

Westport Commission on People with Disabilities
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday July 21st 2022 - 9:00am
ZOOM MEETING MINUTES

Attendance: Chairman - Jim Ross, Stacie Curran, Joe Anastasi, Diane Johnson, Doug Rivkin.

Absent - Marina Derman, Tom Holleman, Diane Johnson

From Human Services: Elaine Daignault, Kaila Moran,

Senior Services: Sue Pfister

Guests Identified: Angie Wormer Dr. Kathryn Turley-Sonne, Sal Liccione, Tom Tarrant, Nancy Wilson, Harris Falk, Markley Rizzi

Minutes: Jim Ross - Motion - Joe-1st, Stacie- 2nd, All in favor

Jim R- Praise for Legislative presentation - with Representative Stephanie Thomas & Representative Tammy Exum, Businesses Employing Adults with disabilities (Stacie presented with Doug Tirola for Remarkable Theater)

WHS - update Elaine D. - staff report (Summary) - public hearings, Homes for Hope Aug 2nd - Bd of Finance to have meeting, followed by RTM - to ratify using ARPA funds for new pilot position/program at the library to hire a Career Coach Employee - to assist residents in finding employment.

Sue P.: Senior Services update – reports that the WCSA is thriving with a mix of patrons choosing to mask. The congregate meal program is popular but not yet up to pre-covid attendance. Programmatic participation is positive as well.

E4E:

Jim Ross - shared his experiences with going door-to-door with his daughter and Joe Anastasi to downtown businesses.

Discussion –

CPD will need to circle back to those businesses and expand in-person outreach to encourage participation and awareness of the initiative.

MOCA – has been most active in posting and hiring. They also host Westport Transition Program students. They may be a model/advisor for those businesses considering more inclusive employment.

Downtown Merchants Association - Elaine & Stacie were duplicating efforts - we will connect – to ensure that a link to E4E site is embedded on their landing pages?

* Getting other businesses to offer to assist to talk to prospective employers - Ambassadors to the program

- * Angela W- Suggests we offer opportunities for businesses to connect with each other for support and/or mentorship.
- * Stacie will ask Andrea P from Porch @Christies and Anne G from MOCA)
- * Kathryn - suggests asking/including employees to be a part of the process of success story building.
- * Joe A - suggests a DMA event after hours - where E4E is the focus topic so we can include ALL
- * Harris F - suggest recording to make a “success reel” in the Library with their tech., and maybe can even host event there.

ACTION ITEMS:

Stacie & Elaine - will get to DMA Maxs Crowley & Josh Allen

Joe - will get in touch with Rotary/Sunrise

Jim - will reach out to the Rotary/ other

Doug - with Sal’s help will connect with Matt Mandel from the Chamber (Elaine D had already make contact and will f/up with Doug/Sal

Discussion:

October is (disability) Employment month

Sal - Can we ask for a Proclamation from the Selectwoman’s office?

CLUB 203

A social Program for individuals with disabilities (18+)

Stacie Presents:

“I speak for many of our Commission members, the voices that have reached out to Human Services/Elaine Daignault, and especially, we speak for those who do not have a voice,

We witness and are LIVING the lack of social opportunities for those differently abled once they exit school programs.

At age 18 our individuals face a cliff. Loss of employment opportunities, Social opportunities, Transportation, housing, - today we reach out for social support.

In working with Joe, talking with Marina and Diane on this topic - And connecting with Kathryn Sonne and also now joined by Sharuna Mahesh, we ask for the Town’s blessing in the Launch of Club 203 - The COOLEST new club to be a member of.

We are working to create social opportunities, thru month gatherings, which are fun, safe, places to connect with like-minded individuals, find friends, people to hang out with and do things with, in Westport’s public arenas.

We have received tremendous support from any we have asked -

Museum of Contemporary Art, MOCA< TOQUET HALL< REMARKABLE THEATER< WAKEMAN TOWN FARM, THE WESTPORT LIBRARY, SUE knows i'm coming her way next, and we have an ask into the Playhouse, Westport YMCA, VFW. Parks & Rec, Christ & Holy Trinity Church, Town synagogues

Ideas - a DJ dance party held at the Museum for Contemporary Art, Trunk or Treat at the drive in dress in costume and play all snippets of short Halloween theme film Charlie Brown, etc., not the big screen, Holiday party at Wakeman Town Farm, Bingo gaming night at Toquet, -

We will not have any responsibility for transporting individuals

If any one needs an extra assistant, they have to provide their own, we are all volunteer based, many are stepping up, offering to volunteer, one parent (Nancy Whaler) offered to work on donation of snacks for our events,

Our plan is to have an annual membership (\$75/yr)

11 events a year, come to as many or as few as you can, or come on as drop in basis each even - approx. 90mins to two hours

age 18 and up- 40, 50, - until available senior center activities pick up

Sue P stated that senior individuals with disabilities are welcome at WCSA and restated her support for the efficacy of Employment and/importance of social/recreational outlets.”

Motion: Joe A; Seconded: Diane J.

“To approve a request by Stacie Curran for CPD/DHS to incorporate Club 203 under Town/Commission initiatives.”

All in favor: unanimous (Diane, Joe, Stacie, Jim, proxy – Marina)

Motion to adjourn: Joe A 1st, Stacie C - 2nd - all in favor