

MINUTES OF THE 10/24/22 MEETING OF THE WESTPORT
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING; BRIAN GALLAGHER, CHAIRMAN, ANDERS NEWCOMER,
VICE CHAIRMAN, RAY PHOENIX, MARTIN COSTA, SUE SHERMAN, RICK GRUNDY.

THE MEETING OPENED AT 3:46 P.M.

REMOTE PARTICIPATION: RAY PHOENIX PARTICIPATED VIA TELEPHONE

THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER MEETING WERE APPROVED WITHOUT CHANGE

THERE WAS A DISCUSSION ABOUT THE ENTRANCE TO THE LOWER LEVEL OF THE
TOWN HALL ANNEX. IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDE A CONCRETE WALKWAY TO THE
DOOR. MARTIN WILL CHECK ON THE PLANNED IMPROVEMENT TO THE INSIDE
RAILING ON THE RAMP

WATER ACCESS.

HIXBRIDGE LANDING; JEFF BULL, OUR CONSULTANT ADVISED THE FIRST
\$90,000.00 NEEDED FOR THE DESIGN AND ENGINEERING HAS BEEN SECURED BUT
WE ARE STILL MONTHS AWAY FROM COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT.
EVENTUALLY SEVERAL HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF MORE DOLLARS WILL BE
REQUIRED AND THE TOWN WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR A PERCENTAGE OF THAT
AMOUNT. JEFF ALSO SPOKE ABOUT A SMALL AREA OF LAND ON HIXBRIDGE
ROAD WHICH IS OWNED BY THE TOWN THAT COULD POTENTIALLY BECOME A
PICNIC AREA WITH A VIEW OF THE RIVER. THERE IS NO WATER ACCESS AT THE
SPOT. A HANDICAPPED PARKING SPOT WILL BE CREATED

WE ALSO HAD A PRESENTATION BY MICHAEL MOSHER WHO IS WORKING ON
THE REQUIREMENTS NECESSARY TO BECOME AN EAGLE SCOUT. HE ORIGINALLY
THOUGHT ABOUT CREATING A LIFT AT HIXBRIDGE LANDING TO BE USED BY
DISABLED RESIDENTS TO TRANSFER INTO A WATERCRAFT LIKE A BOAT, CANOE,
KAYAK ETC. WE APPLAUDED MICHAEL FOR HIS THOUGHTFULNESS AND HIS
DESIRE TO HELP BUT THE PROPOSED PROJECT IS NOT FEASIBLE SINCE HE WILL
NOT BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH IT BEFORE HE TURNS 18 AND BECAUSE OF ISSUES
SUCH AS MAINTENANCE AND LIABILITY. JEFF BULL IS ON THE LANDING
COMMISSION IN TOWN AND HE HAS OTHER POSSIBLE PROJECTS IN TOWN THAT
MICHAEL MIGHT WORK ON FOR HIS EAGLE SCOUT BADGE. MICHAEL AND JEFF

WILL STAY IN TOUCH TO DISCUSS THOSE POSSIBLE PROJECTS, MICHAEL LEFT WITH US HIS CONTACT INFORMATION, PROJECT IDEAS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR AN EAGLE SCOUT SERVICE PROJECT

CHILDREN'S BEACH: THE MOBILITY MATS HAVE BEEN TAKEN UP BY THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT AND WILL BE STORED IN THE DEPARTMENT'S GARAGE

BEACH AVENUE: WE RECEIVED AN ORDER OF CONDITIONS WHICH HAS TO BE RECORDED AT THE MASSACHUSETTS REGISTRY OF DEEDS. THE MOBILITY MATS ARE TAKEN UP BY THE LAND CONSERVATION TRUST. THE GEOGRIDS WILL BE INSTALLED IN THE SPRING. MARTIN WILL ASK CHRIS GONSALVES TO PUT IT AT THE TOP OF THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT'S LIST OF THINGS TO DO

SIDEWALKS IN TOWN; BRIAN AND MARTIN APPEARED AT THE PLANNING BOARD TO REQUEST A CHANGE TO THE CURRENT REQUIREMENT THAT A SIDEWALK BE INSTALLED IF A NEW DEVELOPMENT HAS 20 OR MORE HOUSES. THE WCOD WANTS THAT PARAGRAPH CHANGED TO REQUIRE SIDEWALKS IF 5 OR MORE NEW HOUSES ARE BUILT. THERE WILL BE A PUBLIC HEARING ON OUR REQUEST ON NOVEMBER 15, 2022. THERE WAS A DISCUSSION ABOUT HOW THE SIDEALKS AT WESTPORT POINT ARE FREQUENTLY IMPASSABLE DUE TO A NUMBER OF REASONS.

DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES IN MEDICAL OFFICES; FREQUENTLY THE OFFICES ASK A DISABLED PERSON TO STEP UP ONTO A SCALE. THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE WAY TO MEASURE THE WEIGHT. THERE WAS A RECENT ARTICLE IN THE BOSTON GLOBE WHICH ALSO STATED THAT SOME DOCTORS DO NOT LIKE TO TRWEAT OR REFUSE TO TREAT A DISABLED PERSON. THERE WAS A DISCUSSION ABOUT THE USE OF FORMS TO EDUCATE MEDICAL PROVIDERS ABOUT TREATING DISABLED PATIENTS. SUE SHERMAN SPOKE ABOUT THE HOW SOUTHCOAST REHABILITATION DEALS WITH DISABLED CLIENTS. THERE WAS A DISCUSSION ABOUT THE PRACTICE OF PLACING DISABLED AND DISADVANTAGED INDIVIDUALS IN NURSING HOMES RATHER THAN FINDING APPROPRIATE LIVING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THEM. MARTIN'S FRIEND, ED WALSH IS WORKING TO BUILD DISABLED ACCESSIBLE HOUSING IN NEW EBGLAND. THE PROCESS OF EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ABOUT DISABILITIES AND CHANGING ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS IS NOT EASY. ANDERS SPOKE ABOUT ENCOUNTERING PEOPLE WITH CLOSED MINDED ATTITUDES WHEN HE USES HIS SEGWAY.

WCOD DONATIONS; THE WCOD DONATION OF \$5,000.00 TO THE TOWN RECREATION DEPARTMENT HAS NOT YET BEEN FINALIZED. MARTIN WILL FOLLOW UP WITH THE TOWN ACCOUNTANT ABOUT THIS. THAT AMOUNT HAS BEEN DEDUCTED FROM OUR ACCOUNT BALANCE WHICH IS CURRENTLY \$17,549.36. THE WCOD HAS RECEIVED THE APPROVAL OF THE SELECT BOARD TO DONATE \$5,000.00 TO THE HIXBRIDGE LANDING PROJECT. IN LIGHT OF THE INCREASE IN THE OVERALL COST OF THE PROJECT WE MAY, AT SOME FUTURE POINT DECIDE TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF THIS CONTRIBUTION. WE CONTINUE TO LOOK FOR OTHER WAYS TO USE THIS MONEY TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF DISABLED RESIDENTS OF WESTPORT

NEXT MEETING: DUE TO THE HOLIDAYS IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON JANUARY 23, 2023 AT 3:45 P.M.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED