

COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY

Minutes 3/10/2016

Present: Jean Goldsberry, David Holdorf, Jennifer Brooke, Marybeth Barker, Meryl Schwartz, Lloyd Price

Meeting called to order at 5:10PM. Minutes of 2/11/2016 approved.

Goals for FY 2016: Discussion postponed until the next meeting.

Access at Beede Center pools: Alice Van Deusen met with Director Jon Straggas on 2/22/16 to follow up on a letter from a citizen received by the Disability Committee (DC) which noted that there is no longer a provision for a disabled person to be lifted into the deep water pool. Jon stated that ADA rules preclude lifting a disabled person into water over their head, however, Jennifer pointed out that there are no such ADA rules. It was suggested that the DC write Jon for written clarification on the policy, as there may be other operational issues involved, and depending on the answer received, the DC will follow up with a formal request to provide lift access to the deep water pool.

Needs of People with Cognitive Impairments: There was a followup discussion to Lloyd's presentation at last month's DC meeting. Meryl queried the Council on Aging (COA) and reported that the COA has no way of knowing the numbers of seniors with mental health and cognitive impairment, nor the types of disorders, but is indeed interested to know that the DC is interested in the issue. Other sources for getting a feel for the prevalence of the disorders is to contact Newbury Court and Concord Park, as well as the Police and Fire Departments and organizations like Minuteman Senior Services. It was noted that a major problem for this segment of the Concord population is means of transportation. The COA van was purchased by the Friends of the COA, and by agreement is only available to persons over 60. However, the van is in need of replacement, and the DC could advocate for a new Town-owned van which has no such restriction, so that it could then be used by citizens of all ages with cognitive impairments. Because First Responders should be trained to recognize and deal with such impairments, it was suggested that the Police Chief and Fire Chief be invited to the next DC meeting, to discuss that issue as well as the issue next discussed, public parking.

Committee membership: The initial members of the DC were appointed for staggered first terms (1, 2, and 3 years) in order to insure continuity. Alice has completed her term, and will not follow with a second term because of her many other commitments in the Town. The Committee was disappointed, but accepted her decision and thanked her in absentia for her very active involvement and invaluable contributions in our first year of operation.

Town Center Parking: Jean drove around the Center and noted the various handicapped spaces available, for example, 3 spaces in the lot bordered by the liquor store and post office, 2 spaces in front of the Town House, 2 spaces in the lot behind Middlesex Bank, 3 spaces at the Town Keyes Road facilities, 5 spaces in Millbrook Tarry, 2 spaces at Emerson Umbrella/Library, 2 spaces behind Colonial Inn (which are not truly accessible), etc. Jennifer pointed out that the requirement for spaces for commercial and public use varies by total number, but for instance, 4 are required for a lot of 100. This issue is on-going, and will be discussed again with the Police Chief, et al.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15.

Recorded by David Holdorf, Clerk