

**Westport Commission on People with Disabilities
Minutes of Meeting
(December 2020 meeting was cancelled)
Thursday January 21st, 2021 - 9:00am-10:30am
ZOOM MEETING MINUTES**

Attendance: Jim Ross - Chair, Marina Derman, Stacie Curran, Doug Rivkin, Diane Johnson, Tom Holleman, Joe Anastasi. Present from Human Services: Elaine Daignault, and Michelle Bottone
Audience who choose to identify: Sal Liccione (people need not identify themselves)

Jim Ross -recap minutes: Joe A 1st, Diane J 2nd - all in favor.

Plans for new year - open conversation

- Elaine D - Teen center closed, Covid-19, Busy with food service, Senior Center - 45 programs Zoom a week, role out of vaccination. - Need to register online, wait for invitation - Early Feb should see Age16-64 who may have a medical condition, need to work out some kinks in the system.
- Westport Health District has the Moderna vaccine. Anticipated expansion of eligible residents is early Feb 65+ population and those with a medical condition, may be able to begin registering online, waiting for appt - but it has not been a smooth roll out thus far. (New help line to get folks enrolled on the phone).
- RTM – Transit Committee is exploring transportation issues
 - CPD recently had the former WTD to a meeting to discuss Wheels to you & Door-to-Door
 - Sal L. announced that Peter Gold is new Transportation Director
 - Still talk/look for full time Director of Transportation.
 - service for 3/4 of a mile off Post Rd - need more advocacy for those living further.

Human Services – Elaine Daignault

- DHS will present their budget for FY 21, Elaine indicates that she will not request any increases. Last year, DHS was successful in getting a new part time social worker.
- Wednesday Jan 27th at Noon – Affordable Housing Subcommittee meeting
 - Accessory Dwelling Units, more leeway on apartments on people's property, expanding to include the disability population. Using some \$ From Dept of Housing - working to hire affordable housing advisor- to help track those in low/moderate income levels.
- Michele B. - Energy assistance season - one can make application until May 1st.
- Food & Family Program - helping with food insecurity –
 - Every other Thursday 1:30-2:30, Senior Center, helping residents in need, can come and pick up food, or arrange for delivery if necessary.
 - Federal Farm to Family Program - Elaine D will reach out if volunteers needed.

Discussion of focus/topic for CPD in 2021

- Housing, Transportation, Employment, Recreation, Education, Health & Wellness, - what can we tie together. (Diane - Employment, Education)
- Joe - Education, discussed Communication.
- Discussion - Zoom working well for Doug R. - Elaine D - There is a Challenge in informing People of Opportunities.
- Doug R - Need technology supports for “access” to Communication. Suggests a category - Communication & Technology - and he would focus on this piece.
- Pre-Covid - Programs were running to help people - Career Bus, Library had workshops, SMORES - group of High School students helping Seniors with Tech.
- (all not presently available)
- Tom H - These are all gigantic topics - Elaine D- can't get too granular/
- Ask the person on each committee to decide the plan for that category, figuring priorities can be done further down road.
- (Further Discussion) Programs for adults - Michele B. runs, Partner with existing programs, Westport Together, find Natural mentors - Housing, Employment, transport ion - to serve a Transition program - create exposure in Westport for our own young adults - all Interdependent - Westport centered exposure.
- Marina - Can we create something ‘Senior Center like” for Disability population.
- Diane J - or Dovetail on what is already there, using all Town Centers, Teen, Sr., Community, - Marina - a Web of connection. And Legislative Piece - doesn't need full time; needs to keep an eye on Hartford.

To best serve the 18-65 Community:

1. Housing & Transportation - Diane & Tom
2. Employment/Transition/Education - Marina, Joe, Stacie
3. Community Connection/Education/Supported Living/a good life - Jim & Doug, Stacie
4. (?)unclear if “3” is broken into 2 categories= Community Connection - Transition Education/Supported Living

Next steps - Need Objectives for each group

Tom - Suggests we come up with these prior to next meeting - then pitch to larger group
Jim R -Let's not wait a month - each group come up with Priorities - and be prepared to present at next meeting

Diane J - Book, Being “Heumann” - Disability Rights advocate, Judith Heumann - Diane is sending each one of u s a copy of the book.

(Please see attachment for clarification on subcommittees)

10:43am, - meeting adjourned Jim/Diane

Commission on People with Disabilities
Committee Focus Areas as of January 27, 2021

Please find a proposed draft of focus areas for the 2021 Commission on People with Disabilities. Please review your assigned topic area and inform Elaine if changes are required. Feel free to amend the topic areas as I did my best to capture our discussion and could have easily twisted topic areas.

As discussed last week, the plan is for each committee to meet separately to explore issues and objectives to bring back to the larger group to discuss actionable items.

Meetings must not exceed 3 people unless you wish to post a public meeting.

Please inform Michelle and me when you are meeting, and one of us will do our best to attend.

Topic Areas	Jim	Stacie	Doug	Tom	Marina	Joe	Diane	Elaine	Michelle
1. Housing/Transportation				x			x	x	
2. Employment/Education/Transition		x			x	x	x		x
3. Mental/Physical Health & Wellness	x	x	x	x					x
4. Community Connections and Engagement (Access/Communication)			x			x		x	
<i>As hoc committees:</i>									
State/Federal Advocacy					x			x	x
Emergency Management								x	x

The following suggestions for small committee exploration:

1. Conduct an internal audit of your topic area: do an informal needs assessment (what are the pressing issues?), determine gaps to create a mini-mission statement, establish problem (or solution) statements, and suggest actionable areas for attention.
2. Approach TEAM Westport about including People with Disabilities in their diversity statement
3. Consider expanding “Westport Together” alliance partners to offer new social/recreational opportunities for individuals with disabilities.
4. The Term “Community Connections and Engagement and Supported Living” came up as an item; it was unclear whether that was an overarching idea for all areas or an area in itself.

The following topics/meetings for CPD participation:

1. P & Z Affordable Housing Subcommittee Meetings
2. TEAM Westport
3. Westport Transit District
4. RTM
5. Board of Finance
6. Westport Together
7. Other Human Services Commission Meetings