

Westport Commission on People with Disabilities
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday, February 27, 2020 - TOWN HALL 201

Attendance: Jim Ross, Tom Holleman, Stacie Curran, Doug Rifkin, Diane Johnson, Marina Derman, **And, Newest Member: Joe Anastasi**

Staff: Elaine Daignault & Michelle Bottone

8:36am - Call to order.

Jim Ross – reviewed January 2020 minutes

Motion to approve - Doug 1st, Diane 2nd - All in favor

GUEST PRESENTER: Danielle Chiaraluce, Executive Director, Chapel Haven School - Center for Employment Services & Opportunities (CESO) New Haven.

New name: “Career Ability”, no longer CESO

Mission: Meaningful Employment for its clients

(Powerpoint presentation - handout included)

- Extra comments: unique approach - clinical & vocational components
- Not all clients are working now, they have age-in-place building too.
- Clients come from all over the country - Chapel Haven West is in AZ.
- Outreach to Businesses; grassroots efforts, most of their clients need customized employment, process takes a lot of time and effort.
- They retain employers by not making false promise. Takes strong staff to keep it positive.
- Presently have 83 employers.
- They do employer recognition ceremonies and awards, spotlight, etc.
- Many agencies often vying for same positions, many clients don't want to work outside immediate area (transportation is an issue).
- Their advisory board also helps get job placements.
- 100% of their clients have kept their job over 90 day.
- 89% have remained employed for the year.
- Incentives to Employers: Some tax credits, better retention ratings, fewer sick days.
- Chapel Haven says it has lots of parent training to do.
- Their hope: To get state/federal funding in the future. They use an advisor as a big component which doesn't fit present govt. dollar models for support. The hope is that will change soon, given the Chapel Haven success of its model.
- In 2023, their new building will be complete, with cafe, and they will look to open small businesses, run by Chapel Haven employees.

Housing Update - Marina D. presents:

Specialty Housing - An evolution in: Inclusive, Affordable, and Accessible housing

(See Handout/presentation)

The effort has three prongs: Fed Grant, Agency (FAVAR) and a real estate developer Affordable housing, with income limitations - Individuals, or families, pay rent

The amount of rent charged is based on percentage of income for more info: email: FINtestmonyecga.ct.gov

(Discussion)

Elaine will share new text amendment proposal with us which addresses housing for Special Needs populations, we can review and discuss at next meeting, re., our support/or not.

(Discussion - affordable housing, Section 8 housing, developers overdeveloping Town)

Presenter: Jennifer Korowitz, Westport

Taking the State of CT Partners in Policy making course in Hartford which provides education and advocacy skills training for professionals and self-advocates.

She is here today to share her idea for her capstone project.

She wants to work with the Police Department to do sensitivity training for them in dealing with people with disabilities in a crisis situation.

Training would include de-escalation and other strategies.

She will circle back with us as she moves ahead in her project.

Elaine suggested that she do her research as to current police training around this topic. She indicated that the police have been very proactive in training their officers around a variety of disability issues they may face on the field.

Westport Library Launch:

Presenter: Jocelyn Barandiarian - Update - She serves Westport Library Board, serving over 11 years.

- She helped to start a separate 501(c)(3) - For the Library Book Sale, to also employ people with disabilities.
- The Library press release announcing this initiative went mid-February, March will be their first book sale launch, matching skills to tasks, eventually wanting to grow into a bookstore, and they are proud to have first four employees working by March.
- The library book sale has been working with Abilis and STAR. Growth is expected, but plan is to start small and learn.
- They are on lookout for more help, volunteers, always looking for Paras, OT, PT professionals who want to give an hour or so of time.
- They work on resumes and interviews - and try to understand the person and build jobs.

Marina D.- House Bill#5059 - She is heading up to Hartford now, to discuss support for this Bill which will give greater tax advantages to employers who hire people with disabilities.

Jim R. - Suggested we take a vote now, making a motion to support this Bill - and write letter to their effect, now, to go to Hartford, with Marina.

Jim - Makes motion for letter of support from the Commission of Proposed Bill 5059,

Vote - All in Favor

Downtown Merchants & Chamber discussion:

Joe A. & Sharuna M. had a meeting and are putting together information to share on the DMA and Chamber websites to support employers of people with disabilities. This initiative will help demonstrate collaboration with the Town & Commission's initiative working to create more business opportunities in Town.

A draft of the informational document will include: (See HANDOUT)

Shares ideas, mission statement, statistics, and a page of support/resources, contacts
Goal is to breakdown barriers, encourage hiring practices and discussion about and support local businesses, what benefits can be provided to businesses - also looking to STAR, Kennedy Center, Pilot House, etc. - what they can do to help us. It's a work in progress, this is first step.

Meeting Adjourned. 10:30am

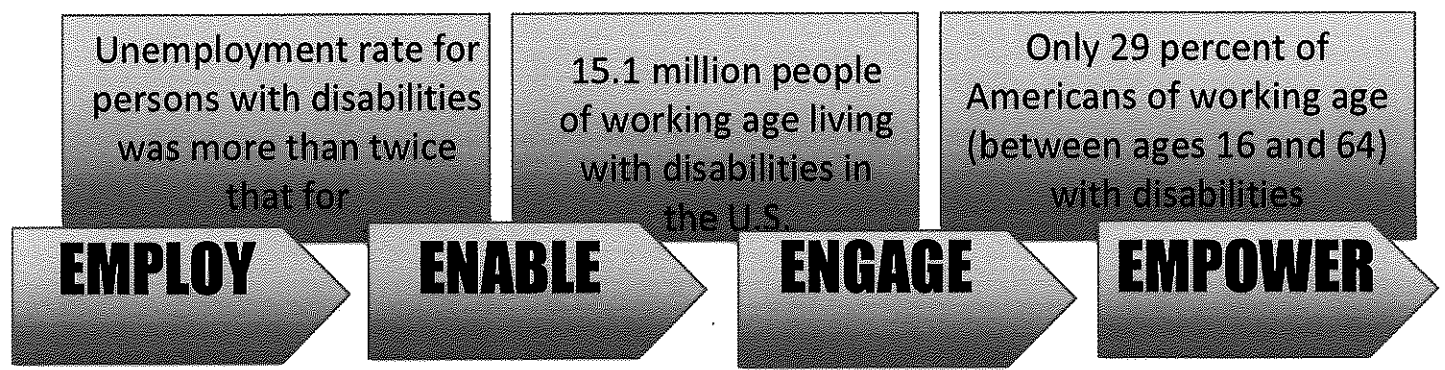
Handout
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Westport Business is for Everyone

WESTPORT DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION and CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The "Westport Business is for Everyone" Initiative is an exciting, new collaborative effort between the DMA(CoC) and the Town of Westport's Commission on People with Disabilities to unleash the power and the promise that people with disabilities can bring as employees and consumers to local Westport business. This initiative, with the support of the Westport Department of Human Services and leading disability organizations, will help educate and actively support local businesses who want to recruit, hire and promote people with disabilities and attract consumers with disabilities to their businesses.

Meaningful employment and accessible workplaces are achievable from the newest retail stores on Main Street to the large corporations throughout Westport. The Westport Business is for Everyone initiative is ready to help your business catch the wave that is re-awakening corporate culture and turbo-charging corporate profits across America! Let's get started....



What can you do?

How does hiring adults with disabilities help you?

Inclusion works, why hiring developmentally disabled employees can help your business?

Employers love them, increased profits, they have staying power, they are reliable, they want to succeed, they are productive, they continue to improve, they are happy to be there, customers love them, they inspire others and inspire a change for the better.

1. our participants are hard-working and dedicated employees. The average tenure of an employee is 9.5 years.

2. Provide no cost placement services and job training.
3. Utilize a customized employment strategy focused on matching the needs of the employer with participant's skills.
4. Pre-screen applicants eliminating costly advertising expenses for the employer.
5. Provide a job coach, on-the-job training and follow-up support reducing time needed for orientation and training of new employees.

HOW THE JOB PLACEMENT PROCESS WORKS WITH EMPLOYERS:

1. The commission along with its employment services partner will provide a no cost job assessment to determine unmet needs within the employers organization
2. If the assessment determines there is a need, a formal job description is developed.
3. The employment service partner will then match the specific job description to the skills of one of their job seeker participants
4. An informal interview is then scheduled giving the employer an opportunity to meet and discuss specific job tasks with the candidate
5. If hired, the employment services partner will facilitate all on boarding paper work, confirm start date and assign support systems as outlined below

Employment Services Partner Support:

All participants that are placed into jobs through our employment services partner receive a dedicated job coach at no additional charge. The job coach will train, model behavior and be the direct conduit between the employer (supervisor) and the participant. Initially the job coach will work with the participant during all shifts ranging from 2-4 weeks. Once the individual demonstrates a clear understanding of job tasks, the job coach will begin the process of fading back. Eventually the job coach will maintain a weekly visiting schedule to check in with the employee and employer to insure success. This support is on going and continues as long as the participant is employed at this location.

Transportation:

All job seekers are required to have reliable transportation whether it be public or private. The employment services partner will not place an individual unless they have dependable, safe transportation.

Specialty Housing



An Evolution in Inclusive,
Affordable, and Accessible Housing



Expected Completion Date: February 2020



Canton, CT

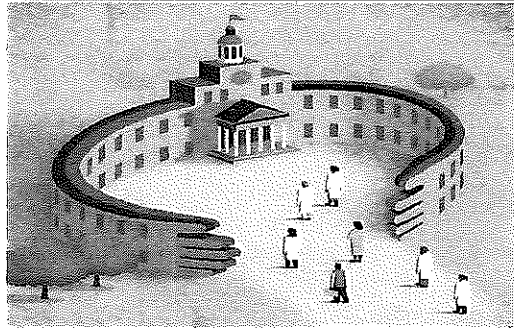


Bloomfield, CT

SIX KEY FEATURES

1. An Inclusive Setting
2. Clustering
3. Affordability
4. Enhanced Accessibility Features
5. New Smart Home Tech
6. New Healthy Prepared Meal Delivery





1. An Inclusive Setting

- a) 75/25 resident mix (w/o and with IDD)
- b) Common Gathering/Activity Spaces
- c) Planned, Integrated Activities



2. Clustering

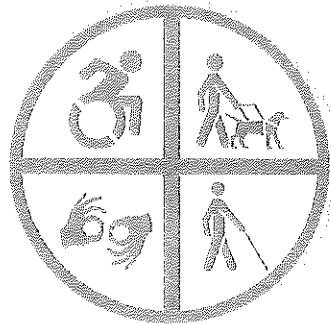
- a) Large Peer Group
- b) Staffing Efficiencies
- c) Transportation Efficiencies
- d) Customized Recreation





3. Affordability

- a) More Cost Effective than Group Homes
- b) Affordable Rents with RAP's

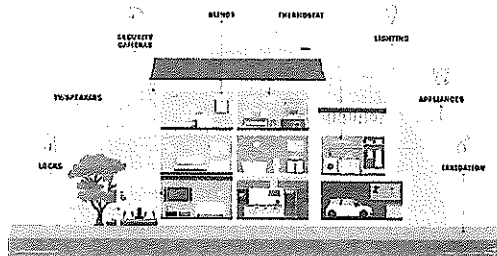


4. Enhanced Accessibility Features

- a) Barrier Free Apartment
- b) Extra Bathroom Features
- c) Extra Kitchen Features

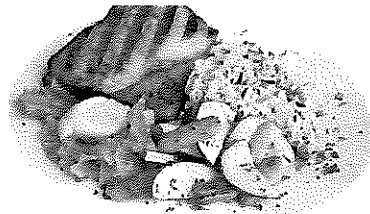


HOME SMART HOME



5. Smart Home Tech

- a) Smart Apartment Management System
- b) Customizable Base System
- c) Add-on System



6. Structuring the Food Environment

- a) Healthy Prepared Meal Delivery (Mon. - Fri.)
- b) Small Plates and Bowls
- c) Educating Staff (healthy weight, nutrition, activity levels)
- d) Online Grocery Shopping





Favarh Specialty Housing Interest Form



Favarh – the Arc of the Farmington Valley and Regan Development are building two innovative specialty housing complexes that will give tenants with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) increased independence and autonomy in an integrated and safe environment. One of the complexes will be in Canton at 300-350 Commerce Drive and the other will be in Bloomfield at 458 and 470 Cottage Grove Road. The innovative nature of the projects will be the incorporation of ADA+ features along with a cutting-edge smart-home management system to help tenants with IDD safely thrive in a fully integrated community setting. A prerequisite for all tenants in both complexes will be that they meet state income limitations. The two complexes combined will create affordable rentals for 38 people with IDD and 115 others.

Name: _____ phone: _____

Address: _____

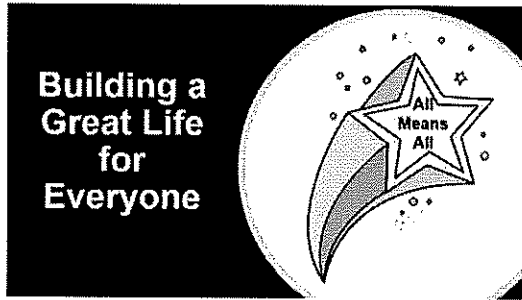
Email (please print clearly): _____

Why are you interested in Favarh's Specialty Housing? Check all that apply:

- For myself
- For a family member. Name: _____
- To move into one of these new apartments
- To follow the progress of the project
- Other: _____

How did you hear about Favarh's Specialty Housing? _____

...Please complete the back side of the form before you return it →



“ALL Means ALL: Building a Great Life for Everyone in our Communities”

A Conference for Self-Advocates, Family Members and Providers

Tuesday, April 7, 2020

8:00am – 4:00pm

Farmington Marriott Hotel, 15 Farm Springs Road, Farmington CT

Register for this conference at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/all-means-all-building-a-great-life-for-everyone-in-our-communities-tickets-94853753129>

National and State Speakers

Keynotes, Presentations, and Workshops on many topics.

Limited to the first 350 registrants.

There is no cost and lunch is included.

Sponsored By:

