



## TOWN OF WINTHROP

NAME OF PUBLIC BODY: TOWN OF WINTHROP  
COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

DATE AND TIME: THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 2018,  
From 6:15-7:40pm

LOCATION OF MEETING: ROBERT DELEO SENIOR  
CENTER

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING

The minutes of the Winthrop Commission on Disabilities (WCOD) was called to order by Chairperson Linda McGeorge at 6:17pm with the following members in attendance: Chair McGeorge, Patricia Tacelli, Jon Rodis, Michael Sullivan, John Morgan, Kathleen Kane, Susan Rowe. Absent from this meeting were: Gerry DiFranza and Andrew Carr. Guest was Town Council member-at-large Michael Lucerto who listened and spoke to the issue of disability.

In her opening statements, Ms McGeorge informed the attendees of her desire to increase the membership from the 9 members currently serving on the Commission. Further, Ms McGeorge suggested that using the Senior Center Newsletter might be one good way of soliciting new members.

In addition, a suggestion was made that our two hour meeting timeframe be reduced to an hour and one quarter, except when dictated by important matters requiring additional time.

First topic of import was the safe passage of the disabled throughout the Town of Winthrop. Ms McGeorge allowed that within the Town, many disabled persons have actually died waiting to get HP parking signage close to their homes.

Other members commented on the ineffectiveness of the crosswalk on Crest Ave. which has a ground-inserted blinking light to caution motorists and pedestrians, even blind pedestrians.

Michael Sullivan admonished us about spreading our suggestions for safe transit around Winthrop too far, rather than focusing on one thing at a time, such as one crosswalk at a time. The problem of multiple crosswalks being sources of possible tragedies in the making was made by several members, including John Morgan who has had a minor brush with a vehicle whose driver failed to yield to a pedestrian.

Additional matters involving the safety of the disabled throughout town include curb cuts and colorfully painted crosswalks to alert motorists of approaching crosswalk(s).

Jon Rodis wondered if the WCOD ought not to be involved in various town projects from the ground up.

At this point, Chair McGeorge mentioned the MOD (Massachusetts Office on Disability, citing this state agency as a resource for grants, information, and monitoring of ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act). She further wondered if we might need a champion to spearhead our local needs.

Councilor Lucerto then stated that the town's infrastructure is in total disrepair, having no Town Planner and is now on a 5 year plan having been awarded a grant of \$2 m. When asked if he could be WCOD's "champion," he said he would do what he could do.

Patricia begged an answer to the following question: "Would the Town Council be supportive of our needs?" "Does the town have the power to deny a WCOD program or request?" She added that "it behooves us to get one of our members on the Council."

Michael Lucerto indicated that any grant that is written has to go through Town Hall, with grant writer Joe DiBlasio needed to sign off on it. It is therefore important to use a white board to list the Commission's order of importance of things most needed by the disabled community.

Discussion continued on whether WCOD is a non-profit or a town agency. Member and attorney-at-law Kathleen Kane was able to weigh in on this question saying that WCOD is a Town of Winthrop agency.

Councilor Lucerto then expressed his willingness to ask Town officials where the money goes and how it is accessed. A lot of funds are matching funds involved in roadways and streets capes. Therefore, he would recommend that the commission have some guidance in navigating the Town Hall pathway.

Thanks were extended to Councilor Michael Lucerto for the gift of his time.

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to adjourn at 7:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Rowe  
Recording Secretary