



TOWN OF HAMDEN

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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COMMISSION ON DISABILITY RIGHTS & OPPORTUNITIES

MINUTES: The Hamden Commission on Disability Rights & Opportunities held a Regular Meeting on Monday, November 9, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the Friends Room, Miller Library Complex. The following issues were discussed:

Commissioners in Attendance: Chris Balogh, Bryan Barry, Pat Delaney

Commissioners Absent: Joe Petrini, Kathleen Sullivan, Annmarie McConville, Sandra C. Adams, Susan Adams, Theresa Nevin

Others in Attendance: Acting Commission Clerk Peggy Craft
ADA Coordinator Bob Gualtieri
Roberta Johnson, Visitor

Due to the Lack of a Quorum a Regular Meeting could not be held.

An informational meeting was held to discuss current items.

Vice Chair Barry asked Ms. Johnson to discuss her interest in this Commission. Ms. Johnson explained that her nephews suffer from Fragile X which is a condition very much like Autism. She said that this has motivated her to become an advocate for special needs persons. She added that she has always been a caring person and would like to educate others as well as herself regarding people with disabilities. She said that she has much knowledge in this field and would like to become a member of this Commission. There was a discussion regarding Ms. Johnson's experiences in this field and what she could bring to this Commission.

Next, Dr. Barry discussed the possibility of this Commission joining the Hamden Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Barry has an application to join the Chamber which he will bring to the next meeting. Dr. Barry also discussed the Chamber Awards, which he said was a very good event. Ms. Delaney explained the origin of the award given by this Commission at the event. She said it is given to an area business that advocates for and supports the handicapped. Stop & Shop was chosen for their commitment to helping the handicapped both in the store setup, the treatment of handicapped customers and through employment.

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Commissioner Balogh reported that the Dance went well. He added that Chairman Petrini did a good job with the guess on the pizza purchase. The only set back was that there was no diet soda. Commissioner Delaney said that there were 55 pre-registrations and close to 30 walk-in.

Commissioner Balogh discussed creating an on line job board where people with disabilities could find jobs suited to them. Dr. Barry said that he believes these types of programs are available through the State and the State Unemployment Offices.

Ms. Johnson suggested visiting small businesses in Town to discuss hiring people with disabilities.

Commissioner Delaney said that if this Commission is involved with the Chamber we would have access to their businesses.

Mr. Gualtieri said that the sidewalk program is coming to an end. They have been working on Dixwell Avenue from the Middle School to Skiff Street. The sidewalk project at the library is out to bid and will be opened on November 16th. He also said that the Town is working with Public Works on leaf removal. Public Works will remove leaf from the curb for resident 65 and over and those with disabilities.

Ms. Johnson asked about the budget for this commission. It was explained to her that the only money available to this commission is what is raised through events. Dr. Barry estimated that there is about \$1200 presently in the commission account right now.

Mr. Gualtieri reported a woman with a disability in a chair came into Hamden Government Center accompanied by an able bodied friend looking for money to get back to Hartford. She had been staying with a friend whose apartment was broken into and had lost all her money. Mr. Gualtieri said there is no system in place to help someone in this situation. He added that this person was stranded, but was not forthcoming with personal information. There was a discussion regarding this type of situation..

Ms. Delaney did not have much to report on the film festival. She has tried to contact the woman at the organization that will pay half of the expense for the film festival. She left a voice message for Arts Coordinator Mimsi Coleman regarding this, indicating that perhaps we should go ahead without them. A group named Sprout presents this program. This program will be held on April 9th.

Adjournment

Vice Chairman Barry adjourned the meeting at 7:40 PM.

Submitted by: _____
Peggy Craft, Acting Commission Clerk