

TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD
MINUTES
Advisory Commission for Persons with Disabilities
November 14, 2022
7:00PM Elmwood Community Center Auditorium

- Call meeting to order
 - Meeting was called to order at 7:01PM
 - Members present: Joe Kolczynski, Mary Silverberg, Kimberly Jacobsen, Kim Grehn, Christy Miller, Tara McNeil, Amy Messinger, Erin Conneely, Jason Mirsky, Suzanne Oslander
 - Members absent: Ann Mione, Stevie Ann Lis
 - Guest Liz Buczynski – Assistant Director of Social Services for The Town of West Hartford

- Minutes from September 12, 2022 meeting were approved with the following correction;
 - Item 4. From Suzanne’s report of September 12, 2022 minutes should be corrected to read; The Town participated in a State Preparedness drill.

- Report (Suzanne Oslander – (Town ADA Coordinator, Department of Social Services)
 - a) Eisenhower Pool and Pool House ADA compliant Upgrade.
 - Required upgrades are out for bid. Project is delayed.
 - b) Kennedy Park Pool House ADA compliant Upgrades.
 - Project is delayed.
 - c) Wolcott Park Restroom ADA compliant Upgrades.
 - Project is delayed.

- Old Business
 1. Mary and Joe reported on the status of the ECC Advisory Commission.
 - Project is out for Architectural design bids.

 2. Ann Mione, while absent, reported earlier that there are no new developments on CERT. However, she sent two links on Winter Preparedness;

https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/winter-storm_information-sheet.pdf
<https://www.ready.gov/winter-weather>

- New Business

- a) Voting

1. Mary and Joe reported major improvements at the Conard High School polling site. Directional signs were appropriate, reception and IVS voting went smoothly.
2. Tara reported that voting at Hall High School went smoothly.
3. Kim Grehn reported that signage at Bugbee was not clear and there was an issue with entry doors

- b) 2023 Meeting Dates

1. The 2023 meeting dates of; January 9, March 13, May 8, June 26, September 11, and November 13, were approved.

- c) Erin commented that Cornerstone Pool doors are not all automatic.

Suzanne Oslander advised that ADA requirements may not specify automatic doors and she will investigate.

- d) Tara reported that the temporary location for the Children's Museum in Emanuel Synagogue on Mohegan Drive is not fully accessible.

Jason commented that the Children's Museum web site stated that it is not accessible.

- e) Guest Speaker

Dani Brown – Inclusion Support and Special Needs Coordinator for The Town of West Hartford. She is also a special needs paraprofessional at King Phillip Middle School.

Dani Brown spoke about her work for teens and adults.

She runs the Beachland Teens Summer Camp and Beachland Adventures, which is a Summer Camp for extended school year students with special needs. She also advises staff on additional supports for students at camp.

She runs the Simply Social activities at the Elmwood Community Center and Pop-Up activities in the community, such as bowling at Bowlarama.

Dani works with (SEPTA) The Special Education Parent Teacher Association to create and conduct social events for significantly impaired students, such as a once a month "Silent Dancing" where students wear headphones and dance to their own music.

Dani also addressed additional issues that the town should look into. She said that while the town is inclusive, it does not address the need for modifications necessary for effective participation, such as a larger ball, and wider paddles for table tennis. She said that lifeguards at the Beachland pool need training to improve verbal interaction with special needs students.

Dani's presentation triggered significant discussion and interest among commission members.

Suzanne said that she is working to partner with the New England ADA Center to provide training for people who are working with adults with disabilities.

Tara commented on the need to train mainstream camp counselors on how to deal with the reactions of special needs students, similar to the work of the Unified Theater Program. She also expressed a desire to help with this training.

Tara also expressed gratitude for Dani's work with her own child.

Erin commented on the wearing of different color Tee Shirts for Dani's staff. While making identification easy, they perhaps may stigmatize special needs students.

- Adjournment at 8:10 PM - next meeting date: January 9, 2023 Elmwood Community Center Auditorium 7:00 PM