

Wethersfield Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities
Wednesday, September 21, 2005
Wethersfield Town Hall Conference Room
7:30-9:00 p.m.

Present: Carol Keenan, Joan Haines, Christine Taylor, Kathleen Sullivan, Eileen Knapp, James Grise, Frank Lane, John Baker, Judith Tacey

Liaisons: Natalie Morrison

Also Present: Louise Ryan, David Lang, and Lee Sekas

I. INTRODUCTIONS

Everyone introduced himself or herself.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Lee Sekas attended the Real Choice Conference in Farmington. He thinks there is real progress being made by this organization. Didn't think there was enough representation from the education and judicial areas. Mr. Sekas is concerned that the Wethersfield Art League is not handicapped friendly and that there may not be sufficient funds to make the location handicap friendly. He also brought up concerns regarding the Silas Deane Highway Project. There are improvements he would like to have considered by the committee in charge of this project, mainly changing the crosswalk signals to audible and visual signals and improving the curb cuts. He is also concerned about the Nature Center entrance. The Nature Center is trying to raise funds to make their entrance more handicapped friendly and wondered if the WACPD could make a donation.

David Lang attended the meeting. He would like to become a member of the WACPD. Louise Ryan also is waiting to get back on the committee. The Committee will find out if there are presently any openings.

There were concerns that the curb cuts at CVS are not easily accessible. You have to go all the way down to the end of the building to access the curb cuts, then come all the way back to reach the entrance. Also, the overhang at CVS stops right where the handicapped parking starts.

III. MINUTES

A MOTION was made by Joan Haines to accept [the minutes of the June 15, 2005 meeting](#). Jim Grise seconded the motion and all were in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Group Home Visits

The summer picnic was held on July 9th. Those that attended enjoyed the day and the food.

Lasher Court is still looking for someone to take over the management. This is a twelve-unit facility located on 333 Maple Street.

We need to establish liaisons with group homes in Wethersfield so that we can contact them with upcoming events and information.

B. Seniors

The first Senior Meeting was held Wednesday September 14, 2005. They are still looking for a

Chairperson and other members to serve on the committee.

There are Resource Cards distributed by the North Central Regional Mental Health Board listing emergency services in the towns of Newington, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield. These cards can be obtained through the Social Services Department.

1/3 of the Dial-a-ride drivers are on strike. Please be patient, there may be a longer wait than usual. Social Services Dept. will look into notifying the public of the strike by way of the local newspapers.

There was a discussion of legislative changes regarding seniors. The Connecticut Commission on Aging has been moved to the Legislative Department and will be adding 3 new positions by the end of 2007. Residents of Connecticut in need of long-term care shall have the option to choose and receive supports in the least restricted appropriate setting. Regarding Medicare, individuals on Conn-pace, Medicaid, and Qualified Medicaid Beneficiary Programs need to get on the Medicare Part B Prescription Program. There were two significant pieces of legislature passed involving transportation aimed at increasing the availability and flexibility of transportation services.

The Regional AARP may be setting up a friendly driver volunteer program in Wethersfield soon.

The Medicare Part D prescription program begins January 1, 2006. There will be two informational sessions regarding this new program and how it can help you with the cost of your prescriptions. The dates of these sessions are Thursday, October 27, 2:00pm-4:00pm and Thursday, November 17, 6:00pm-8:00pm, both being held at the William Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield Street Wethersfield, CT. These sessions are open to the public and you are encouraged to attend. There will also be a session held by the Social Security Administration on Thursday, November 3, 2005 from 10:00am-12:00pm to assist Wethersfield residents with filling out Medicare Part D applications.

C. Parks and Recreation

All Summer Camp Programs have ended. A golf tournament was held in Hamden, all athletes did well. The Bowling League, Unified Basketball and After School Programs have started. The Thanksgiving Dinner will be held on Tuesday November 22nd. The Holiday Party will be held on Tuesday December 20th. There will be a Santa Pancake Breakfast fundraiser held Saturday December 3rd from 7:30a.m. - 11:30a.m. to raise money for the Special Olympics Program.

Jim Shoemaker of Civitan is looking to donate funds to the WACPD. There was a discussion of where they could best be used. Suggestions were made to use funds for the printing of the Resource Booklets and also to help fund the Thanksgiving Day Party.

D. Transportation/Dial-A-Ride

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E. Resource Booklet

The Resource Booklets are just about finished. The purpose of this booklet is to provide a comprehensive guide of Wethersfield services for persons with disabilities. This information will be on our website but we will also have some booklets printed.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discuss possible changes in Bureau of Rehab Services

The Bush Administration has made proposals to change the position of Commissioner of BRS to Director of BRS and also is considering eliminating regional offices. This could delay response times. Another proposal would allow Governor's to subcontract BRS services.

B. Guest Speaker - John Baker of the Department of Mental Retardation

Mr. Baker spoke about some of the requirements for eligibility for the program. The DMR is not an entitlement program. There is no guarantee for services. Qualification is based on resources available. You do have to be a resident of the State of Connecticut, meet statute requirements of an IQ less than 70 and/or also have a diagnosis of Prater Willie. If a person is eligible, records are assigned to a case manager in a regional office. The majority of people supported by the DMR live in their own homes. There are waiting lists for DMR services. There are respite centers available for people living at home. Stays at the respite centers can be arranged through the DMR caseworkers.

VI. OTHER

The Connecticut Disability Advocacy Collaborative puts out a Bulletin that includes a Calendar of Events listing workshops for the Medicare Part B Prescription Program. The Bulletin can be accessed on-line at jjk1009@hotmail.com

There was a discussion regarding the Silas Deane Highway improvements. People would like to sit in on the meetings in order to have some input as to what work will be done. The first meeting of the Committee responsible for these improvements will be held October 5, 2005 at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Wethersfield Police Station. If you are interested or have any questions about the plans for the Silas Deane Highway, please feel free to attend.

A MOTION to adjourn was made by John Baker. Seconded by Kathleen Sullivan. All were in favor, MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Eileen Knapp
Secretary