



TOWNSHIP OF NORTH BRUNSWICK
ABILITIES COUNCIL

"Embracing the power of 'We' by including everyone"

Meeting Minutes
October 22, 2008

Members present: Robin Turner, Rachael Druker, Debbie Druker, Marge Griscti, Glenn Sandor, Peter Kenny, Councilwoman Rhonda Lyles, Carmel Mangarella

New Member: Kevin Scott

Secretary: Nancy Krauss

Meeting commenced at 7:02 pm

1. Officers, Member Terms and Committee Governance:

Peter Kenny suggested that the group nominate and elect Officers for the Abilities Council. After a brief discussion, nominations were made and the following members were unanimously elected:

Chairwoman:.....Robin Turner

Vice Chairman:Peter Kenny

Vice Chairwoman:Marge Griscti

Congratulations to the newly elected officers!

Upon review of the ordinance which governs the committee, Anne Brady will be our "Resource Consultant" rather than a "general member" since she is not a resident of North Brunswick.

Robin will suggest to the Mayor that the following terms be assigned to the Committee members beginning in January 2009:

Three Year Terms	Two Year Terms	One Year Terms
Peter Kenny	Pete Clark	Carmel Mangarella
Robin Turner	Debbie Druker	Kevin Scott
Marge Griscti	Rachael Druker	Glenn Sandor
		Valerie Molnar
		Judy Garrity

There is some question about how to handle members who do not regularly attend meetings. The standard practice, which is stated in a Township ordinance and applies to all the Township committees, indicates that once a member misses three consecutive meetings, that member receives a letter which states should they miss another consecutive meeting, you can be dropped from the committee membership.

Most Township committees have a budget line item, but it is unknown at this point if that is the case for the Abilities Council and if so, what is that budget number.

2. NBAC Meetings:

For the record, the meetings of the Abilities Council are open to the public.

3. Around Town Projects:

- *Access to Medical Services:*

Peter introduced the topic of adequate health care coverage for the disabled population in North Brunswick. He shared a personal story where he has encountered many roadblocks in an attempt to receive the mental health services he requires. Rhonda Lyles noted that many doctors and providers which offer these services are located at UMDNJ and the waiting list is commonly 9 months which dissuades many of the people in need of these services.

Robin Turner suggested that Anne Brady is a tremendous resource for Peter's situation in particular. Robin would be open to contacting State legislators to try to address this issue on a grander scale. Peter will email Nancy with his specific situation and needs, and she will facilitate the contact with Anne Brady. Rhonda will be informed of the situation and she will also help to facilitate a resolution for Peter.

- *OEM Plans:*

Robin Turner and Pete Clark are planning to meet with Woodbridge to see review their "Operation Safe & Secure" program geared at disabled residents during an emergency. They will gather that information and share it with North Brunswick's OEM Office as well as the Township Council.

Rhonda indicated that North Brunswick has a "Operation Safe Call" which follows up with residents in need. Rhonda will speak with Lou Ann Benson, Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services about the criteria used to put residents on this list as well as how folks can be added to this list. This list could be used as a starting point to develop a program similar to that of Woodbridge's as mentioned above.

4. Township Ordinance:

The group received a copy of the Township ordinance which governs the Abilities Council. There are several items the group would like to submit for changes, including but not limited to:

Under Section 2: Members; compensation; terms; vacancies.

- Member terms will be recommended as outlined in section 1 of these minutes
- The following is the existing version of the sentence which deals with the composition of the committee:

The Council shall consist of nine members appointed by the Mayor. All of the members shall be residents of the Township of North Brunswick; at least 1/2 of the members shall be disabled citizens; one member shall also be a member of the Township Council; the members shall serve without compensation except as hereinafter provided.

The changes suggested for this paragraph are (changes are marked in **BOLD** text):

- The Council shall consist of **at least** nine members.
- "At least ~~half~~ **a quarter** of the members shall be disabled citizens **or their families**"

If you are interested in participating in a subcommittee to look at and make suggested changes to the ordinance, please email Robin or Nancy Krauss.

5. Upcoming Events:

2009 Disabilities Awareness Day:

- Robin would like "save the date" postcards to be distributed to the residents. Probably the best way to communicate the "save the date" is as an insert in the tax bills. The next mailing of the tax bills will be late December/early January. In addition, we can advertise a "save the date" item on local Channel 15 and on the Council's portion of the web site.
- Robin shared copies of the letters Carteret sends to participants and donors. These specific documents are mailed two months prior to the event and one month prior to the event. Nancy will customize these letters for use by the Committee.
- Some Township staff which should be invited is Jessica Zink, Seniors Activities Advisory and Tom Vigna, Town Planner who serves as the Township ADA Officer.
- Volunteer Training: Anne Brady had offered to coordinate the training of the volunteers for the event. Rhonda Lyles would very much like to take part in the effort.

- Marge will confirm the training dates with Anne Brady and get that information to the Drukers.
- Rhonda suggested that the group reach out to the Junior Police Academy. These folks could be well suited to assist with traffic control outside of NBTHS.
- Glenn will official invite Roy Mineri from Channel 15 to the event.
- Mayor Womack will be asked to draft and present a resolution for the day of the event.
- Rhonda will reach out to BlanquitaValenti, Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, to be the Committee's liaison to Blanquita's group.
- Carmel will ask Wayne Kuberiet, Township staff member, if he would be willing be the "mascot" at the event.

6. Other Business:

- Nancy will forward a copy of the assistive devices the group has available to Roy from Channel 15 to post on the "scroll". Rhonda reminded the group that any documents we produce which offer items to someone in need should include a blurb which indicates "we do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, and religion"

7. Remaining 2008 Meeting Schedule:

- The next meeting of the Abilities Council will be **Wednesday, November 12th, 2008 at 7pm** in the *Historical Gallery* on the lower level of the Municipal Building. This room is located directly across from the elevator.

Last meeting of 2008:

- **Wednesday, December 10th, 2008 at 7pm** in the *Council meeting room*.

8. 2009 Meeting Schedule:

The following are the meeting dates for 2009. All meetings are on Wednesdays and will commence at 7pm and are scheduled to run until 9pm. Locations for the meetings will be confirmed as the dates draw nearer:

January 14
February 11
March 11
April 8
May 13
June 10
July 8
August 12
September 9
October 14
November 18
December 9

The meeting concluded at 8:51 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Krauss
Secretary
North Brunswick Abilities Council