

**Town of Acton
COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES (COD)**

**MEETING MINUTES
May 16, 2017**

Members Present: Madeleine (Mady) Harvey (Chair), Ann (Nancy) Corcoran, Lisa Franklin

Members Absent: Danny Factor, Cindy Patton (Vice Chair and Secretary)

Associate Members Present: Joan Burrows, Leslie Johnson

Call to Order 9:35 am

Citizens' Concerns None

Announcements

- Mady requested a moment of silence in honor of the passing of Danny's long-time partner Nadia.
- A new Board of Selectman (BOS) liaison has been assigned to the COD: Joan Gardner.
- Cards were signed for Lea Walton and Cheryl Snyer (unofficial volunteers) who assisted with the Wellness Fair in West Acton several days earlier.

Board of Selectmen Updates None

Change of Title

- The commission voted unanimously to change Danny's title from "Variance Coordinator" to "Access Coordinator".

Neighbor Brigade and Other Services

- Kathleen Surdan of Neighbor Brigade gave a 15-minute presentation on the organization, which provides free day-to-day needs for

individuals experiencing crises (accidents, injuries, tragedies) including home-delivered meals, rides to medical appointments, errands, simple household chores and pet care (dog-walking).

- This was followed by a short presentation by visitor (and Acton resident) Jorge Morales about VINFEN and YesHealth and the Cambridge/Somerville Recovery Learning Center.

Membership Update

- The commission voted unanimously to promote Leslie to a full member of the commission in view of Cindy's extended absence. Our BOS liaison now has to bring this to the selectman for formal approval. This means that Leslie now has a full vote on the commission.

Volunteers

- Mady represented COD at the Acton volunteer celebration the previous week and reported that about 25-30 people were present.
- There was brief discussion about increasing the number and formalizing the role of volunteers. The commission voted not to make this a formal process, recognizing that we do not need additional volunteers at this time unless we have specific tasks for them.

Retreat

- The COD is holding its annual retreat (for members only) on June 20th. This will include a group training exercise and general discussion. Various suggestions were made as to content.

July Agenda

- Rather than setting a specific agenda, the commission voted to have Mady (chair) call for agenda items a week or two prior to the meeting, as most other commissions do. This is an experiment for now, as opposed to setting agendas at our meetings.

Mental Illness Program

- It was agreed that the mental illness co-sponsored with NAMI/In Our Own Voice was a success. We had two excellent presenters, and even though the video equipment failed, it was an excellent event, and perhaps better and more spontaneous than if a film had been part of the program. About 25-30 people attended, although some of this

group were COD and NAMI members. Follow-up is occurring with individuals who attended and desired additional information.

Wellness Fair

- Acknowledgement/thanks were given to those who hosted the COD table at the West Acton Wellness Fair on May 13th, but it was agreed that this was not a useful event for the COD, and that we will not attend in the future.

Updates

- There was a brief update on 33 Nagog Park where some town employees still have temporary offices; the COD had been informed via email a day earlier about the schedule for moving these people to other, more suitable locations.
- In the absence of our Access Coordinator, there were no further updates.

Adjournment

12:00 noon

Documents

No documents distributed

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Respectfully submitted by
Joan Burrows and Madeleine Harvey

