

HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY – September 8, 2015

Attendance:

Commissioners: Ed Horne, Yvonne Senturia, Peter Powell, Kristin LaFleur

Staff: Barbara Butler, Sarah Heath, Patty Haberstroh, Sue Pfister

The minutes of the July 14, 2015 meeting were approved.

Old Business: Commission's 2014-15 Agenda

Continuing concerns include:

1. *Housing options affordable to low and moderate income individuals and families.*
Barbara and Sue will continue to monitor the senior housing subcommittee of Planning and Zoning. Legalizing existing buildings on designated open space, by rewriting regulations may limit expansion of WCSA. Identified issue with management of communication by Westport Housing Authority, with plan for follow up by Ed.
2. *Transportation options, both public and private, serving the needs of residents of all ages, but especially the youth and elders of the community and people with disabilities.*
After school transportation no longer funded by the state, which is particularly problematic for working parents.
3. *Community mental health needs.*
4. *Community diversity and respect for differences*

Overarching concern is how to make human needs more visible to the community. An example would be Jim Lomuscio's informative series of articles in *The Westport News* illustrating the need for senior housing.

New Business:

Westport schools Superintendent Search holding a community forum on September 10th at 10:00am.

Proposed changes to senior tax relief program with a cap on medical deductions and changes in tax abatement eligibility income levels. Summary of proposed changes will be presented in October.

Department Report:

Commission on People with Disabilities: First Selectman will make this a reality.

CSA Enhancement Planning Committee: will be formally appointed by First Selectman soon, and overseen by Second Selectman

Afterschool Collaborative Program Proposal: Sarah asking United Way to reallocate funding to cover clients who cannot afford after school child care. YMCA will provide 50% scholarship and transportation. Earthplace covers their transportation. Hales Court Homework Club (Monday – Thursday) provides supervision and homework support.

Annual Mental Health Breakfast: Tuesday October 6th presentation on "Cultivating Inner Resilience in Ourselves and Our Children" by Linda Lantieri, MA.

Summer School and Campership Program Report: over 72 households and 107 children helped in some way. Full report to follow.

Back to School Program Report: Outreach to all clients in grades K-12, including Open Choice. 102 families this year. Grant covered 86 \$30 Payless gift cards. Other funds used so that each child received \$40-\$50 in gift cards.

Meeting adjourned 10:05am.

Next meeting: Tuesday, October 13, 2015.