



JOHN DeSTEFANO, JR.
Mayor

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
 CITY OF NEW HAVEN
 165 CHURCH STREET
 NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06510
 (203) 946-7833 - VOICE (203) 946-8582 - TTY/TDD
 (203) 946-8587 - FAX



DAVID HICKS
Chairperson

Commission on Disabilities Minutes
 City Hall 4th Floor Conference Room
January 14, 2013

- Present: Cecile Brodsky, Dana Canevari, David Hicks, Christopher Hicks, Matthew Ranelli (by telephone), Jack Tsai
- Excused Absence: Robin Tousey-Ayers, Maria Rivera
- Staff: Michelle Duprey, Paula Pernal
- Guest: Jenifer Blemings

Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Minutes

David asked the commission members if they had a chance to review the December minutes. Dana had one change to the December minutes. Dana stated that Marc's name is spelled with a "c" instead of a "k". David made a motion to accept the December minutes as amended. Cecile seconded the motion. December minutes are approved unanimously.

Chairman's Report

David reports that the four (4) letters connected to the Jobs Pipeline that he discussed in the previous meeting went out fairly recently with the assistance of Michelle and Paula. Michelle asked David about Ms. Zucker, one of the cc'd individuals on the letters. David stated that she was mentioned in one of the New Haven Independent articles and she works in Bruce Alexander's office at Yale University. Michelle stated that she was not aware of this and will mail Ms. Zucker's letter this week.

David reviewed various events on line that the commissioners might take part in concerning disabilities and employment. David mentioned a webinar at the end of the month that he has registered for.

David mentioned that Michelle received a letter from Mayor John DeStefano appointing former commissioner Elaine Quinn to the board of the Local Mental Health Catchment Area Council #7. Michelle asks Jenifer and Jack about the phrase Catchment Area. Jenifer states that this phrase is not used very much any more, as services are now provided with greater flexibility than earlier, when people were required to receive services in the Catchment area in which they lived. Michelle suggests inviting Elaine to a future commission meeting to discuss the work the Council does and her role on this Board. Matthew states that the phrase Catchment Area Council was established in the 1970's by citizen bodies when the Mental Health system was decentralized and defined by geographical region. Jenifer states that the term Catchment Area is an old phrase used for funding.

Department Report

Michelle states that she has been sending items to the commissioners as she receives them that are pertinent and of interest. Michelle solicits the opinions of the commissioners.

David asks Michelle about the email she forwarded from Beth Leslie of the Office of Protection and Advocacy. (Ms. Leslie's emails often include information about proposed legislation that may have an impact of people with disabilities.) David asks Michelle if she has received any information relating to the legislative agenda. Michelle states that she just received an item on Friday, but has not reviewed it yet. Michelle states that she will forward this recently received item to the commissioners. She mentioned that the cuts are significant at DSS. Michelle suggested that the Commission invite a speaker from DSS to a future meeting to discuss how they are planning to handle the cuts. Michelle mentions inviting other officials from surrounding cities and towns along with DSS to discuss support services, rebates, funding, etc.

Michelle states that her department received complaints about the Housing Authority of New Haven not being very responsive or calling back people making inquiries or reporting problems. Michelle states that she was on the monitoring committee for the Housing Authority. Michelle notes that this committee used to meet every quarter, but she has not received notice of any meetings in a year or more. Michelle suggests asking the Housing Authority to a future meeting to discuss the status of its progress since the last time the Commission met with members of HANH. Michelle mentions that big problem with the Housing Authority concerns the Section 8 vouchers. Michelle states that the Housing Authority hired an outside realty company as part of the federal funding regulations. Cecile mentions that she has rental property and that she is aware of the problems surrounding Section 8. Cecile states that landlords shy away from Section 8 apartments. Michelle states that a landlord can receive 150% of fair market rent for an accessible Section 8 apartment. Cecile states that the problem with the Section 8 voucher program is largely a monitoring issue. Michelle states that the program is designed to increase the accessible housing opportunities. Michelle states that there were forums for landlords and support services for tenants. Michelle states that there was a good turn-out. Michelle suggests inviting two (2) members of HANH to a future meeting; one to discuss the overall accessibility and other to discuss the support services. David & Dana mentioned that they used to receive notices of round-table meetings, but they have stopped. Michelle asks Jack & Chris if the VA has any Section 8 Program. Jack states that the program is known as HUD VASH Program where the VA provides the support services and HUD provides vouchers. Michelle mentions that she will follow-up with the VA. A discussion takes place concerning incentives for landlords to renovate their rental properties. Michelle mentions the pilot program that she attempted to get passed in the legislature.

Cecile mentions that 150 residential units are to be built in the old Repeating Arms factory on Winchester Avenue. Cecile states that she was told that some of the units must be affordable housing. Cecile asks Michelle if the units must be accessible. Michelle states that they are not governed by the Fair Housing Act because it will not be a first time occupancy, but the State Building Code will require some of the units be accessible. Michelle will look into this matter.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Other Business

None

Public Comment/Announcements

None

David made a motion to adjourn meeting.

Dana seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 6:12 p.m.