



City of Danbury Commission for Persons with disAbilities
155 Deer Hill Avenue, Danbury, CT 06810

Monthly Meeting Minutes – January 14, 2014 - 6:30pm

in attendance: John Gentile (Chairman), Rose Marie Bouciler, Annie Dance, Paul Kachevsky, Joanne LaPorta, William Lewis, John Neumuller, Bobby Perez, Chad Sinanian

absent: Frances Ryan; *guest:* John Michael Gentile

- Welcome & Introduction: John Gentile
- Review & Accept Minutes: November 12, 2013 (quorum) & December 10, 2013
- Phone Log: John Gentile
- E-newsletter - Annie Dance
 - have not yet received reimbursement - finance dept. is processing it (per Wayne Shepperd)
 - (see addendum for organizations who opened our latest email sent on 12/31/13)
 - February e-newsletter date and topic TBD
- Social media report as of 1/14/14
 - Facebook: currently 20 likes (up from 19 last month)
 - Twitter: currently 110 followers (up from 55 last month)
- 2013 -2014 Recognition Award
 - Housatonic Area Rapid Transportation (HART) Reached out to HART
 - John Gentile has spoken with Rick, will contact Eric (CEO) at HART regarding next steps
- On Demand Transportation: (kept as an open item)
 - Letter to the Mayor
 - Frank Reed will look into possible grant state funding with HART
 - Possibly presented at CT Council on Developmental Disabilities council meeting on 1/14/14
 - see appendix:
 - Frank's letter to the Mayor
 - CT Council on Developmental Disabilities position paper
 - Consumer Involvement Fund (CIF) information and application
- Danbury Buddy Ball Program (training program for children): Update - Frank Reed
 - Frank to follow-up with contact there
 - will keep as an open item on agenda for future meetings
- March of Dimes walk on May 4 - Frank Reed will be the Ambassador for the event
 - Frank to send Annie details - we will send a press advisory a week before the event
 - will keep as open item on the agenda and promote the event closer to the date
- Open Discussion

- Frank Reed - Thursday 1/30 3pm - Frank Reed to speak at Hyde Park for FDR's birthday - Wallace Center
 - Chad Sinanian - WeCAHR - to meet at Ability Beyond Disability once a month
 - People First of Danbury - Shirley Ricart - CACD
 - Annie to send e-newsletter announcement that People First of Danbury needs advisor
- Next Meeting: February 11, 2014

Appendix

The last e-newsletter, [Happy New Year - Join us as we reflect on 2013 and look forward to 2014](#), was sent on 12/31/13 was opened by over 300 people, including people at over 80 different organizations:

ADA Coalition of CT
 Arizona State University School of Social Work
 Ashfield Healthcare
 Bridgeport Mayor
 Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust
 CBS
 Center for Disease Control Asthma Program
 Center for Health Law and Economics, UMass Medical School
 City of Danbury
 City of Danbury - Equal Housing Opportunity Program
 City of Danbury Commission for Persons with disAbilities
 City of Danbury Fire Department
 City of Danbury Police Department
 City of Danbury, Mayor's Office
 City of New Haven
 Commonwealth Medicine/
 UMass Med School
 Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA)
 Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center
 CONNECTICUT STATE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC)
 CT Dept. of Labor
 CT Mirror
 CT State Dept Of Emergency Services and Public Protection
 CT State Office of Consumer Counsel
 CTemploymentlawblog.com
 Cuyler News Service
 Danbury City Council
 Danbury City Council - 1st Ward City Council
 Danbury City Council - 2nd Ward City Council
 Danbury City Council - Council at Large
 Danbury Hospital
 Danbury Police Department
 Danbury Professional Firefighters Union Local 801
 Dept Of Social Services
 DHHS, 11 SHS
 DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER OF FAIRFIELD COUNTY
 Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
 FAP-Friends of Autistic People

Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
Harvard School of Public Health
Health Resources in Action
Human Rights And Opportunities, Commission On
INDEPENDENCE NORTHWEST - CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING OF NW
CONNECTICUT
Indoor Environments Division
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
LA Times
LADIES' HOME JOURNAL
Lifespan/Women's Medicine Collaborative
MA Department of Public Health
Mental Health & Addiction Services, Dept Of
National Diabetes Education Program
NBC Connecticut
Network Health
New Milford Hospital
News 12 Westchester
NH Asthma Control Program
Norwalk Hospital
Orange County Post
Outdoor Writers Assocation of America
Public Health, Dept Of
Register Star
Rhode Island Hospital
St Joseph hospital
State of Connecticut Legislative Management
State of Connecticut Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities
State of CT Insurance Dept.
The Academy of International Studies, Danbury Public Schools
The Cornwall Local
The Journal News
The New York Times
The News-Times
The News-Times - Hearst Media
The Poughkeepsie Journal
The Putnam County Courier
Time
UMass Memorial
Waterbury Hospital
WBNR AM
WCBS AM (880)
WDNB FM
Westchester News
William W. Backus Hospital
Woman's Day

Minutes respectfully submitted by Annie Dance

**PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE
TO BE PRONSORED BY THE CITY OF DANBURY
COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

To: Mayor Mark Boughton, City of Danbury, P. J. Prunty, Mayoral Assistant

As advocates for persons with disabilities we experience first hand the challenges regarding the availability of transportation for disabled persons in the Danbury area.

We understand that as the population ages, beyond the ability of motor vehicle licensure, the need for transportation becomes more acute, especially for those with limited financial resources.

It seems that there are limited resources but there are significant restrictions imposed such as provisions to attend doctor appointments and the requirement that the users of the fixed bus line routes must live beyond a specified distance from the bus stop which, as a consequence of the terrain, often in not accessible for a person needing crutches, cane or wheelchair. There are no affordable transportation services available for a person who wants to just go shopping, visit a park or relative in this targeted population.

The Commission is aware that there are about 1,000 amputees in the area many of whom lack the availability of transportation, additionally there are thousands of folks home bound as a consequence of aging and disability.

The Commission desires to approach the State of Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities with the objective of obtaining a grant to finance a feasibility study and develop a system of helping to provide assistance necessary to address this matter. The Council is funded by Congress in accordance with the provisions defined in the Developmental Disability Civil Rights Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 and is charged to promote inclusion for persons with disabilities in societal activities.

As former chair of the council I have had preliminary discussions with Ms. Molly Cole, Executive Director of the DD Council, who has attended a commission meeting and expressed interest in having the Commission provide a transportation presentation initiative at a D D Council meeting in January 2014.

This is to advise the Mayor's office of the desire of the commission to approach the Council and request the City to provide technical support in obtaining any grant which may be available.

**Frank Reed, Associate Commissioner
City of Danbury Commission for Persons with DisAbilities
cc: John Gentile & Molly Cole**

Consumer Involvement Fund (CIF) CT Council on Developmental Disabilities

What is the Consumer Involvement Fund (CIF)?

The CIF is a program that provides partial funding for individuals with developmental disabilities or their family members in Connecticut to participate in professional or informational conferences, legislative advocacy skills training events, public forums, focus groups, hearings and other similar activities. The intent of the CIF is to promote consumer involvement in activities that enhance independence, productivity and community inclusion of people with developmental disabilities. Funds are distributed based on goals and priorities set by the Council.

Many policy, procedure, and program decisions affecting the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities are made without the involvement of the people who are most affected by those decisions. Often, individuals with disabilities and their families cannot afford the costs associated with involvement in some activities or do not have the experiences and information which would make their participation as meaningful as it could be. The Consumer Involvement Fund is designed to provide individuals with disabilities and their family members the opportunities, experiences, resources and information they need to participate meaningfully in decisions which affect their lives.

Requests are considered on a first-come, first-serve basis. However, the Council will give preference to:

- First time users of the fund
- First time attendees at a particular activity or event

How much funding is available, and how often can I apply?

- Applicants may not apply for funding more than one time in two years.
- In order to receive funding from the Council the applicant must provide 25% match for any Council funds. For example, if the Council awards \$100, the individual must match an additional \$25. If the Council provides \$500 the individual must provide \$100 in match. Persons wishing to receive Consumer Involvement Funds can secure the required matching funding from other sources, such as other state agencies, private foundations, consumer or advocacy organizations, an employer or use of his/her own money.
- Individuals may receive up to \$100 to attend an event in-state and up to \$600 to attend an event out of state.

Who is eligible to apply?

- An individual with a developmental disability

- A parent or family member of an individual with a developmental disability...

What cost(s) can be reimbursed by the Consumer Involvement Fund?

- Registration Fees
- Child Care or Respite Care
- Personal Assistance
- Hotel/Lodging
- Meals
- Transportation
- Other (at the discretion of the Council)

How do I apply for funding?

- Submit an application at least 30 days prior to the event
- The Council will review applications for funds monthly
- E-mail or mail the application form
- If you need assistance in completing an application, contact the Council Office at 860-418-6160 or Toll Free at 800-653-1134; TTY: 860-418-6172.
- Once the application has been reviewed by the Council the applicant will be sent a letter indicating the amount of the award or indicating that the application was denied, with the reason for denial. Included in the award letter will be details to report approved expenses and an acceptance form to be returned to the Council.

What is the reimbursement process?

- After returning from an event, all individuals receiving Consumer Involvement Funds will be asked to complete a reimbursement form and a report form that must be returned before reimbursements will be processed. CIF applicants will be asked to share information received from the event with his or her local community, local groups or local legislators. Also, applicants will have the opportunity to share experiences at Council meetings and share photographs of their attendance as well.
- Consumer Involvement Funds are reimbursed for actual expenses.
- A receipt for each expense to be reimbursed must be submitted to Council before a reimbursement request can be processed.

For additional questions or information, please contact:

Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities

460 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

Molly.cole@ct.gov

860-418-6160

800-653-1134 Toll Free

860-418-6172 TTY



CT Council on Developmental Disabilities, 460 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106

Consumer Involvement Fund Application

1.

Applicant			
Address		City	Zip
Phone		Email address:	
How did you hear about the Council?			

2.

Title of Event			
Sponsoring Organization			
Location of Event		Dates of Event	

3. Please Check One of the Following:

Individual with Developmental Disabilities Parent/Grandparent/Guardian of Child with Disabilities

4.

Transportation Cost	\$		
Estimated Meals/Hotel Cost Totals	\$		
Circle All Applicable: Registration Parking Taxi Respite List Other:	\$		
Total Amount Requested	\$		
List Other Sources of Funding			
List Other Funding (Amounts)	\$	\$	\$

5. How will this conference address issues of importance to CT Citizens with developmental disabilities?

6. The Council expects you will use the knowledge gained to educate others in your community. How do you intend to do this? (Example: presentation to school board, PTA or parent group) Use additional pages if needed

A COPY OF THE CONFERENCE OR MEETING AGENDA IS REQUIRED

All approved requests are paid by reimbursement & have a maximum reimbursement amount.

ALL CONFERENCE REQUESTS MUST BE SUBMITTED AT LEAST 30 DAYS PRIOR TO CONFERENCE

I understand the requirements of receiving these funds from the DD Council and agree to submit all required reports and receipts as a condition of receiving reimbursement for expenses.

NAME

DATE

6. The Council expects you will use the knowledge gained to educate others in your community. How do you intend to do this? (Example: presentation to school board, PTA or parent group) Use additional pages if needed

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I understand the requirements of receiving these funds from the DD Council and agree to submit all required reports and receipts as a condition of receiving reimbursement for expenses.

NAME

DATE



CT Council on Developmental Disabilities, 460 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106

Consumer Involvement Fund Approved Expenses

1.

Applicant Name			
Address		City	Zip
Phone No.		Email address:	

2.

Title of Event			
Sponsoring Organization			
Location of Event		Dates of Event	

3.

Transportation Cost		\$	
Parking or		\$	
Mileage			
Child Care			
PCA			
Hotel			
Meals			
Registration		\$	
Other			
Other			
TOTAL AMOUNT APPROVED		\$	
Other Sources of Funding			
Other Funding (Amounts) Received	\$	\$	\$

4. **Provide receipts for all expenses to be reimbursed.**

Upon Return:

1. Complete the reimbursement form with receipts, and a meeting summary form return both forms to:
CT Council on Developmental Disabilities, 460 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
2. A copy of the meeting agenda or conference program is required. Only expenses approved by the Council will be reimbursed.

All approved requests are paid by reimbursement & have a maximum reimbursement amount



CT Council on Developmental Disabilities Position Paper on Transportation

Transportation and mobility play an important part in providing equal opportunity in the disability community. Affordable and reliable transportation makes it possible for people with disabilities to access important opportunities in education, employment, health care, housing, and recreation/community life. People with disabilities are often unable to afford cars or do not drive and they lack other transportation choices that are affordable and accessible. Of the nearly 2 million people with disabilities who never leave their homes, 560,000 don't leave home because of transportation difficulties ("Opportunities for Creating Livable Communities," Mia R. Oberlink, April 2008 at http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/2008_02_communities.pdf). When people with disabilities are left at home, they are left out of jobs, kept away from shopping, and left out of their communities. It prevents them from making valuable contributions to our society as individuals, employees, consumers and taxpayers. The CT Council on Developmental Disabilities believes that, to achieve full integration of people with disabilities, livable communities require transportation that is:

- 1. Appropriate.** Transportation should include a variety of transportation options that address the unique needs of people with disabilities in urban, suburban and rural communities across the state. This includes transportation that addresses the needs of people with an array of disabilities and needs, including parents with disabilities who have children, and people who use wheelchairs. The transportation should be compliant with regulations, with drivers appropriately trained to use any needed equipment.
- 2. Affordable.** Currently, transportation through licensed vendors is very costly, both to individuals and to agencies who may arrange such transportation for their constituents. Accessible cab fares can

also be expensive. There is a need to develop more affordable transportation systems with universal and consistent rates across the state.

3. **Comprehensive.** In order for people with disabilities to access employment, housing in the community, education and the full array of community activities, a transportation system needs to be accessible to people with disabilities regardless of where they live in the state. The system should offer flexible hours, including evenings and weekends. Transportation should be dependable and timely, offering direct and reasonable routes.
4. **Easy to Use.** The process of accessing transportation should be easy to understand. People with disability who need assistance in planning their routes or determining eligibility for subsidies need a one-stop process, with support staff that are knowledgeable about the system.
5. **Respectful.** Drivers and office staff at transportation companies should receive training about disabilities, person directed services, safety concerns, proper use of equipment and communication. Respect for personal choice, differences and unique needs are a critical component of safe and reliable transportation services.

For more information, contact:

CT Council on Developmental Disabilities
460 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
Molly.cole@ct.gov
860-418-6160
800-653-1134



Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities **HOUSING POSITION PAPER**

For over twenty years housing for people with disabilities in Connecticut has been moving away from segregated housing toward housing in the community, in order to more fully integrate persons with disabilities in community life. However, if this transition happens without a focus on basic standards and principles, then the move is purely geographic, and will not lead to a better life for the person with a disability. This process of accessing housing must be person centered, allowing the person with a disability and responsible family members to identify what needs to be in place for their life to be better. At this time, Connecticut is failing at developing an array of housing options. The CT Council on Developmental Disabilities believes that access to housing for people with disabilities must address the following:

- 1. Respect for the choices that each person makes.** The process of finding housing should be person centered. People with disabilities should be informed of the housing choices that are available to them, and have the right to choose where they live, and who lives with them. There should be respect for personal preferences, such as the type of neighborhood or being able to decide if they want to live in a place that allows animals. Housing should be located in culturally diverse communities that include people with and without disabilities. If the services needed to best support the person do not exist, then they should be developed before the person moves.
- 2. Respect for the rights and responsibilities of both the tenant and the landlord.** This includes the right to live in housing that is in good condition, where things work properly and where repairs are made as needed so that everything is in good condition and safe. Having a

place to live means making friends and participating in community activities as they choose. Tenants with disabilities may have a greater need for long term stability in their housing than other members of the community and options should be available that enable them to live where they choose for a long time, in order to maintain their friends and relationships in the community. They should not have to be concerned about discrimination because of their disability, or be forced to leave for unlawful reasons.

- 3. Location in the community of choice.** All people should be able to live in safe communities of their choice. People with disabilities should be able to live in housing that is convenient to parking, transportation, amenities, and schools. They should be able to live in culturally diverse communities that include people with and without disabilities. Additionally, these communities should be adequately prepared for emergencies, recognizing the particular needs of people with disabilities.
- 4. Accessibility.** Housing should be affordable to all people, including people with disabilities. Existing financial barriers that impair housing choice should be removed, including allowing people with disabilities to own their own home, creating incentives for people with disabilities or their families to finance their own homes, and dedicating additional public finance dollars to expand available housing for persons with disabilities. People with disabilities should have housing available to them which allows physical access through doorways, sufficient room to turn around in hallways and fully accessible bathrooms. They should also be able to visit friends and relatives barrier-free in other houses and apartments. In order to maximize housing options, people with disabilities should have access to accessible transportation, informal and formal supports that are available and assistive technology needed to live inclusively in their community.

5. **Availability.** The supply of housing for people with disabilities is insufficient. Governmental programs should require resources adequate to serve a greater number of people with disabilities who are eligible for and seeking housing assistance, and not solely for emergency placements. There should be no wrong door to access housing, so that the system is easy to use, adequately funded and coordinated to ensure that all people have a stable housing plan.

For more information, contact:

CT Council on Developmental Disabilities
460 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
Molly.cole@ct.gov
860-418-6160
800-653-1134



CT Council on Developmental Disabilities
Position Paper on Employment of Persons with Disabilities

"Put simply, work is fundamental to identity. It means so much more than a paycheck; it offers purpose and the opportunity to lead a more independent, self-directed life for all people—including millions of Americans with disabilities." (Martinez, K. NDEAM *The Value of Work*. October, 2012. U.S. Department of Labor)

Of all the population groups in the United States, people with disabilities have the highest level of unemployment. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports:

- For all age groups, the employment-population ratio was much lower for persons with a disability than for those with no disability.
- About 18.2 percent of all people with a disability were employed in May, 2012, well below the employment to population employment ratio of 64.3 percent for persons with no disability.
- In 2012, 33 percent of workers with a disability were employed Part-time, compared with 19 percent of those with no disability.
- Employed persons with a disability were more likely to be self-employed than those with no disability.

In these tough economic times, it is important that people with disabilities have access to an array of person centered opportunities that allow them to be included as productive members of their communities. As a labor pool, people with disabilities are a source of reliable workers, regardless of the nature of their disability. People with disabilities have the ability to adapt to different situations and circumstances perhaps better than any other group and have long proven themselves as a great source of dependable employees. As employees, they contribute consistent work ideas and perspectives that business needs to succeed. They have fresh ideas on how to solve problems and complete assigned tasks. This reliable and determined work force can contribute to increasing the retention of employees and reducing turnover. In addition, tax incentives and technical assistance can assist with creating and expanding employment opportunity, as well as with accommodations, which are often relatively easy and inexpensive to implement. Meaningful work at a reasonable wage will allow people with disabilities to contribute to their own expenses of daily living,

reducing dependency on government programs and family support. Working in the community in a work site that includes people with and without disabilities is an important component of full community inclusion.

The CT Council on Developmental Disabilities promotes employment for all people with disabilities. We believe that employment should be:

- 1. Meaningful.** Jobs should be fulfilling and challenging, offering choices for career development and job options. Positions should include opportunities for growth, professional development and advancement. Employers should not exclude people with disabilities from consideration for advancement based on their disability.
- 2. Living Wage.** People with disabilities should receive equal pay and benefits as other workers who perform the same job.
- 3. Person Centered.** People with disabilities must have better access to available job opportunities in their communities. Job seeking is a person centered planning process. Persons with disabilities need access to information about employment that is compatible to their interests and skills, so that they are recruited for the job they desire. Applicants with disabilities must be included in the pool of all other eligible and qualified applicants. The employment should be in a healthy work environment, with opportunities to experience all the employee-related activities and benefits that are offered to any employee.
- 4. Available in the Community.** Potential employers should be identified who are in their community, on bus routes and in accessible locations. Reliable transportation systems are critical to expanding employment of people with disabilities. Employers should offer reasonable accommodations as needed.
- 5. Offered with Appropriate Training, Orientation and Supervision.** Employers should provide clear expectations of all duties, and ensure that any support staff are also aware of these

expectations. Supervision should include the identification and provision of ongoing training and support needs, which could also include assistive technology and other accommodations.

Additionally, the Council believes that we must continue to address barriers to employment that exclude people with disabilities from access to a good life with meaningful work and economic stability. This includes addressing the limited employment opportunities, increasing awareness of the value of employing people with disabilities and addressing stereotypes that limit access to an array of jobs for people with disabilities. Educational opportunities leading to employment should be expanded and accessible to people with disabilities.

For more information, contact:

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460 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
Molly.cole@ct.gov
860-418-6160 800-853-1134