

(Unapproved Minutes)

**TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD
WETHERSFIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY MAY 21, 2008**

I. INTRODUCTIONS

Present: Carol Keenan, Chairperson
Joan Haines (arrived late)
Jim Grise
Christine Taylor
Frank Meunier, Jr.
Kathleen Sullivan

Liaison: Natalie Morrison, Parks and Recreation Department

Excused: Joan Haines

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Mark Rafferty, Resident of Wethersfield addressed the Commission. He works for the Board of Education and Service for the Blind. The light on the Silas Deane Highway in front of the Wethersfield Shopping Center starts blinking at a certain time of the night and as a legally blind person, he could be trapped on one side of the street and not be able to cross. Also when the light is blinking cars travel faster up and down the Silas Deane and it is impossible to cross. He is also concerned about the repair and maintenance of sidewalks especially during the winter months. Sidewalks are not being shoveled after snowstorms. He would like to see a Town Ordinance passed making it illegal to open for business and plow vehicular areas before plowing or shoveling the pedestrian areas first. Mr. Rafferty doesn't think the fines are large enough to force people to shovel their sidewalks. He doesn't feel the Police Department takes his complaints seriously. Finally, Mr. Rafferty said there is a section of sidewalk that would cost \$150 to repair on Jordan Lane. He has made complaints about it before because it is dangerous to pedestrians and especially visually impaired individuals. Last week he tripped over it and fell cutting his shins and dropping his groceries. He is asking the town for reimbursement of his groceries and shopping cart and he would like this area of the sidewalk fixed. They put a patch on it but he feels it is substandard. Carol said sidewalk repair is on a schedule. Lee Sekas walked with the Mayor down Wolcott Hill Road to

point out problems with the sidewalks so he has been make aware of some of the problems.

Jim Grise said he lives on Wolcott Hill Road and he only remembers the sidewalks being inspected 2-3 times in 30 years. He said he would like to know how the town goes about inspecting the sidewalks. Natalie suggested calling the Physical Services or Engineering Departments.

III. MINUTES of the September 20, 2006 meeting

Frank Meunier, Jr made a MOTION. to accept the minutes of the January 16, 2008 meeting with changes. Seconded by Jim Grise. All were in favor, MOTION CARRIED.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Group Home Visits

Board members received handouts listing the Group Homes and their liaisons. Christine Taylor noted that the Butternut Group Home has moved to Cromwell.

First Church Village just installed a new lighting system outdoors and they are putting in landscaping.

B. Seniors

The seniors attended a very successful Emergency Preparedness Workshop. Eighty people attended and were given a lot of useful information. The Workshop was taped and should be replayed on Channel 14.

Effective July 1, 2008 the cost of Dial-A-Ride had increased to \$52 per year. Christine passed out copies of the new guidelines. Anyone concerned about the increase can contact the office of Social and Youth Services at 721-2977.

Social Services has an Outreach schedule planned for the Renter's Rebate Plan. Call the office of Social and Youth Services for more information at 721-2977

There is a Connecticut statewide respite program for people with Alzheimer's, dementia or Parkinson's disease. They can apply for a grant for up to \$3,000 per year for home care services. More information can be obtained by calling 724-6443 x 272.

There is an Eye-Opener Conference coming up Friday June 13, 2008. This program helps adults with severe vision loss. Registration is 8:30-9:00 a.m. The program runs from 9:00a.m. -3:00p.m. at the Marriott Hotel in Farmington. Anyone interested can call Maureen MacIntyre at 602-4030.

Free wheelchair ramps are available made by a church youth program in Ridgefield, Connecticut. Contact Kathy Marciello at 203-551-5517 or 203-578-4551.

There is a new Connecticut Law designed to promote energy efficiency, which establishes a rebate program for residential customers who replace room air conditioners that don't meet the Federal Star Efficiency Standards. Rebates are from \$25-\$100. There are also rebates on central air conditioners. Bernie's and Best Buy on the Berlin Turnpike are participating.

C. Parks and Recreation

Special Olympics programs are running as usual. Three in-town group homes participated in the track and field events. Twenty-seven athletes are moving on to the State events in June.

The Tip-a-Cop fundraiser was held last week to raise money for Special Olympics Connecticut. The event was well attended.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run will be held June 5, 2008 between 4:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. on the Silas Deane Highway from the Mobil near the Rocky Hill town line to the police station.

The Special Olympics bocce and golf programs begin in the middle of June.

The annual picnic is being held Wednesday July 9th at Millwoods at 5:00 p.m. Frank suggested donating WACPD funds to help with the cost of the picnic.

D. Transportation/Dial-A-Ride

Natalie said they are still in the process renegotiating their adult transportation.

E. Update on Resource Booklet

Fifty additional copies were made and given to the office of Social and Youth Services. Jim suggested updating the books with new information. The Committee agreed to discuss it at the June meeting and work on it over the summer.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Carol suggested that Natalie discuss the plans for the picnic and holiday events with the Committee before finalizing everything. Any requests for donations must go through the treasurer.

A MOTION was made by Frank Meunier, Jr. to appropriate \$75 for the summer picnic. Seconded by Kathleen Sullivan. All were in favor, MOTION CARRIED.

VI. OTHER

There are no meetings in July or August. The picnic is being held July 9th. The next meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2008.

There is no representative from the Town Council because they meet on the same day. Carol suggested moving the WACPD meetings to another day. She said she would find out if they could move their meetings to the second Wednesday of the month and start them at 7:00 p.m.

There was a discussion about recruiting new members to the Committee who would show up for the meetings. Carol said she has already spoken to the Town Clerk and sent word to the Town Council.

A MOTION was made by Frank Meunier, Jr. to adjourn. Seconded by Kathleen Sullivan. All were in favor, MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen A. Knapp
Recording Secretary