

Westport Commission on Disabilities Meeting of Oct. 22, 2018

Present were members Anders Newcomer, Brian Gallagher, Kim Legendre, Raymond Phenix, Rose Rego; consultant Jeff Bull. Absent: Stanley Cornwall, Martin Costa.

1. Call to Order: The meeting at the Town Hall Annex was called to order at 3:45 p.m. by Chairman Gallagher with the above members present.
2. Remote Participation: No requests made, this agenda item was passed over.
3. Minutes: The minutes of the Sept. 29 meeting were reviewed, with a motion to approve made by Mr. Phenix, seconded by Rose Rego, and passed by unanimous vote.
4. Water Access Subcommittee: With Mr. Cornwall being absent, there was no report on the ramp project, but Mr. Gallagher indicated that the planning process continues to move forward. Noting a \$100,000 estimate for the preferred choice of ramp, other models and options will be explored by the subcommittee.
5. Member Input: Mr. Gallagher reported the receipt of information on the home modification loan program of the Community Development Assistance Corp., offering low-cost loans up to \$50,000 for accessibility improvements, to be repaid upon sale of the house. The program offers loans up to \$30,000 for mobile homes with the same terms. Residents seeking information can call (866) 500-5599 or visit the website cedac.org/hmlp.

Mr. Gallagher noted the list of past grants to residents, community groups, and town departments to kick off a discussion of potential future grants. He reported that the Veterans Service Officer had suggested no specific needs for veterans groups; the Council on Aging director had indicated a need for lightweight wheelchairs to transport folks from door to transport vehicles. Ms. Legendre reported the Macomber School physical education staff seeking \$250 to purchase graphic materials for a break room for autistic children; at the elementary school, desktop slant boards for visually impaired children, sensory stimulation toys, and a soft touch chair were suggested grant items. Mr. Newcomer suggested investigating whether the COA's transportation accounts are in need of some financial support.

6. Fiscal Year 2020 Budget: Mr. Gallagher said the Fiscal Year 2020 budget request recently filed was for \$1,000, the same amount as this year. Funding for reprinting the brochure was noted as the only major expenditure anticipated.

7. DCR Letter: Mr. Gallagher reported receipt of a letter from Mass. Dept. of Conservation & Recreation, seeking commission input on a proposal to update the comfort stations at the Horseneck Beach Campground. The current ramps, handicapped accessible bathrooms and showers do not meet current ADA codes, and "significant" improvements to the facilities are planned. Mr. Bull, who served on the state inspection team for that site, noted the current facilities are well-worn and updates are needed. He also noted that mobility mats are in regular use at the site.

8. Automatic Door Updates: There was no update on the suggested automatic door opener at the Westport Federal Credit Union branch in Central Village; Mr. Phenix will try to track down Mr. Lees to discuss the matter.

9. Next Meeting: The next meeting was confirmed for 3:45 p.m. on Nov. 26, 2018 at the Town Hall Annex.

10. Future Meetings: By general agreement, it was decided to cancel the Dec. 24 meeting. Mr. Gallagher indicated he will be out of town for the January meeting, and will file a remote participation request to take part via teleconference call.

11. Adjournment: Ms. Legendre made a motion to adjourn at 4:20 p.m., seconded by Ms. Rego. The vote was unanimous.