

Westport Commission on People with Disabilities
Work Session - Minutes of Meeting
Thursday Feb.3, 2022 - 9:00am
ZOOM MEETING MINUTES

Attendance: Chairman - Jim Ross, Stacie Curran, Diane Johnson, Absent- Doug Rivkin, Marina Derman, Joe Anastasi, Tom Holleman
From Human Services: Elaine Daignault, Kala Morgan, Margaret Pinheiro
Members of the public in attendance: Gary Mayerson, Sharuna Mahesh, Jocelyn Barandiaran

9:08am call to order

Elaine D. - Reviews E4E initiative and the purpose of today's meeting

- * Goal today is to nail down one page document of info in time for a March 1st launch
- * Human Services Dept. will manage Job Bank (aka Employment Gateway) which will include employer-submitted job opportunities and an area for job-seekers to search and/or pursue job training/assistance from local providers which will also be listed on the site.
- * The webpage will also direct interested parties to the Commission/DHS for assistance in the process, as needed.
- * Elaine briefly showed the outline of the webpage which will be on the Town's Human Services tab.
- * Its important to realistically manage expectations of all participants, making it clear that CPD is offering a platform to connect businesses, employment specialists, and potential employees to resources. We are not providing job placement or coaching, but may be able to help businesses consider opportunities and implement disability friendly workspaces.

Stacie - Q - based on recent discussions with Employers: concerns and fears, uncertainty, anxiety around working with people with disabilities - very real.

Member of the public Gary M - works at Job Path NYC - has an anxiety checklist which he will share, to assist in dispelling employers of the anxieties and desensitize employees. He suggests that we highlight examples of current successes in town like Restaurants, Museums, Retail locations, law firms - not yet Executive level, but working way there.

Discussions: One-Pager - word edits, reposition of bullets,

Discussions: Logos - do we include logos of all our partners? Does the initiative need its own logo?

Member of the public Jocelyn B, from the Westport Bookstore - offered the Westport Bookstore as a first-step, leg-up location, to provide opportunity for volunteers

(employer's, employees) to work with adults with disabilities and get used to the novelty and anxiety of working with a person with a disability.

Next steps:

- Elaine to share Job Path document
- One final review of the information document for the website
- Commissioners to do an outreach to successful businesses to highlight on the website.
- DHS to finalize the website template (www.westportct.con/efore) and then share with local partners: DMA, Chamber, Rotaries, etc. to begin utilizing the site and contacting CPD for assistance as needed.
- Press release to go out after completing outreach to partners, and finalizing the website for activity.