

**Westport Commission on People with Disabilities
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday January 17, 2019 - Town Hall - Rm. 201**

Attendance: Chairman, Jim Ross, Tom Holleman, Stacie Curran, Evan Levinson, Diane Johnson, LuAnn Guinta . Present from Human Services: Elaine Daignault
Excused: Marina Derman
Guest: Doug Rifkin

8:30AM - Call to order

- Review of Nov. 2018 Minutes - no meeting in December 2018
 - Judge Wexler's presentation included concerning areas: the line in the sand at IQ 69, and the gap of care, the need for advocacy between Age 21 - to Senior Citizen.
- Beach restroom accomplishments/walkways done
- 19 people have signed up with Volunteer registry – goal to improvement sign up process in the future
- Jim - motion to approve, Tom-2nd - All in Favor.

Guest Speaker - Bill Harmer - Executive Director, Westport Library

- The library is interested in building stronger relationships with Disability population
- Currently embarking on Strategic Plan - seeking public input on programming and services
- **“Inclusion”** is what public libraries are about = all are welcome, different views are welcome, safe open space for all - explains the new design.
- Points of Interest:
 - * \$15M Dollars - raised by private donors in two years
 - * They are on budget and construction on time - completion set for June.
(when built (1980s) - no internet no google, needed to house many books - no more.)
Now need technology and Flex space for people to come together:
 - * Six times the meeting rooms now; nine board rooms.
 - * New spaces can accommodate a group from 25-650 people!
 - * Thousands of sq.ft to accommodate groups of people
 - * Raised Flooring - so power can be brought up to anywhere in the room/any configuration, all furniture movable & diversity of furniture
 - * Circulation of air under raised floor - Acoustic ceiling panels to handle noise
 - * Greatest Broadband in the region
 - * Most beautiful piece of real estate - now using its beauty by reconfiguring the space
 - * Stacks - now downstairs - new area created to accommodate quiet space needs
 - * Opportunities to program the Jessup Green Space - presently under-utilized
 - * With 1,100 visitors a day in old space, it was the busiest library in New England
 - * Heated ramps to entrance - to prevent icing
 - * Floor to ceiling windows to capture views
 - * sculpture piece outside/seconds as an outdoor ping pong table

- * State-of-The-Art Amenities: Stage, theatre, lighting, Video Wall, Film, Video game tournaments, trade show space, convention hall floor space - weddings, Bar Mitzvahs, Non-profit organization events
- * Program rooms: space behind the stage, McManus room size, also used as your green room
- * Technology: Cameras all over the building
- * Updated Maker Space
- * Broadcast Space - Audio & Video Studio space (Thinking 24/7 broadcast space) could record Garage bands, pod-casts, make films, radio broadcasts, Internet Radio
- No more big check out desk - now the HUB is there - with all new resources.
- Café - Six times larger with OUTSIDE Cafe space connecting to the indoor space , can be used after hours (no commercial kitchen - residential zone)
- 3rd floor - Bumped out the narrow hallway, created great balcony space all lines with bar stools, seating & tables, and greater conference rooms
- Children's Dept is being transformed
- Team of Programmers, been collecting Data - What does the Community want. With an Outreach component - going out into the community
- (Henry Mayerberg- Architect for Libraries)
- They May open Fri., Sat., and Sun nights.
(Discussion)
- Thinking about the Disability Community:
 - Open Space, easier to Navigate
 - Wider Hallways
 - Grand stand in the middle
 - Maybe Home Delivery
 - Suggestions; Guided tours, marketing materials, visual aids
 - Could use volunteers - social interaction piece
 - Diane J: Maker Space people coming to Caroline house. Bringing the Library out to the community and beyond.
 - Bill wants a meeting with us (Diane, Marina, and Stacie)- to talk about potential employment.

Committee Updates:

CAPE/WCI:

- Brief update on progress and merger; Holleran & Sage to be our Pro-bono attorney through Zoning & the support all through the community is endless
- Elaine D. - Update: Westport Warm-Up & Energy Assistance - keeping the office busy and they are giving lots of guidance and offer financial resources to help folks.
- Discussion - Fairfield County Homelessness Count
- Diversionary Worker - Wanda - working on the audit in our community on homelessness.

Transportation:

- the Town Loop still being researched they have to go to the State for approvals; it's a process.
- New push to look at Regional ideas: Bridgeport to Greenwich - get groups to come together, share ideas, see what everyone is working on to help each other.
- (Eileen Flug is our ADA Westport coordinator)

Other Updates:

- Jen Fava - working on more Mobi Mats
- Newtown - dealing with Litigation on access to water sports
- Evan - shared article from Norwalk Hour - CT is 31st of the 50 state - lame in handling disabilities - Elaine with circulate the article/ and post to FB.
- Audience: SAL - wanted to share Senior Center is having great Super Bowl party in their new Center - come on by.

Adjourned - 10:10am