

# Westport's Commission on People with Disabilities Regular Meeting

Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9am

Under the Governor's Executive Order No. 7B, this meeting was held on zoom.

Meeting Attendance: Jim Ross (Chair), Tom Holleman, Diane Johnson, Joe Anastasi  
Guests: Mary Gai, Daniel Maya  
Staff: Elaine Daignault

## **Meeting Minutes**

9 AM Minutes approved from Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Guest Speaker – Daniel Maya, a Westport resident, and owner of Westport Fitness

- Daniel was born at 1.5 pounds with a visual impairment and a learning disability.
- He shared his passion for physical fitness, crediting the support of his family and a Westport Education.
- Dan's interest in fitness started when he joined a running club at Staples High School. Daniel said SHS prepared him well for college, and enjoyed his time there.
- He continued to pursue fitness while attending Gateway Community College's transition program. He went on to a 4-year college where he received his BA in Human Services, where he continued to pursue wellness and founded a Mediation Club at school.
- Daniel's career goals led to certifications including Certified Personal Trainer Adaptive Special Needs Trainer, Level 1, Adaptive Special Needs Trainer Certification Level 2, Adaptive Special Needs Group Fitness Instructor, American Red Cross Water Safety Instructor, American Red Cross Lifeguard
- Daniel founded a personal training business Westport Fitness and continues to work for Westport's Park and Recreation as a lifeguard.
- Dan offered the following insights to others. Find what you love, and go for it. Changing your mind about what you want to do and following your passion is okay.
- When asked about areas to improve in Westport, Daniel spoke about transportation as something that could be improved.

Human Services Report

- Elaine introduced the new Director of Westport's Center for Senior Activities Wendy Petty
- The Human Services budget was first presented at the Board of Finance's informal workshop last week. On March 1st, the First Selectwoman will present the entire Town budget at the BOF meeting.
- Transportation - She spoke briefly about impending changes in Transportation at the state level, which indicates regionalization is imminent.
- Affordable Housing – continues to be a topic of conversation in Town with the state mandate to create a 5-year Affordable Housing Plan. The Town's Moratorium on 8-30G applications will lift soon, making non-conforming structures more likely to be presented to the p & z. Several upcoming meetings may be of interest.

- Employment – the Westport Library recently hired a Career Coach to assist residents in exploring career opportunities. This addition could provide additional support for E4E candidates.

#### Commission Projects & Advocacy Report

- Club 203 – A social program for individuals ages 18+ - continues to thrive with events through June. March-The Porch, April – at Jesup Green with TAP Strength, May – Parks and Rec/Compo, and June – Westport Library.
- "Employment is for Everyone" (E4E) - The Commission will hold a committee meeting to strategize a Spring Into Employment initiative. The Commission hopes to engage the Chamber and Downtown Association in the program.
- As a reminder, the following Commissioners have agreed to serve as lead advocates in the following areas:
  - Stacie - Recreation
  - Joe - Employment
  - Jim - Transportation
  - Diane - Housing

#### No Public Comment

#### Other Announcements and next steps:

Future speakers/topics for commission meetings:

March – Westport Farmers Market

April/May - Affordable Housing, Library Career Coach, and Transportation

#### Future meetings of note:

Feb 27th – [8-30G Discussion at the Library](#)

Feb 28th – [P & Z Affordable Housing Sub-Committee](#)

March 1st – [Board of Finance Budget Presentation](#)

March 16th – [CLUB203 Event](#)

#### Next Steps:

Employment is for Everyone Committee Meeting - TBD

10:15 AM Adjourn