

Mayor's Council on Disability
Chattanooga, Tennessee

Meeting Minutes
December 01, 2008

Sandra Booher, Chairperson
Bea Lyons, Vice Chair
Katie Jones, Secretary
Jill Hindman, Parliamentarian

Council Members:

Dr. Rick Rader
Jim Queen
Mary Ann Schenk
Tommy Gates
Gina Turley
Carolyn Boyd
Carol Martin
Phillip Stevens
Karl Epperson

Meeting called to order by Chairwoman, Sandy Booher.

In attendance:

Sandy Booher
Bea Lyons
Katie Jones
Jim Queen
Rick Rader
Carol Martin
Phillip Stevens
Tommy Gates
Matt Lea, Mayor's Office
Kathie Fulgham, Mayor's Office

Excused Absence:

Gina Turley
Jill Hindman
Carolyn Boyd

Visitors:

Beth Coleman
Greg Smith
Elaine Adams
Dennis Dodson

The Mayor's Council on Disability members received copies of the October and November meeting minutes via email. Both sets of minutes were approved by unanimous vote of the Council.

Mayor Littlefield was present to recognize the out-going members of his Mayor's Council on Disability. He began his remarks by expressing his appreciation of the work of the group; he felt pride in establishing the first disability council in the city and noted that the work that has been done has been remarkable. The 2008 Go!Fest program was the most successful one ever. Finding the right formula and venue for Go!Fest celebration has been the key with it being held at the Zoo. Other improvements to Warner Park have been planned. He came to thank the Council for their service and particularly to recognize three founding members whose time has come to roll off the Board: Bea Lyons, Dr. Rick Rader, and Gina Turley. He thanked Bea for giving an early nudge to make this organization come into being and expressed appreciation to Dr. Rader and Gina Turley for the good work that has been accomplished. On behalf of all the citizens of Chattanooga, the Mayor thanked these members for their service for the past three years.

The Mayor will appoint new people to the Council and welcomes advice and assistance from Council members. Matt Lea is accepting suggestions and resumes for prospective candidates to fill the current vacancies on the MCD. Matt also thanked the three founding members: Dr. Rader as a great influence to the Council, Bea as an icon of the Council as a founding member and Gina as a sometimes absent member making a difference behind the scenes.

Molly Littleton from the Assistive Technology Department of Signal Center shared information about a recent conference in Nashville on redistribution or reutilization of computers for people with disabilities. Signal Center and Goodwill Industries reutilize assistive technology, all types from simple items to wheelchairs and mobility devices. Tennessee has a program where they're trying to revitalize this reutilization across the state; a twelve minute video was shown to describe the program and to explain the various technology solutions that are possible for people with disabilities. To donate used

equipment to Signal Center contact Molly Littleton or Ezra Reynolds to arrange for pick up. Donated items that cannot be used are given to Goodwill where there's a good recycling program that is operated in an environmentally safe manner. Signal Center is currently in a unique position of having a design specialist on board; no other center in Tennessee has one. Because of the excellent coordination and collaboration between Signal Center and Goodwill, more equipment gets reutilized here in Chattanooga than at any of the other assistive technology centers across the state.

Matt Lea commented about the Nominating Committee and its procedures earlier in the meeting. There are six vacancies to be filled on the Council to comprise the full membership of 15 persons.

No report was given about the Stigma Project.

There were no web inquiries this month since Go!Fest is over. Kathie Fulgham reported that there is \$40,000 left over from sponsorship donations to Go!Fest to fund the new Play Core playground for children with disabilities. What a wonderful Christmas present to the Mayor's Council on Disability and to the City! Planning for the 2009 Go!Fest celebration is set to begin early in the New Year.

Jim Queen reported that everything is good with CARTA since fuel prices are down. At the Tennessee Public Transit Association meeting in Gatlinburg recently, politicians expressed concern about the state budget and funding since there has been a change in the controlling party in the Tennessee House of Representatives; they are feeling nervous about what may happen and who wht chairman may be. There is more emphasis now on public transit. Jim announced that one of CARTA's Care-A-Van drivers, Carlos Hampton who is also an off-duty fire fighter, has won second place in the local "Rodeo" contest and third place recognition in the state contest; this is his first year to participate in the Rodeo competition.

Announcements:

Greg Smith from the Hamilton County Emergency Services announced a meeting to be held on December 9 for the purpose of rewriting the 2009 Hamilton County Basic Emergency Operations Plan with focus on preparing effectively for local hazards. Jill Hindman and Dr. Rick Rader will attend along with representatives of agencies and community-based organizations who are service providers to the functional needs community.

Beth Coleman from the Chattanooga Area Brain Injury Association announced an all-day conference to be held February 19, at the Doubletree; topics include two national models: transition for students from hospitals to home or school (Western Oregon Model) and care-giving for supportive caregivers for a variety of disabilities (Rosalind Carter Institute), a presentation by Dr. Rick Rader, and a traumatic brain injury specialist from the Centers for Disease Control.

Elaine Adams from Therapeutic Recreation announced the Annual Holiday Ball at the Zoo in conjunction with the Dream Night, a free event for individuals with cognitive illnesses or disabilities to be held December 11, 2008, beginning at 5:30pm.

Dennis Dodson, director of the Depression and Bipolar Alliance Hamilton County Chapter, reported that they have two support groups for adults and families; now added support group for adolescents, ages 17 years and younger; Cumberland Hall is working with the chapter. There will be a "Stigma Stomp" Parade in Dayton, TN, on December 13, sponsored by the Tennessee Mental Health Consumers Association.

Chairperson Booher suggested that Phillip Stevens investigate possibility of adding a section to the MCD web site for support group information; Chattanooga has a number of various groups that meet regularly. Phillip was also recently recognized for his work as webmaster for the City of Chattanooga. He answers e-mails from people from all over the world everyday; he has received approximately 20,000 inquiries over the past seven years.

A question to Matt about the Volkswagen policy on hiring individuals with disabilities was brought up; their policy appears to be a very progressive and positive one. There is a corporate diversity policy statement located on the Volkswagen web site, a five-point statement listing their goals for hiring practices. The suggestion was made to invite a VW representative to attend the next MCD meeting and to make a presentation on the company's hiring practices. Carol Martin was successful in obtaining \$5,000 donation from them as a sponsor of Go!Fest; she agreed to serve as the Council's point person to be in contact with Volkswagen. Chattanooga State and Vocational Rehabilitation Center are already working closely with VW; internationally Volkswagen is a strong supporter of VSA, Arts for Persons with Disabilities.

Sandy Booher's Pottery Studio Holiday Open House will be held December 5 & 6, 10:00am until 6:00pm both days; family discount available for MCD members.

Downtown Holiday Parade will be held Saturday, December 6, at 6:00pm, starting at Miller Plaza and ending at the Tennessee Aquarium.

After thanking everyone for coming and wishing a "Merry Christmas" to all, the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting of the Mayor's Council on Disability will be held Monday, January 5, 2009, at 3:00pm, at the DRC.

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Bea Lyons

Bea Lyons, Acting Secretary
Mayor's Council on Disability
Chattanooga, TN