

Meeting Minutes

February 18, 2015

Members in Attendance: Maureen St. Hilaire, Michael Rademacher, Cynthia DeAngelis, Kerrie Fallon

Members Absent: John Thompson, Susan James

Others Present: Jack Jones, ADA Coordinator, Patti Brennen Human Services

Meeting began at 4:05 P.M.

Meeting Minutes January 21, 2015:

Michael Rademacher moved approval of the January 21, 2015 meeting minutes as corrected. Seconded by Kerrie Fallon.

Town Web Site:

Patti Brennen said that the Institute for Human Centered Design (IHCD) reviewed the Town's new web site developed in July 2014. In addition to the Town's main web site Arlingtonma.gov. IHCD also reviewed the Recreation Department's web site ArlingtonMyrec. IHCD had a sample of individuals between the ages of 19 through 62 with visual and/or motor skill impairments attempt to navigate through each web site through different operating systems and different browsers. Examples of comments by IHCD were that pictures should have an alt. tag (written description) and also the location of where to find information be made more consistent. These comments and others were sent to Joan Roman, Arlington Web Master. Along with a fifty-two page report prepared by IHCD on how to best improve the Town's web site. Patti said that a take away from this review is that the Town has taken the initiative to improve and make their web site more accessible.

Conflict of Interest Law:

The State Ethics Requirement requires that appointed members of State and Municipal Commissions and Committees successfully complete a conflict of interest training program by April 3, 2015. Jack Jones said that he would forward to all members of the Commission the training program prior to the March 2015 meeting.

Announcements:

The 37th Annual Legislative Reception sponsored by The Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council and The Arc of Massachusetts is scheduled

for Monday, March 9, 2015 from 10:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. at the Massachusetts State House Great Hall, 2nd Floor.

Myra Berloff. Director of the Massachusetts Office on Disability, retired on March 13, 2015.

A blindness conference is scheduled for March 11, 2015 at the Sheraton in Norwood from 8:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

Snow and Ice Removal:

Michael Rademacher said that typical snow removal from curb cut ramps and other accessible concerns has been delayed this year because of the unusual high amount of snowfall over a brief period of time. Cynthia DeAngelis questioned if disabled residents would be able to receive any assistance, from the Town, in removing snow. Michael said that the School Department has a Links Program that may be of some assistance. Michael suggested that individuals that require assistance to remove snow should consider making arrangements with private contractors prior to the start of snow season.

Commission Membership:

Jack Jones said that 6 applications have been received from individuals interested in serving on the Commission.

ADA Coordinators Report:

Was received from Jack Jones, ADA Coordinator.

25th Anniversary of Signing of ADA Into Law on July 26, 2015.

Kerrie Fallon suggested that the Commission prepare an article for the Arlington Advocate to be printed within two weeks of the ADA's 25th anniversary date. Cynthia DeAngelis said that on Wednesday July 22nd there would be a march at the Boston Common to celebrate this important anniversary date. Michael Rademacher suggested that the Commission consider participating with other groups in celebrating and promoting this anniversary.

Annual Report:

Jack Jones distributed copies of the Annual Report. Jack said that the report should be presented at Town Meeting.

Other Business:

Kerrie requested that a monthly report be developed that would include at least the following columns the date, request, who has responsibility for handling the request and the final outcome. Michael Rademacher said that the Chair Person should be responsible for maintaining the report. Also discussed was creating a calendar of monthly events such as when the Town Report is due or when warrant articles must be submitted etc.

Jack Jones said that Carol Kowalski, Director of Planning & Community Development, discussed possible ideas regarding the Central School Building in regards to accessible parking spaces and other plans for improving the safety of pedestrian travel around the building. Kerrie questioned how abutting neighbors would feel about accessible parking spaces being placed on Maple Street. Michael Rademacher said that there would be a process that would go before the Selectmen before a final decision would be made.

Kerrie and Cynthia discussed the Commission being available to meet with parents regarding guardianship issues. Maureen said that the Commission could be a resource but did not agree that the Commission should be directly involved.

Cynthia DeAngelis said that the Commission should invite the Special Education Director to a future Commission meeting. Kerrie Fallon said that she feels that there are groups in the Town that deal with individuals with disabilities that are unaware of the Commission.

Commission Manual:

Maureen St. Hilaire said the Commission should appoint a sub committee to work on preparing a commission manual. The manual should include at least the following (1) How the Commission was formed. (2) Commission By-Laws. (3) List of Massachusetts agencies that serve individuals with disabilities. (4) Duties and responsibilities of the Commission. Michael Rademacher said that this manual could be called a new member information packet.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 P.M.