

COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

January 13, 2004

ATTENDEES: John Gentile, Kris Ginty, Tony Vitti, Robie Barile, Carlene Barker, Kenny Lee

ABSENTEES: Janet Ross, Roberto Perez, Doris Pietras, Chad Sinanian

Meeting Commenced 6:45pm

- John distributed the NEW AGENDA for this meeting.
- December meeting minutes reviewed and accepted.
- John distributed "Information and Resources" list aimed at helping and/or educating people with Disability issues. Listed were news/radio shows, web sites, publications, upcoming conferences, events, meetings and courses, grants, scholarships, internships, and other funding opportunities.
- John also distributed information on the "Art for FAP's (Friends of Autistic People) Sake", January 17, from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Greenwich Audubon Center, 613 Riversville Road, Greenwich, CT. This event is a wine reception with silent auction which includes art by autistic individuals ranging in age from 10 to 43. It will help support local artists and raise seed money to create a small farm community (FAP's New Farm Initiative for Autistic Individuals) in CT that will provide a wholesome setting where autistic individuals can participate in farm activities, such as gardening, animal care and crafts. They can live and work and develop a sense of purpose, pride and self-esteem while still in close interaction with the community at large. Anyone interested in attending has to contact Maria Fertucci @203-622-4414.
- Web Page Update-The monthly Commission meeting is now posted on the City of Danbury's Calendar of Events.
- Everyone agreed that the Commission needs to be more visible. Once we have the Commission Membership term renewals approved we can then update our brochure

and disperse via local fairs and to local organizations/services. We can also post the brochure on our web site.

- Robie suggested maybe the Commission members could march in the Memorial Day parade. That would improve our visibility within the community. Robie will look into how to go about doing it.

- John will send the Mayor a request for the update of membership. Member terms have expired; one in 2002, several expired in March 2003 and more will expire March 2004. Debra LaJoie and Rich Lewis must also be taken off the members list. The Commission is still short 2 alternates. Anyone know of anyone who might be interested in becoming a member?

- Accessible Voting Booths Update-John needs to contact the Office of Protection and Advocacy to learn how to go about addressing the issue of non-accessible voting booths for the disabled in Danbury. More to follow.

- Kris brought up the issue of a new condo owner at Deer Hill Arms II who wants to reserve a reserved handicap parking spot for her own auto. There are 2 other reserved handicap parking spots still available for visitors. It was discussed and it was suggested that the Tenant Association at Deer Hill Arms II vote on this issue since this is private property and incorporate in their bylaws.

- Kenny Lee spoke about the 1 phone call that the Commission received from Emma Dixon of Ridgefield. She chairs the Ridgefield Commission on Persons with Disabilities and is interested in attending one of our meetings. John will follow up with her and invite her.

- Robie informed the Commission that the Commission on Aging has funds available. The individual (refer to the October and November minutes) who complained about the lack of transportation available to him/her due to the weight of his/her wheelchair will be receiving some of those funds in the form of a new wheelchair which is more accessible to local transportation.

Next meeting is February 10.

Meeting adjourned 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Kris