



Concord Commission on Disability Meeting

Minutes

February 25th, 2021

Present: Jean Goldsberry, Chair, Mary Beth Barker, Lloyd Price, Karen Young, Jane Hotchkiss, Bonnie Albright, Meryl Schwartz, Jennifer Brooke, Janet Beyer.

Old Business

Funding Requests: Jean proposed a draft for processing funding requests. Meryl suggested extending the time from quarterly to twice a year or annually. Janet would prefer to process requests as they come in. Mary Beth pointed out that it would be useful to have time to compare requests.

Jane mentioned that Hugh Cargill trust has a process in which they are connected to social service organizations to funnel referrals and requests are approved using a protocol. Llyod suggested creating a subcommittee to determine request approvals. However, Jane pointed out that subcommittees are subject to open session law, and that executive sessions allow for confidentiality.

The commission discussed the importance of applicants exploring other avenues of funding and suggested that the commission limit grant funding to \$1000 per applicant. Applicants must indicate where they will get the remainder of their funding. Once the commission agrees on a protocol, and application process it will be submitted to the town's Chief Financial Officer for approval.

Meryl would like additional consideration to be given to identifying where the needs are in the community. Bonnie suggested using the origination documents to create the criteria for needs. Jean will send out the charter information and draft to commission to continue discussion at the next meeting.

Vaccine Concerns

Meryl has sent a letter to the Baker administration expressing her concern regarding the large number of people with disabilities unable to get vaccinated due to the challenges with the vaccine roll out. Meryl proposed that the commission also write a letter to the administration. Mary Beth pointed out that there is no representation on the Advisor board for the roll out and seconded the suggestion of writing a letter. Janet would like to contact State Representative Tami Gouveia, for suggestions as she serves on the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities. She has been helpful in the past. Meryl stated that she has reached out to U.S. Representative Lori Trahan's office looking for advice and they have not yet responded.

Jennifer proposed using the commission's website as a point of resources information. Social action is an important element of the commission's work. Jennifer shared macovidvaxhelp.com as a resource for assistance making vaccination appointments. The commission could potentially use their landing page on the town's website to gather resources.

Janet & Meryl are working on an article for the newspaper with resources and an article that gives more general information about the Commission on Disability.

Jean will contact Katie Hodges regarding updating resources on the webpage.

Discussion on Publicity & Awards for Community Members was postponed to next meeting.

New Business

Needs of People with Cognitive Disabilities

Lloyd expressed his concerns regarding the accessibility of information available to help with cognitive disabilities. He proposed the question, "What are the possible intervention to help people out, if reading comprehension is impaired?" Lloyd suggested speaking to the Council on Aging (COA) to see what services they are providing. Meryl stated that is set up as a social service organization, and that they respond to individual needs. Lloyd will reach out to COA Director Ginger Quarles to discuss possible programs.

Jane reminded the commission of the importance of reaching out to the town moderator prior to town meeting.

Correspondence and Miscellaneous

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is looking for members of the Commission on Disability to become members. However, as members are unable to serve on two committees at the same time, Jean is asking for suggestions from the group of people that have an knowledge or understanding of the needs of people with disabilities that might be interested in participating. Jennifer asked for the contact details to forward to a potential candidate.

Meryl suggested looking at any new green cards, Jean agreed to follow up on that.

Middle School Presentation The middle school committee will present to the Commission on Disabilities to gain their perspective on the project. Jennifer requested that the commission be sent information on the projects design prior to the presentation.

The next meeting will be Thursday, March 4th at 8:00 AM.

Meeting adjourned at 6:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Lauren Barretta