

TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD
WETHERSFIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 2006

I. INTRODUCTIONS

Present:

Carol Keenan, Chairperson
Eileen Knapp, Recording Secretary
Jim Grise
Christine Taylor
Judith Tacey
Kathleen Sullivan
Frank Meunier, Jr.

Liaison:

Natalie Morrison, Parks and Recreation Department

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

III. MINUTES of the June 21, 2006 meeting

**A MOTION was made by Frank Meunier Jr. to accept [the minutes of the June 21, 2006 meeting](#).
Seconded by Kathleen Sullivan. All were in favor, MOTION CARRIED.**

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Group Home Visits

Several group homes in Wethersfield are taking part in the Special Olympics.

B. Seniors

The first Seniors Meeting of the year is Thursday September 21, 2006 at 3:00 p.m.

C. Parks and Recreation

Summer camps have now ended. The Motorcycle Ride held in July was a big success. About 90 people participated. They are trying to getting a long time sponsor for the future events. Thank you to all the businesses that made donations. There was a big turnout for the summer picnic despite the rainy weather.

The Special Olympics bowling and basketball programs have begun. The Park and Recreation Department just finished a Macy's Shopping Day fundraiser. The Butter Braid and Cookie Dough fundraiser has begun. Contact Natalie in the Park and Recreation Department if you are interested. They are working on doing more publicity to generate interest in a Saturday basketball program for youths age 8-11.

**** The Thanksgiving Day Party will be held November 21st from 5:00-7:30 p.m. and the Holiday Party will be held December 19th from 6:00-9:00p.m. Both are at the Community Center.**

D. Transportation/Dial-A-Ride

Nancy Stillwell, Director of Social and Youth Services issued a memo in response to the issues concerning Dial-a-Ride. After meeting with Logisticare staff the following procedures were implemented to address these issues:

- They are going to track return times for a while to see if there is a pattern to the delays.
- If Ambassador is overwhelmed and cannot handle the demand, they will look into finding a second subcontractor to augment the current service. This will take time to accomplish, but they agreed that a wait of over one hour for a return trip is excessive.
- They are creating a new position in Quality Control to oversee the condition and safety of all vehicles, address driver training, compliance with all rules and regulations, and issues related to timely pick up and return.

Social & Youth Services is working on The Friendly Volunteer Driver Program and it should be up and running the beginning of 2007. This will provide transportation to locations outside of Wethersfield.

E. Update on Resource Booklet

The Resource Booklets are now complete. The WACPD received a letter from the Town Council thanking us for our efforts. Copies of the Resource Booklets are available in the Social Services Department and the Town Library. Frank Meunier, Jr. is looking into having them printed in Braille. The Resource Booklet is also available on line through the towns website, www.wethersfieldct.com

V. NEW BUSINESS

There is a new form of housing in New Haven providing support to those with mental illness called the Parent's Foundation for Transitional Living located at 100 Broadway, New Haven, CT.

The State of Connecticut is changing the name of the DMR (Department of Mental Retardation). DMR is required to solicit input regarding this name change from clients and families receiving services by the department, advocates of persons with mental retardation and other interested parties. DMR must submit a report of findings and recommendations no later than January 2007. Contact the Social Services Department for more information.

The Board of Education Services for the Blind is holding a new Independent Living Skills Training Group to assist 10-12 older adults with coping with severe vision loss. The Group is meeting at the Wethersfield Senior Center, 30 Greenfield Street starting on October 11th at 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. for 6-7 weeks. There is no charge to participate. Transportation and assisted listening devices are available. Lunch is available for \$2. Please contact Lydia DeAngeles at 800-842-4510 ext. 4051 or Marsha Brown at ext. 4046.

InterCommunity and the Towns of Wethersfield and Newington are co-sponsoring free anonymous mental health screening for depression, bi-polar disorder, anxiety disorders, PTSD and post-partum depression on October 5th at the Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield Street Wethersfield, Room F3 from 9a.m.- 12 noon and also on October 5th at the Senior Disabled Center, 120 Cedar Street, Newington from 2-6p.m. For more information please contact the InterCommunities Development office at 895-3011.

Ct Family Support Network Northwest Region Parents Support Group for all parents and caregivers raising children with disabilities at the Waterbury WARC, 1929 East Main Street Waterbury. Presenters are Barbara Stein with the CT Behavioral Health Partnership and Tim Cunningham of the Waterbury Systems of Care Collaborative. If anyone is interested please contact Alice Butwell.

Medicare is scheduled to announce the 2007 plan options for Connecticut by October 1, 2006. Soon after,

Medicare beneficiaries will need to respond accordingly and quickly to potential changes to the Medicare Part D market (possible plan withdrawals) in Connecticut and to changes within their own current plans (i.e. deductibles, premiums, co-pays, etc.). If researching Part D plan options and changing plans becomes necessary, then people will only have a few weeks to do their homework, get a re-screening and then quickly make a decision to enroll into a different plan by December 31.

VI. OTHER

Jim Grise gave a summary of a meeting he attended with the Town Manager and the Town Council regarding the Freedom of Information Act, how to conduct a meeting, Robert's Rules of Order and the Code of Ethics as related to town committees.

According to the Freedom of Information Act, the public is to have access to all meetings. They can also tape or videotape the meetings. There are four different types of meetings. Regular meetings should be scheduled in advance and made available to the public by the end of January. A meeting agenda should be published 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Within 7 days after the meeting the minutes should be filed. Special meetings are open to the public and the agenda needs to be posted with the town clerk 24 hours in advance of the meeting. Emergency meetings can be held in the case of a true emergency. All meetings can go into Executive Session and the public is not allowed to attend. Two thirds of the Committee needs to vote to go into Executive Session and no motions can be made during this time. All voting must be made in front of the public after the Committee has come out of the Executive Session.

They also discussed the Wethersfield Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics says that there is to be no granting of special favors beyond that which would be available to anyone in town. There is a town Ethics Board that is in charge of making judgments and handing out discipline.

There was a PowerPoint slide presentation on how to be a better chairperson and keep your board out of trouble. The chairman should be impartial, meetings should be punctual and they should follow the schedule. Any committee members not able to attend meetings should contact the chairperson in advance. They went over guidelines for abstaining from voting and recusing oneself from an item on the agenda.

A portion of the meeting was spent discussing Robert's Rules of Order. This directs committees on how to conduct a proper meeting.

** Currently there are 4 openings on the Wethersfield Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities.

The WACPD discussed a letter received from Town Manager Bonnie Therrien regarding detectable warning systems for sidewalk ramps. The Town Council Infrastructure Committee has recently recommended setting aside \$40,000 of Capital Improvement funding for initiating a replacement program of handicap ramps with ADA detectable surfaces. At a cost of about \$500 per ramp they are able to replace approximately 80 ramps, 50 of those are to be done along the Silas Deane Highway. Bonnie Therrien and Mike Turner asked the WACPD for their input to prioritize areas in which the town could continue this program.

The WACPD had several questions about the warning systems being proposed by the town. Because of the raised surface of the tiles, how would ice and snow build-up be removed? Will snowplows be able to go over this material without damaging it? How would this type of surface affect someone using a wheelchair, scooter, rolling walker, cane or baby stroller? A suggestion was made to get a larger size sample of the detectable warning systems to have people with different mobility issues and impairments supply some feedback as to how they like it.

The WACPD discussed other locations in town that might benefit this type of detectable warning surface including the Wethersfield High School, Wethersfield Middle School, the Pitkin Community Center, the entrance to the Town Hall and Library, the Shop-Rite Plaza, Porter & Chester School, within all the shopping centers in Wethersfield, the north and south ends of the Wethersfield Shopping Center to allow people to move from the shopping center sidewalks to the sidewalks along the Silas Deane Highway.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen A. Knapp
Recording Secretary