

**Westport Commission on People with Disabilities
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday May 17, 2018 - Town Hall - Rm. 201**

Attendance: Chairman - Jim Ross, Evan Levinson, Stacie Curran, Tom Holleman, LuAnn Giunta, Absent - Marina Derman, Diane Johnson. Present from Human Services: Elaine Daignault.

8:35am - Jim Ross - called to order

Sum of last month's minutes - Vote for Approval of April 2018 minutes- All in favor.

Guest Speakers

Pippa Bell Ader - Green Task Force, appointed by selectman, Westport's goal to be Net ZERO by 2050, in the areas of Energy, Waste, & Water.

- The GTF is in the process of applying for the Sustainable CT (SCT) Certification for the Town of Westport.
 - 10 Categories must be met with an action in each – CPD's Voluntary Registry Efforts may fit into the Sustainable CT EQUITY category.
 - It was noted that the SCT does not specify issues related to disability in their Categories within their requirements –
 - SEE HANDOUT - Equity Toolkit Overview - 3 steps: Set Goals, Analyze Data, Determine the Benefit/Burden
 - For the SCT purposes, the project timeline must be completed by August
 - Under the 10th category - We could also look into the Town ADA compliance piece. (maybe for next year)

Discussion:

- Melissa Katz-Kane suggests that the Committee About People's Employment (CAPE) efforts as a potential project under the grant to enhance local economy
- Q: Jim - What does the Certification do?
- A: Pippa - There is some \$ - funding for Towns that become certified.
- Recognition thru the CT Conference on Municipalities (CCM)
- SustainableCT.org - has all actions/step needed
- ("Complete Streets" is another one)

Action: The CPD will vote at the next meeting on whether to work with GTF and SCT to meet mutual goals

Curtis Leuker - My Team Triumph (MTT), endurance racing (5K - to Triathlons) - A National organization, founded 10 years ago (by Ron Rob).

- Captain = person with Disability
- Angel = The person who pushes/runs

- WATCH VIDEO - #RunlikeAngels
- MTT participated in the STAR race last week, at Sherwood Island.
- Future events include:
 - June 2nd - Fairfield 5K,
 - Sept 9- Westport - tri. - Website has all information to register, check calendar, volunteer, donate, etc.
- see handout - or www.myteamttriumph-ct.org

Discussion:

- Katie, from STAR - wanted to add - Saturdays - at New Canaan school, age 7-21 year olds, have a sports buddy Program.
- Team Triumph, is a Non-profit - anything we can do to spread the word, share the link, all equipment is provided, all volunteers, and angels are provided!

Katie Banzhaf - STAR, Inc. - www.starct.org - began in 1952, based in Norwalk. Star serves 600-700 individuals. Katie been there 35 years

- Services provided locally for Intellectual & Developmentally disabled individuals - from Birth-to-three, then transition to schools, where individuals are handled by school districts, they offer few support programs to the schools, then post Graduate HS, Schools may purchase services from STAR, or have programs on their own - Then, as adults - they aid in competitive employment. They stay connected every week, from training to coaching, to independence - until successful.
- Day services, activities, learning skills, classes in the community, etc.
- Residential/housing with support as needed
- Senior programming for their aging population.
- Transportation (40 vans)
- Mandated entitlement program provided by Federal Govt. - State sets standards - comparison done once a year - they keep all of their programs alive and going, and will fundraise if they need any extra \$\$.
- Customized Employment -is trending STAR staff is training for this now.
- Area of growth is Technology ex., smart homes, Foster Care - companion home model.
- Hourly payment increasing to \$14.75/hr for minimum

Discussion:

- Melissa Kane - the state having less\$, day programs
- Competitive employment & customized employment is the future so day programs must keep up with the times to provide targeted job development & consider transportation barriers
- Elaine D: Justin Nadel, SHS Media teacher, has agreed to assist CPD producing a documentary that highlights local businesses who hire people with disabilities. This is part of an effort to encourage others to consider hiring as well.
- Katie – Employment for people with disabilities is not just about “food & filth”, many other businesses in the community are hiring with success. It is important

to get community support on a variety of levels (ex. Job training, placement, supports, Chamber of commerce, etc.)

STAFF REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- P & Z this evening- final Compo bathroom/handicap accessibility presentation for approvals - 7:00pm Town Hall
- Tomorrow - 5/18 - 8:00am – Westport PD training on Autism
- Friday May 25th - 10am, new Mobi-Mats unveiled at Compo.
- Two Subcommittees forming to assist DHS/Town Staff with:
 - ADA Self-Assessment of Town Buildings, a component of the DOH grant which DHS is applying for, and
 - DOH Grant RFP reviewPlease inform Elaine if you are interested in either subcommittee.
- Affordable housing and upcoming proposals to watch via P & Z hearings:
 - The Kowalski property, Hiawatha Lane,

Transportation updates:

- Cabs & Uber wept transit new route discussion that must include ADA compliance- all buses and vans all of the time. What other models are out there?
- Elaine D: Westport Transit and Town exploring partnerships with agencies that have existing/available ADA vans but need to make it cost effective and establish interest/need in our community.
- Diane Johnson, Transportation news presented from her email below:

“I have recently attended several meetings of a subcommittee of the Transportation Coalition, which has been organized and facilitated by the SW CT Agency on Aging (SWCTA). The subcommittee met with Leslie Wolf and Stephanie Green, former board members for the now defunct volunteer transportation organization, ITN. The purpose of the meeting was to brainstorm on what went wrong with ITN, what were the best practices should a new organization be formed, and how transportation needs are now being met given the ITN service is no longer available. Many suggestions were discussed and all details are being compiled, but it was interesting to learn that many people that previously relied on ITN have now starting using cabs and Ubër more often (rides usually are organized by adult children). We discussed the possibility of utilizing volunteers not necessarily to drive people, but to train and accompany individuals as they learn and get comfortable with using cabs & Ubër. While the primary focus is on seniors, our discussions include the impact of all our ideas on individuals with disabilities. I will be able to share more at future meetings as other subcommittees meet and the coalition moves forward with implementing ideas. I've been pleased to participate and learn of all the potential solutions for transportation in the next few years... and learn if all the challenges that go with those 'solutions'.”

Public Comment & Announcements:

- Crumb Together: Andrea Pecoriello asked if I would share that they officially launched the Crumb Together Bakery on April 9th. They started a Go Fund Me campaign to raise funds: www.GoFundMe.com/crumbtogetherbakery
- She asked that we please share with family and friends and with those at the WCPD. From Andrea: "Please also spread the word that we need students. If they go on our website, crumbtogether.org, they can fill out an application and come in and be interviewed. Right now, we are looking for student bakers but eventually we will have jobs for packers and other kitchen staff. When we have a full class of 10, we will also be looking for adult volunteers, 1 per baking session, to be another set of hands in the kitchen. We are excited that it has finally started. Right now our kitchen is temporarily housed at Temple Beth Israel in Norwalk. We will be looking for a permanent space in either Norwalk or Westport within the year."
- Sharuna: Shared that the YMCA is wanting to partner to create activities for adult children - they have seen an increase need and Wilton is providing services we are not.
- Patty Haberstroh: Reports that Town Hall is currently addressing a lighting issue on the handicap ramp - Kudos to Public Works for being so responsive.
- Sherwood Diner has no ramp.
- New cub cuts in sidewalks are also noted as a positive step for people with disabilities
- Jim R - Talked of his meeting with "Para - Olympics" - maybe they can come speak with us and/or partnership with Team Triumph.

Discussion -

- ADA Newsletter - want to go with a cooperative process to Businesses - open doors and building bridges.
- LuAnn/Elaine - - Courtesy calls for homebound residents – possible synergy with other commissions - maybe a 'Good Samaritan Program' need to know who will manage it, some confidentiality issues, need training and education, etc.

Public:

Adjourned:

10:54am

Respectfully submitted,
Stacie Curran

