

COMMITTEE CONCERNING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES MEETING MINUTES

City of Middletown

61 Durant Terrace

March 7, 2023

6:00 PM

1. Members Present: Marty Knight/Chairperson, Phil Cacciola, Elderrean Paules, Keith Vinci, Molly Carta, August DeFrance (Via Webex), Laurie McFadden and Richard Pelletier

Absent: Joe Bibisi

Staff Present: Catherine Lechowicz – Director of Recreation and Community Services

General Public: none

2. Meeting Called to Order: Called to order at 6:01pm.

3. Public Hearing: none

4. Approval of Minutes: *A motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 7, 2023, was made by Phil Cacciola and seconded by Keith Vinci. The motion carries.*

Departmental Reports:

- Elderrean Paules stated that there is 1 apartment vacant at Monarca Place. There is an elderly lady that is moving in probably this weekend. The water damage is being fixed but is creating an issue for Ellie to find the vestibule. They are putting up sheetrock and there is scaffolding up as well as areas being taped off so that the work can be completed. The work is supposed to be completed by Friday. It has been challenging for Ellie to maneuver all of this. A discussion ensued.
- August DeFrance stated that the building committee has voted on the final design of the new boat house which is fully handicapped accessible. The next meeting is April 19th and will have the 30%-40% cost to the city. The city has the design and now the costs have to be determined. A discussion ensued.
- Laurie McFadden introduced herself to the committee. She was just sworn in by the Mayor last week. She is a person with a disability with being mobility impaired as well as having an immune system disorder. She was also a caregiver to her sister who was developmentally disabled and who passed away last year. She has been with the disability rights community most of her life. The committee each introduced themselves to Laurie. A discussion ensued.
- Phil Cacciola stated that there was no issue with voting. Ocean State Job Lot has donated a lot of things for the veterans/seniors. They gave a great deal of yard in addition to many other things. A discussion ensued.
- Keith Vinci stated that they are finding a great deal of difficulty in finding interpreters for deaf people in hospitals again. There was a lawsuit 20 years ago against the CT Hospital Association and several hospitals because deaf persons could not get interpreting services while in the hospital. There was a consent decree that was passed and Keith was on the commission for the deaf and there were interpreters that were available for deaf persons in hospitals for emergency services. Unfortunately, the consent decree died and it was not reinstated. The hospitals are now becoming complacent and there may be another lawsuit in the future. Also, deaf seniors invested a lot of money in a facility in Stafford Springs. Keith suggests that they come to Middletown again. A discussion ensued.
- Molly Carta stated that she did not have anything to report regarding the Veterans pool committee yet since she is new to the committee. The accessibility to the front doors at the Beman School buttons have been installed. Unfortunately, the buttons have been shut off after school hours. The button has to be overridden in order for them to be working after school hours. The doors are on an automatic timer. Cathy said that she will reach out to the correct person to make sure that the buttons are working so that the school will be accessible for after school events. A discussion ensued.

- Cathy Lechowicz stated that there have been no ADA issues or complaints. Cathy introduced herself and her title with the City. She also explained that Laura Runte is the Municipal Agent with the City and that Laura is the person who sends out the minutes and agendas for the CCPD meetings. Also, the Recreation Center will be having their open house this Friday from 5pm-7:30pm. In addition, the city is establishing the Fair Housing Commission. They will be meeting to discuss different issues pertaining to housing. A discussion ensued.
- Marty Knight stated that it is the time of year again when term limits are expiring and need to be addressed. Marty would like to stay on the committee in the capacity as chairperson. If the committee does not put forth another person to take the position of chairperson, then Marty can stay in his position as chairperson in perpetuity. A discussion ensued about term limits. Marty has been on this committee for 31 years.

Old Business:

New Business:

Miscellaneous:

Adjournment: *A motion of adjournment was made by Elderrean Paules and was seconded by Keith Vinci. The motion carries.* The meeting adjourned at 6:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Bruni Runte