

Westport Commission on Disabilities
Meeting of June 25, 2018

1. Open Meeting: The meeting was called to order at 3:45 p.m. by Chair Brian Gallagher. Other members present included: Stanley Cornwall, Ray Phenix, Anders Newcomer, and Martin Costa. Consultant Jeff Bull was also present.
2. Remote Participation: Having no requests for remote participation, this agenda item was passed over.
3. Minutes: Mr. Cornwall made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 4, 2018 meeting as presented, seconded by Mr. Phenix; the vote was unanimous.
4. Water Access Update: Mr. Gallagher reported that he, Mr. Cornwall, and Woody Underwood had met with selectmen regarding a proposal to improve access to the Westport River for boaters and kayak users with disabilities at the Hix Bridge Landing. There was unanimous support for the concept from selectmen, he indicated, and a meeting of the landing subcommittee would be called for further discussion of the concept. Mr. Cornwall reported meeting with Westport Conservation Agent Chris Capone to discuss the project, and being told that no Conservation Commission filing would be required; talking to the Planning Board, he was told a site plan for the project would not be required. It was noted that Sean Leach had volunteered to prepare some plans for the project at no charge.

Mr. Bull noted that the Landing Commission has no authority over the Hix Bridge Landing, as it is controlled by selectmen. Mr. Gallagher suggested that the state Fisheries & Wildlife agency not be involved in the project, because state funds would require the landing to be open to the general public. Other potential funding sources will be investigated.

5. Mobi-Mats at Beach Avenue: Mr. Gallagher indicated that he had spoken to the Westport Land Conservation Trust (WLCT) director about the installation of the mats, and was told that the town is seeking indemnification from any liability for the use of the mats on WLCT land; the issue remains in negotiation by attorneys for both parties. Mr. Cornwall indicated that the town is seeking alternative parking spots on Beach Avenue, and will get a survey of the road done.

6. Post Office Update: Mr. Gallagher reported speaking to an aide to Congressman Keating about the accessibility issues at the State Road post office, and is waiting for a response to follow-up email. During discussion of illegal parking in handicapped spaces, Mr. Cornwall said he would bring parking violation tickets to the next meeting.

Mr. Costa reported on his survey of local banks with automatic door openers; only Bay Coast Bank and Santander Bank in the village have openers. Mr. Gallagher volunteered to talk to Westport Federal Credit Union officials about the issue.

7. State Grant for St. Vincent de Paul Camp: Mr. Gallagher reported meeting with WLCT Director Russ Moran and the conservation agent about the camp purchase and re-development issues. The state wants a five-year plan for ADA compliance as a condition of the grant funds to help with the purchase; the WLCT wants Commission on Disabilities input and public input on the five-year plan.

8. New Members: Mr. Gallagher noted he sent a letter of support to selectmen regarding the appointment of Kim Legendre to the commission. Her appointment and other member re-appointments are on the agenda for the June 25 BOS meeting.

9. Areas of Concern: Mr. Bull suggested that the COA director be invited to a future meeting to talk about disabilities issues.

10. Next Meeting: The next meeting of the commission was confirmed for July 23, 2018.

11. Adjournment: At 4:30 p.m., Mr. Newcomer made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Phenix; the vote was unanimous.

Approved 7/31/18