

[NOTE: These minutes are made available to the public prior to Wethersfield Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities acceptance.]

Wethersfield Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities
Wednesday, March 16, 2005
Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: Jim Grise, Kathleen Sullivan, John Baker, Joan Haines, Barbara Blejewski, Frank Lane

Liaisons: Christine Taylor, Lt. Tom Dillon, Natalie Morrison

Meeting called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Introductions: Joan Haines called the meeting to order. Regrets sent by Carol Keenan, Louise Ryan, and Diane Cosker who were all unable to attend.

[Minutes for January 19, 2005](#) were approved. K. Sullivan will email minutes to Tom Hempfill to be placed on the town website.

Old Business:

Group Homes.

- The group agrees that we should look at the group home visits. All the group homes receive flyers from the Therapeutic Recreation Department. It would be good for committee members to visit group homes prior to town activities. Also information from the visits should be brought back to this group. C. Taylor agreed to bring an updated list of all the group homes. N. Morrison agreed to bring the list of names of group homes that are on the Therapeutic Recreation mailing list.

Seniors.

- C. Taylor gave group an update on the Seniors. There was a memorial donation that was received to assist with Senior Center needs such as a shopper program and to help with costs of a volunteer recognition program. The Department of Social Services is encouraging legislation to reinstate the Commission on Aging. Currently there is only one person running it.
- In 2006, there were many changes in Medicare Part B. Training will occur.
- The energy program is ending at the end of this week.

Parks and Recreation.

- In November a Thanksgiving party was held. Eleven group homes took place. Everyone was charged \$5.00 and the event was catered. It conflicted with the Town Council meeting and therefore council members could not attend. The plan will be to change the day of the week next year.
- The holiday party was held in December. It was a smaller group secondary to the weather. There were 13 or 14 group homes who participated.
- Special Olympics. The town sent athletes to participate in snowshoeing in February. Track and Field is going on now. The regional games will be held in May at Weaver High School. The State Summer Games will be held in Southern Connecticut State University, Connecticut June 10-12.
- There will be a Special Olympic fundraising motorcycle ride July 23 with the rain date of July 24th. The ride will begin in East Hartford and travel through Eastern Connecticut. Please let Natalie Morrison know if you are interested in volunteering. Gengras Harley Davidson is helping with the advertising.

Resource Booklet.

- Received copies of the "Programs that Help People in Connecticut" by CL&P. Will reference this booklet in the town resource booklet. John Baker agreed to update the list of churches in Connecticut. Barbara Blejewski agreed to help with the TDD numbers.

Transportation.

- Natalie Morrison, Kathy Bagley, Bonnie Thierren, and Nancy Stilwell met with Ambassador at the Town Hall. Discussion held to address problems brought up at the last meeting. It was felt that Ambassador was receptive to hearing concerns. They are trying to get a better van with fewer seats and more wheelchair space. Individuals were asked to bring any concerns immediately to Nancy Stilwell to address in the moment.
- It was questioned if the transportation for the disabled in town was added to the strategic plan.

New Business.

- CT Real Choice 1st regional forum was held in Wethersfield on Feb. 3, 2005. Wethersfield was chosen as the site for the forum because of our interest in people with disabilities. Invitees included town employees and ADA workers. The purpose of the forum was to share ideas re: inclusion into the community, identifying barriers and ideas for action. An example of idea for action is to have all new developments in a town be accessible and usable. Also, that involvement in making a building accessible should begin with the building plans. It was also suggested that someone with a disability should be on any town committee having to do with a renovation project.
- The forum also discussed the concept of "visitability" in which all new construction should have at least one graded entrance.
- The next forum will hosted by Newington.
- It was estimated that there are 3,888 people in Wethersfield with disability and it was suggested that someone with a disability be on any town committee having to do with renovations.
- Lt. Dillon is working on the commercial and homeowner safety booklet. He is still paring the information down and tailoring to the needs of those with disability.
- Discussion was held regarding making the buttons larger on the crosswalks in town. It is done on an as needed basis but a plan is in place to replace the button on the Silas Deane Highway in the near future. If there is a particular section that is difficult, it can be replaced sooner.
- Discussion was held regarding the need to place a stop sign at the crosswalk in Old Wethersfield.
- J. Haines shared a conference brochure with the group titles "A World of Possibilities Empowering People with Disabilities". It is being held at Quinnipiac University April 7-9th for all who wish to attend.
- Discussion held regarding the fact that the inner doors to the Community Center are not automated for easier entrance for those with disability.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Sullivan
Committee Member