maybe we should have the Fair every third year. Lisa remarked that

perhaps the Fair should be taken to the housing units in the future. Lisa made a motion that Danny come up with the survey questions and bring it to the COD for approval, 2nd Mady. That motion was amended by Danny to say that he will write the prospective survey questions and not bringing it to the COD. He gave four specific survey questions that he would e-mail to Kevin for dissemination. Lisa withdrew her motion. Danny's amendment then became the motion, Lisa 2nd, Unanimous. This needs to be done within a month.

Town Meeting access discussion (meeting with Town Clerk and Moderator re voting procedures, testing paper size):

There may be a special town meeting in November. There are likely to be issues about zoning. The following were brought up as access issues at Town Meeting: standing to vote, hand raising with cards, captioning of the meeting and seating issues. JD Head will help Lisa get into the high school auditorium to look at size and color of cards. Cindy will also attend. What shall we do and when do we do it was the question raised about Town Meeting. Danny said that he would like to call the people who have signed the sheet at the last Town Meeting to ask why they signed-up. If they gave us their phone number, they should expect that they would receive a call. The sign-up sheet is probably in the file cabinet. Kevin said that he could make calls. Eva Szkaradek (the Town Clerk) has reported in the past that more than one night of captioning is too expensive. Danny and Kevin will call the people who signed up and then have a meeting with Eva and Don McKenzie (Town Meeting Moderator). Motion by Danny that Kevin and Danny will call the people who signed-up and then schedule a meeting with Eva and Don. Danny, Kevin, Cindy and Franny will attending the meeting at some date in June. 2nd Ann, Unanimous.

COD new associate member discussion (successor for recently resigned member):

Lisa sent Charles Aaronson an e-mail about the need for a new associate for the COD, but it has not been answered. Danny has a neighbor who may be interested.

Brochures/publicity (where and how to distribute more widely):

We have the brochures in the Library and Town Hall. We should put them in the West Acton Citizen's Library. Can we include it on the cable scroll? Kevin will find out about cable. They also have brochures at the Council on Aging (COA).

June Agenda:

- Set August agenda
- De-brief about retreat
- Up-coming projects
- Hand Book – hand out the table of contents
- August meeting of Statewide COD
- Town Meeting access
- Lower Fields at High School

Final Details for June Retreat: The Retreat will be held from 9 am to 3 pm at the Windsor Green Community Room. We have an easel and markers in room 126. Roach Bros will be delivering lunch. Danny would like a discussion about officer positions, of the COD, at the Retreat. This will be an amendment to Retreat agenda. There was a discussion about whether or not the Retreat would need to follow Open Meeting Law. It was decided that the Retreat would need to follow Open Meeting Law. An agenda will be posted and minutes will be written.

Use of mobile devices/computer/tablets at COD meetings:

Leslie said that some people do not want to have mobile devices at the COD's meetings. She is against that. People should be able to bring devices so that they don't have to bring a folder of memos. Leslie said that cell phones should not be on. The idea of device etiquette should be discussed. Lisa said it is important that people have eye contact during meetings. Ann says that in this day and age electronic should be used if people want it. Mady found it nice at today's meeting that was held with no electronics. Ann thinks it should be not be excusatory, but it may help to speak directly to the person if there is an issue. Leslie agreed with this. Lisa thinks it is possible to let them use electronics, but it is hard on her attention span. There will be no rules about bringing electronics.

Adjourned: 12:30 pm

DocuShare:

Discovery Day at the Playscape at Ripley Field email.

Respectfully submitted, Cindy Patton (clerk)