

**TOWN OF SHEFFIELD
COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
Thursday, April 1, 2010
TOWN HALL DOWNSTAIRS MEETING ROOM
4:00 PM**

Commission Members Present: Denise Rueger (Chair)
Laura Grunfeld
Noah Parsons
Don Perry
Judy Steindler
Dave Wells (with the assistance of Nan Wells)

Visitors: Nancy Perry

Chair Rueger called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

All previous minutes of the Commission on Disabilities (November 12, 2009, December 3, 2009, December 21, 2009, January 7, 2010, January 27, 2010, February 4, 2010, February 18, 2010, March 4, 2010) Grunfeld moved to approve the minutes, Perry seconded, and they were unanimously approved as written.

It was moved by Grunfeld, 2nded by Rueger, and unanimously approved to E-Mail Commission Minutes to Jack Pollitt.

MINUTES FOR THE MARCH 18, 2010 SEMINAR ON DISABILITIES' TRAINING SESSION WILL BE FORTHCOMING: Grunfeld and Wells will collaborate on these minutes.

COMMISSION TO BUY 1 COPY OF CTSB VIDEO OF THE MARCH 18 TRAINING SEMINAR: It was moved by Perry, seconded by Steindler and unanimously approved to take up a Commission Member Collection of \$ to buy one copy of the CTSB CD/DVD of the March 18 Training Session. Money was collected.

DISCUSSION ENSUED ON WHERE THIS COPY OF THE CD / DVD SHOULD BE KEPT SO THAT SHEFFIELD RESIDENTS WOULD HAVE THE BEST OPPORTUNITY TO SEE IT: After considerable discussion, it was moved by Grunfeld, seconded by Perry to ask the Sheffield Library to accept the CD/DVD into their Library Collection.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED ON ASKING THE SHEFFIELD LIBRARY (NANCY HAHN) IF THE SHEFFIELD COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES MIGHT HAVE A SMALL SECTION IN THE LIBRARY FOR BOOKS, MAGAZINES,

Commission on Disabilities' Minutes
April 1, 2010
Page 1 of 6

PUBLICATIONS THAT WERE PERTINENT TO ADDRESSING ADA ISSUES OF CONCERN TO SHEFFIELD RESIDENTS: Rueger suggested this section could be set up with the help of the Aktion Club. Rueger *moved to approach the Sheffield Library (Nancy Hahn) to get approval for a small ADA section to be set aside in the Bushnell Sage Library, seconded by Wells, and unanimously approved.*

MARCH 18 TRAINING SEMINAR CTSB CD/DVD WILL BE PICKED UP IN LEE: *Perry moved, Grunfeld seconded, and the Commission unanimously approved that Perry would pick up the CD/DVD in Lee.* The \$10 collected was given to Perry.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED CONCERNING COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES' NEEDS ON OUR SECTION OF THE SHEFFIELD TOWN WEB SITE: *It was moved by Parsons, seconded by Perry and unanimously approved that Grunfeld would arrange a time to speak with Assistant Town Administrator, Rhonda LaBombard to see if there were any stipulations, constraints, size, number of links available or not available, to our Sheffield Town Link.*

THE WHOLE APRIL 15th COMMISSION MEETING WILL BE SET ASIDE TO DISCUSS WEB SITE NEEDS: Some of the needs which have already been discussed follow below:

- 1.) Commission Logo to be placed on the right hand side of the heading just as it is on our letterhead
- 2.) Post minutes
- 3.) Links from our site to various other links regarding Disability Pertinent Information/Needs, government sites with addresses, phone numbers and pertinent contact information lessening the frustration coming from seeking information from government convoluted quagmire (one avenue being looked into to address the Jack Pollitt suggestion to the Commission), and resources
- 4.) Commission Contact box for suggestions, needs
Sheffield Commission members wish to have their personal contact information on the web site including phone numbers, addresses, and E-Mail addresses if there is an E-Mail address
- 5.) Links to a "good read" list of literature written by those with disabilities about living with disabilities
- 6.) A place on our web site for giving NEW information releases ie the article present by Grunfeld entitled "People First Language," Seminars we are doing or others being done locally
- 7.) *Moved by Grunfeld, seconded by Rueger, and unanimously so approved to put info of the CTSB CD/DVD on our web site and where it may be checked out.*

Commission on Disabilities' Minutes

April 1, 2010

Page 2 of 6

- 8.) Should the web site function under the Effective Communication requirement ie Accessible Web site?

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED ON THE NEED FOR 3 ASSISTIVE DEVICES, HOW TO FIND THEM?, HOW TO HAVE MONEY TO RENT THEM IF NEC.? WHAT ORGANIZATIONS MIGHT HELP US OWN THEM?: Town

Administrator, Joe Kellogg has made it known to us that he is interested in locating for Sheffield a small assistive listening device (this would be a small device for listening at a table). We need a second assistive listening device that is made for a room such as meetings that are held in a room the size of the upstairs Town Hall Selectmen's meeting room, and 3rdly we seem to need a better sound system for Sheffield Town meetings at the Mt. Everett H. S. or other really large audience meetings or gatherings. We also may need a sign language interpreter and have one on call if the need arises. Some possible sources immediately considered to check out:

- 1.) Cerebral Palsy and Cystic Fibrosis
- 2.) Grant
- 3.) Sheffield or local South County Schools
- 4.) Renting centers especially for large assistive listening systems

Moved by Grunfeld to find funding sources for assistive devices, seconded by Perry, and unanimously approved.

Then: Grunfeld moved, seconded by Wells that Perry would help get information and report to Grunfeld.

So much depth to this issue and so much left un discussed, with time running out, it was moved by Perry, seconded by Wells, and unanimously approved that it was nec. to continue this discussion at our next meeting.

WELLS PASSED OUT A 3 PAGE DOCUMENT ENTITLED "RESPONSES / SUGGESTIONS TO THIS COMMISSION FROM SHEFFIELD RESIDENTS": Wells wanted to be sure that the Commission did not lose sight of suggestions and considerations shared with various Commission members, nor did he want their comments to go unrecognized or not acted upon. He recommended that the Commission respond to the suggestions and continue to give the Sheffield resident feedback and updates/ actions on their suggestions. Wells moved that the document should continue to grow as new suggestions come in and that each suggestion should have an update/action included and the resident to whom the suggestion belonged should be in the loop, seconded by Perry, and unanimously so approved by the Commission.

GRUNFELD PRESENTED A SHORT INTRODUCTION / OVERVIEW ABOUT "PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE" by Kathie Snow. Grunfeld passed out a 2 page handout "People First Language" by Kathy Snow to the Commission

members. Much discussion followed as old habits are hard to overcome. Since we are more in tune with our own disability issues and sensitivities, it was still difficult, ourselves, to not fall into poor, demeaning, out dated descriptors. Our doing so, demonstrated just how much work is still needed in this area ... people first language is really just in infancy and so much public awareness needs to be emphasized. The Commission discussed assessing Commission members 50 cents each time a "people first descriptor" was violated. Perry moved, Grunfeld seconded, the vote to approve was turned down after more discussion. Parsons and Wells felt that assessing members might prove to be a distraction when a person is trying to make a point and therefore hurt his/her ability to communicate the idea(s). It was also thought that the "People First Language Link" would be a good one to add to our web site. The Commission agreed to utilize People First Language in its proceedings.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED REGARDING HAVING 2 SEMINARS PER YEAR:

Our 1st Commission Seminar had a number of Sheffield residents who voiced a hope that we would continue to do more informational seminars in the future. Grunfeld moved that we do Seminars twice a year, one in the Spring and one in the Fall, seconded by Perry and approved. Wells approached the Commission that we didn't want to stretch ourselves too thin with doing a seminar too soon after the one we just did BUT he thought this Spring was an ideal time to sponsor a Commission Seminar on the debilitating, often lifelong effects of Lyme Disease. He (through Nan) went on to say that Western Massachusetts is thought to be one of the highest areas of incidents of this disease. Sheffield has a number of residents who will be lifelong suffers of this possibly, horribly lifelong debilitating disease. He shared with the Commission that he is in possession of an absolutely dynamic DVD (105 minutes) discussing not only the disease but the medical community issues surrounding its treatment, pharmaceutical issues - the whole political arena that encompasses its recognition and treatment. Wells also knows local suffers who would be willing to speak at a Commission sponsored Seminar which could also include someone from the medical community etc. etc. The Commission acknowledged that LYME DISEASE in Sheffield is one of dire concern and very timely and that we would continue this discussion as a possible next seminar.

DISCUSSION ENSUED REGARDING LINKING TO A BERKSHIRE COUNTY ADA WEB SITE (if there is one) OR STARTING A NETWORKING SITE:

Grunfeld suggested maybe a free location to link up with others might be to set up a site for ourselves on FACEBOOK. Wells felt that FACEBOOK, even though free, was NOT the place to start linking up with others facing ADA issues as Town Commission.

DISCUSSION FOLLOWED CONCERNING OUR NEXT STEP WITH THE CURB CUT PRESENTATION TO KEEP IT ON SCHEDULE TO PRESENT TO THE SHEFFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN:

- 1.) We need at least a 2 hour slot of time to pull off the walk for ourselves where we would take notes and measurements, perhaps do it on the 5th Thursday of April (April 29) since we have an extra Thursday in the month
- 2.) Discussed the Great Barrington source of funding for the yellow blinking light ... Good Works Insurance Co. with the help of other donations raised the money for Great Barrington (we're trying to look at sources for funding a blinking yellow light at the Wheeler and Taylor crossing in the center of Sheffield)
- 3.) Decided to 1st contact the Mass Highway Department in Lenox Perry moved that he and Parsons would, together, approach the MA Highway Department, seconded by Wells, and unanimously so approved.
- 4.) Perry moved that he would ask his daughter, Donna Louise Perry, who has written a number of grants to work with him and Parsons, who also has grant writing experience, to see if funding can be found.

PARSONS PRESENTED A NEED BY THE SHEFFIELD LAND TRUST TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE COSGRIFF AND DOHONEY TRAIL SYSTEM:

Parsons has already spoken to Kathy Orlando on what plans they may have looked into to making the Cosgriff and Dohoney Trail System disability friendly. Parsons says that the Land Trust is trying to raise funds for the trail system already in Place on Cosgriff/Dohoney properties (adjacent to the School property) and they asked him for his expertise/input in planning the physical layout of the trail. Parsons has been invited to look at the specs of the construction. He went on to say that it would be great if the Commission extended an offer to help the Land Trust in whatever way it can. Parsons said that, to date, there are NO disability accessible trails in Sheffield. There is an educational trail located on the Mt. Everett School property. The trail system that they are fixing right now would link up with the educational trail. The Commission congratulated Parsons on working on another ADA need for the Residents of Sheffield and others. Rueger suggested Kiwanis and the Scouts might also be interested in helping out as well. Parsons moved that someone from the Sheffield Land Trust, possibly Kathy Orlando (Shefland@bcn.net), should be invited to come to one of our meetings, seconded by Perry, unanimously approved. Follow up discussion to be continued

PARSONS UPDATED THE COMMISSION ON THE FINDINGS FROM THE INSPECTION OF THE SHEFFIELD AMERICAN LEGION HALL, MT. EVERETT H.S., AND THE UNDER MOUNTAIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLFOR THE USE OF TOWN VOTING SITES: The final determination by the State Inspector was that none of the above mentioned sites could be used for town

voting and that no matter what the inconveniences might be, the Sheffield Town Hall was still the best location, until the Sheffield Senior Center was ready to have the town voting take place there.

PARSONS HANDED OUT TO EACH COMMISSION MEMBER THE “AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT ADA GUIDE FOR SMALL TOWNS”:

WELLS WAS ASKED TO LOOK INTO WHETHER THE BERKSHIRE COMMISSIONS ON DISABILITIES OR JUST US CAN HAVE SOME SPACE WITHIN THE 2011 SENIOR RESOURCE CALENDAR FOR IMPORTANT ADA CONTACT PEOPLE AND PHONE NUMBERS (A CONTINUATION ON TAKING ACTION ON THE JACK POLLITT SUGGESTION TO THE SHEFFIELD COMMISSION ... OF MAKING IT EASIER TO FIND PERTINENT ADA INFORMATION AND CONTACT NUMBERS:

RUEGER WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND OUR APRIL 15th MEETING:

Wells made a final move to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Grunfeld, and unanimously approved to be adjourned, after moving to adjourn for ten minutes, and seconded, and unanimously approved more than once but the meeting continued with more discussions.

Chair Rueger adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Dave Wells [assisted by Nan Wells]
Clerk