



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 an informal session on Wednesday, October 10, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Friends Room, Miller Library Complex. The following issues were discussed:

Commissioners in Attendance: Bryan Barry, Eileen Carpinella, Pat Delaney, Annmarie McConville

Commissioners Excused: Jon Dwyer, Chris Balogh, Rosalie Cavanaugh, Barbara Brand Kathleen Sullivan

Others in Attendance: Frank DeBernardo from Sarah, and Mark Dupont

Dr. Barry chaired the meeting. Frank DeBernardo noted that Sarah now has a facility in North Haven.

The Fall Fling was discussed. It is scheduled for Friday evening October 19th from 7-9 Bryan Barry will not be able to attend the Fall Fling, nor will Annmarie McConville. Eileen Carpinella and her husband will run the bar. Chris Balogh and his wife and boys will be there. Kathleen Sullivan and Pat Delaney will be there and will work the door.

Ms. McConville spoke with Linda from North Haven Parks and Recreation and invited her to attend our next month's meeting. Because Ms. McConville probably won't be able to attend the dance, she will email the list of what to bring to commissioners. Dr. Barry will purchase the soda and bring it to Mr. Balogh. Attendance might be low because North Haven is having a costume party the same night. We will stick to the costumes and the five gift certificates.

10/19 7-9:00 p.m. Volunteers should arrive at 6:00 p.m. for set up. Mr. DeBernardo and Mr. Dupont are both willing to help. Dave Velardi of North Haven Parks and Recreation is the disc jockey.

Nomination for Disability Friendly Employer:

Ms. Delaney announced that she received only one nomination for this year's Disability Friendly Employer and that was for the Hamden Journal. The nomination came from Tamara Dumas, Assistant Director of Opportunity House, Inc., a Day Program located in Hamden that provides residential and employment/vocational services to adults with autism. They have been delivering the Hamden Journal in the Mt. Carmel area of Hamden for the past year and one half. Ms. Dumas approached Chris LaTorraca of the Hamden Journal with the idea of their workers delivering the Journal door to door, and he was very receptive. Ms. Dumas said "on behalf of the residents of Opportunity House, we would like to nominate the Hamden Journal for their willingness to employ persons with disabilities, their sensitivity towards them and their recognition of their potential." Ms. Delaney also noted that Vickie Gemmell, one of the Journal's staff reporters is disabled.

All commissioners were in favor of choosing the Hamden Journal as the Disability Friendly Employer of the Year. Joanne Fabrics was also mentioned as a candidate, but Ms. Delaney did not receive a nomination for them.

Ms. Delaney will put the notice in the newspapers. Dr. Barry will order the plaque. Criteria for nomination are employment of people with disabilities, treatment of customers with disabilities, and access for people with disabilities. Mr. DeBernardo mentioned that he is on the board of Opportunity House.

Dr. Barry mentioned that Ryan Oil wanted to get involved financially. Perhaps they would be willing to fund the award. He will contact Ryan Oil. The Chamber Choice Awards Dinner will be held on Wednesday, November 7th at 6:00 p.m. at Laurel View Country Club.

Guest Mr. DeBernardo said that Sarah, Inc. has a recreation program coordinated by Cindy Monas, and a huge Special Olympics Program on the shoreline. Sarah provides adult day services, at their facilities in Westbrook, Madison, Branford and now in North Haven. They are in the process of trying to get Cindy an assistant. She has been doing this by herself with many volunteers. They have a lot of participants from Hamden, North Haven, Wallingford and Durham. They receive a phenomenal number of referrals. They have existed since 1954 on the shoreline. They are having an art show in Madison. Mr. DeBernardo explained that Sarah has a job developer who met with Mayor Jackson, who told him about this commission. Commissioners explained what this commission does. We have this dance twice a year, we have done bowling with pizza, we have had a Sprout Film Festival. We also are the liaison to the town on matters of ADA. Chris Marchand, the Town's ADA coordinator attends our meetings to report on pertinent matters such as making the Town's buildings ADA compliant, installing curb cuts, and any complaints regarding ADA matters.

Ms. Carpinella mentioned that VSA, Arts for Learning Connecticut, a branch of Young Audiences, has put in for a grant for Studio Art Works, a works program for persons with disabilities. They will be looking for space for this program. The goal is to bring this population into a studio to produce art to sell. They have looked at successful Studio Art Works programs in Boston and Rhode Island.

Cindy from Sarah will be in touch with Parks and Recreation Departments to set up some programs in this area. The person in charge of the transition program at SCSU told Mr. DeBernardo how much need there is for programs for the over 21 disabled community.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk