

2010 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

Jeff Jacobson (current Chair), Sidney J. Rosenthal, Ph.D., (Chair 2010),

Sheila Advani, Ph.D., Geila Aronson, Thomas Duffy, Shirley Brownstein, Florence Finkel, Susan Myerson, Karen Sprung, James Waters, Ph.D.

The Commission met on eight different occasions during the year in order to discuss issues relevant to the disabled of Sharon. Meetings were held at the COA conference room. Site visitations and inspections were also made to churches, businesses and recreation areas throughout the town.

1. The program of removal of the snow residue left at the base of driveways of qualifying disabled residents has been successfully continued with the cooperation of the Sharon DPW and COA.
2. Grants have been made to benefit the disabled of Sharon using our "ticket fund"* as follows: Defibrillator for the library, Automatic door for the library, Bookmark printing for the Council on Aging, Recreation Department shirts and caps for a disabled kids team, doorbell for the hearing and sight impaired at Hixon Farm.
3. The scholarship program established in 2003 continued in 2010 to be implemented by awarding \$1500 from our "ticket fund" to a disabled student graduating from the high school and pursuing further education.
4. A grant program using the "ticket fund" has been implemented to assist homeowners with cost of meeting accessibility requirements and will be administered by the COA.
5. Members of the Commission attended training and became familiar with the Massachusetts Conflict of Interest laws as mandated by the town.
5. Toward the end of 2010, the Sharon COD became aware that the number of tickets being handed out to handicap parking violators has dropped by 75%. The good news, of course, is that it seems that there are fewer violators. Unfortunately, it does leave the Commission in the midst of either redefining its role or seeking other sources of income.
6. In October, Sid Rosenthal, the long time Chairman and force behind the Sharon Commission on Disabilities tendered his resignation. The Commission voted Jeff Jacobson as new Chair and Jim Waters as assistant Chair. The Sharon selectman confirmed that appointment.

* State statute provides that fines for unlawful parking in handicap spaces go to the Disability Commission in the town where the infraction takes place and the Commission is required to use these funds for disability related purposes.