



Marblehead Disabilities Commission

Meeting Minutes – March 9th, 2023

Members Present: Laurie Blaisdell, Amy Hirschcron (*remote*), Ed Lang (*remote*), Samantha Marino (*remote*)

Members Absent: Katie Farrell, Cheryl LaLonde, Andrea Mountain

Guests Present: Pamela Daly (*remote*), Nancy Powell (*remote*)

Ms. Blaisdell called the meeting to order at 4:14 p.m.

1. Upon motion by Ms. Hirschcron, seconded by Ms. Marino, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the January 2023 meeting.

2. Guest Speaker: Chief Denis King.

The Commission welcomed Chief Denis King to the meeting.

Commission members expressed concern regarding townspeople parking on sidewalks and blocking or parking too close to corners/intersections. Chief Denis explained that there is selective enforcement around traffic and timed parking due to coverage of the town at any given time during the day. He urged Commission members and townspeople with such concerns, to call the non-emergency line so that an officer may be dispatched to address the situation. This would entail an officer speaking with the individual or ticketing the vehicle that is in a parking violation. Chief King further stated that multiple calls are helpful in addressing the situations and are always welcome. Additionally, he explained that the Department does not typically tow the vehicle initially unless it is a repeated issue. Chief King purported that over the past year, the Police Department has received over 700 parking violation calls with over \$40,000 collected from parking citations, of which \$1,500 was garnered from handicap parking violations. Chief King and Ms. Hirschcron expressed interest in a campaign targeting the education of townspeople on acceptable and legal parking practices before resorting to lawful enforcement practices.

Ms. Blaisdell explained that the monies accrued from handicap parking tickets is put towards certain trainings/workshops for the Commission. She offered financial support to the Police Department from this specific fund, to cover the cost of in-services related to officer training in regard to appropriate call responses where individuals on the autism spectrum or those who have communication or sensory disorders, may be involved.

Ms. Blaisdell expressed concern that crosswalk light signals do not appear to be in the sightline of drivers, with some lights having sunshields covering the actual walk lights. Additionally, concern was raised regarding individuals who are in wheelchairs not being visualized by drivers before making a “right turn on red,” increasing the chance of collision. Chief King explained that there is a lot of expectation placed on the driver for these instances to ensure safety at intersections, but will also look into other options.



Marblehead Disabilities Commission

Mr. Lang questioned the potential for vehicle accessibility of the lower sports fields near the high school. Chief King expressed concern regarding vehicle traffic on that road, along with the unknown status of handicap parking in that area. He will look into this inquiry further.

3. Magic Hat Thrift Shop. Ms. MaryAnn Dunn and Ms. Katie Ferrell had previously notified Ms. Blaisdell of an accessibility issue at the Veterans Middle School Magic Hat Thrift Shop. Currently, the shop has an entrance with a ramp; however, it does not have an accompanying curb cut nor handicap parking space. A question had been brought up regarding handicap access being moved to a different entrance point that already exists in the building for those with mobility impairments. The Commission expressed a strong notion that the thrift shop should utilize the main access point to maintain equity for all individuals. The facilities director of the school stated that he is unsure how to initiate this process, but is interested. This project is estimated to cost between \$3,000-5,000 to complete, and will be paid for by The Magic Hat Thrift Shop.

4. Future Projects. Item was tabled until next month.

The Commission unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 4:53 p.m.

Next Meeting: April 13th, 2023

Respectfully submitted,
Samantha Marino, Secretary and Commission Member

Approved by unanimous vote of the Commission: _____