

**Westport Commission on People with Disabilities**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Thursday June 17th, 2021 - 9:00am-10:30am**  
**ZOOM MEETING MINUTES**

**Attendance:** Jim Ross, Marina Derman, Stacie Curran, Tom Holleman, Joe Anastasi. Present from Human Services: Elaine Daignault. Absent - Diane Johnson and Doug Rivkin.

Sue Pfister – Westport Senior services

Jim R - review May minutes **Motion to approve minutes** - Tom 1st, Marina 2nd - All in favor.

**Human Services recap** (Elaine D):

- DHS continues financial and food supports for residents struggling through 16-month Covid, unemployment, and mental health concerns.
- Food offerings - slowing down.
- Hired new Licensed Counselor - Liz Atkin. (Introduction) Has lots of rehab work experience, will be working with disability commission, needing some training, and working with Senior Center too.
- Upcoming meeting - Friday 12- P & Z - looking at Open Space and Baron's South again. And Friday at 4:00 = exploring upcoming lease agreement with Abilis for Riverside if anyone can make it from this commission.

**Sue P.- Senior Center**

- Opening celebration July 1st - 9:30am - slow opening, need reservations.
- Food assistance offerings are for all ages - not just Seniors.
- Discussion - using their space for other groups. While age restriction is in their policy, Sue tries to accommodate other groups where possible if rooms available and she can help.

**Welcome Liz Atkin:** 10+ year Mental health, Drug & Alcohol rehab, came from CT counseling Center.

**Employment is for everyone:**

Discussion:

- Elaine D- met with Laurel house = understanding differences BRS/DDS.
- Preparing for Sunrise Rotary meeting- we need clear view of our initiative what we are/ are not going forward - Customized employment vs. Supportive employment.
- Elaine - next meeting with DDS to learn more about their services
- Joe: We are connecting/ a help strategy - connect Westport to help others find jobs, see if they can provide the expertise.
- Laurel House - provide services like resume building, interview skills, mental health, etc., they were excited to learn what we are doing - and interested in working together, what roles can we play together. ( D. Vestuti)

- Joe/ Jim R - important to note, some may not be interested in disclosing their disability. At STAR - we are an agency that helps, not needing specific disclosure on individual.
- Feels - our view/our lane is education and awareness - with our initiative, the benefits of hiring one with disability, we can guide to helpful links, sites, etc.
- Marina - hard to have both - want benefits and assistance from our offerings but don't want to disclose. Marina spoke to Abylis & Kennedy Center - both interested - we need to create our show - more geared to business vs. agencies.
- Marina - discussion of the funding stream, which follows the person, and the acronyms, for DDS, BRS, DMAS.

Transportation - meeting coming up –

- Elaine will circulate link - Peter Gold meeting (Stacie will get on this with Jim R)

Next Steps:

1. Get Agencies together - What role can you play in this initiative?
2. Get our story/presentation together

- Elaine - will circulate the document again –
- Marina, Stacie and Joe will review and then whomever else wants to chime in.
- New local guy with filmmaking - Elaine will get his contact - maybe Diane J, Tom, others will work on presentation piece.

10:30 adjourned - Marina/Tom - all in favor