

# **MINUTES**

## **Mansfield Advisory Committee on the Needs of Persons with Disabilities**

Regular Meeting - Tuesday March 22, 2011

2:30 PM - Conference Room B - Audrey P. Beck Building

### I. Recording Attendance

Present: K. Grunwald (staff), J. Blanshard, F. Goetz,  
KA Easley (staff), Joe McLaughlin (guest),

Regrets: G. Bent, C. Colon-Semenza, W. Gibbs, J.  
Sidney

### II. Approval of Minutes: The minutes for February 22, 2011 were not approved due to the lack of quorum.

### III. New Business (other added by majority vote)

- a. Birth-to-Three Services: Guest- Joe McLaughlin introduced himself to the group. He and his wife Donna operate McLaughlin and Associates, housed in the basement of the First Church of Christ. They are funded by the State of CT to provide services to families who have a child with a developmental delay or disability. They currently serve 175 families in Mansfield and

surrounding towns, and have approximately 20 staff working with them. Joe distributed brochures for the program. This is a nationwide program; Part C of the Special Education law to provide services to families with children needing intervention services. Children get referred through Infoline, and families have choice regarding where they choose to receive services, and they can change providers if they are not pleased with the services they are receiving. Every town in CT has at least two programs. Since 1996 these services have served 92,600 families in CT, and in that time the state has had 8 due process hearings to resolve complaints. There is now a sliding scale family fee that was instituted last year; fixed at the family's adjusted gross income and family size. There is no fee for families earning less than \$45,000 a year. They have a data system to track children and their developmental progress, and have demonstrated that 53% of children who use Birth-3 services don't need special education services when they reach kindergarten. This represents a significant cost savings, and demonstrates the value of early intervention. One of the benefits is that the program is family-centered and services are provided in the child's home. This is a public-private partnership, and some programs are state-operated. The reimbursement rate is set by the state. Most children are referred by families or pediatricians. Infoline does an initial telephone screening and then refers the family to a provider. Eligibility is determined by a diagnosed medical condition that is predictive of a

developmental delay, or if the child shows a significant developmental delay in any one of five developmental areas on a standardized measure, or if there is a mild delay in two of the five areas.

- b. Wheelchair Accessible Van Application: K. Grunwald reported that the Town is applying for a grant to purchase a wheelchair accessible van for seniors and residents with disabilities.
- c. "Other": none.

#### IV. Old Business

- a. Community Presentation: Follow-Up- J. Blanshard felt that it went well, and was disappointed that more people did not attend. If it is done in the future it should be better publicized, and the publicity should be done with more planning.
- b. Storrs Downtown Development: K. Grunwald provided information about the conditional zoning approval that was granted on the zoning application for Storrs Downtown: "Revisions to the design of the parking, loading driveway and waste disposal site improvements situated north of building DL-1/2 and east of building TS-1. The Planning and Zoning Commission has expressed concerns regarding vehicular and pedestrian safety in this area, the Mansfield Solid Waste Advisory Committee has raised concerns regarding access to the dumpster near building DL-1 **and the Advisory Committee on the Needs of Persons with Disabilities has suggested providing accessible parking spaces closer to**

**building entrances.** Additionally, consideration should be given to specifically identifying all reserved spaces. A final design for this area shall be approved by the Director of Planning with assistance from other Mansfield Staff members.” J. Tanner asked that the committee be allowed to view the final design.

c. Accessibility issues previously identified:

- KA Easley had sent information to Chair W. Gibbs about the use of warning tickets for cars illegally parked in accessible spaces.
- J. Tanner asked if we had found out where Big Y had obtained \$150 fine stickers. Signs are still not up at the Community Center parking lot. K. Grunwald will pursue this.
- KA Easley asked members to suggest an engaging name for the Committee’s website. J. Tanner suggested putting a “hit counter” on the web page. K. Grunwald will pursue this with the IT department.

V. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:25 PM.

The next meeting is April 26, 2011. There may be a new member, and W. Gibbs has asked the committee to consider election of officers.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Grunwald