

Groton Parks & Recreation Department
45 Fort Hill Road - Groton, CT 06340
Phone (860) 536-5680 or Fax (860) 536-5690

Real Choice Systems Change Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 20, 2004 - 11:30 a.m.

Committee members present:

Chris Gaynor, Stan Kosloski, Eileen Cicchese, Mary Jo Riley, Gary Patterson, Jan Lehrman, Paul Duarte, Mary Hannigan, and Carrie Czewinski

Meeting got underway at 12 noon.

Members of the committee were up-dated on the following

- ✓ Much of the information on the "Making Real Choices" booklet has been compiled. The target date to have this booklet to the printer is mid-September for an October distribution date. The booklet needs to be fine-tuned and checked for grammatical errors before it is presented to the Grant committee for their final approval. Any members of our committee interested in working to finish the booklet are requested to get in touch with Mary at 536-5683.
- ✓ Eileen briefly spoke on the Real Choices Mentoring Program. Three people have expressed an interest in working on this project. Those interested will be interviewed within the next few weeks so that we can get someone in place and begin this project.
- ✓ The Second Step players (www.artreachheals.org) will perform at the Groton Senior Center on Tuesday, October 23 at 7:00 p.m. The play is open to the public. The Second Step Players is a theatre troupe comprised of actors, writers, artists, production personnel, musicians and comedians who have psychiatric illnesses. The troupe consists of approx. 50 mental health consumers and 25 volunteers.

- ✓ Lori Parker, IT coordinator for the Town of Groton will input the information from the Real Choices booklet onto the town's webpage under Inclusion once the booklet is complete.
- ✓ Shawn Greeley is currently completing the narrative for the Town's Inclusion Film that will be used as a marketing tool at conferences, etc. The purpose of this film is to educate the public about inclusion within the community for all ages, from birth through seniors.
- ✓ Information will be going to the Superintendent of schools looking for students who want to participate in the Disabilities Mentoring Day. After meeting with the Special Education teachers last fall, it was decided that the Mentoring Day would be an annual event for students who participate in Special Education classes at Fitch High School. Last year approx. 10 students participated. This year we would like to double this and offer this experience to 20 students.
- ✓ Mary Jo Riley reported that the Senior Center was exploring new programs such as how the GSC is meeting the needs of the baby boomers and what programs are appealing to those, ages 55 and over. Mary Jo also reported that the Senior Center was planning on having a voting machine available for the seniors to try prior to the November election since the election personnel use the facility for training new workers.
- ✓ Dana Parfitt, of the Groton BoE, reported that the Collaborative Committee was meeting on a regular basis and the goal was to come up with a consensus of what skills are needed for students to master prior to entering Kindergarten. Members of the committee included representatives from private, public and home based pre-schools, day care centers and kindergartens. Dana indicated that their committee was made up of between 15 - 24 individuals. The goal is to work cooperatively with the Real Choices Committee to come up with training that will benefit employees of the small facilities as well as the larger ones and to offer sessions that appeal and cover all behavior characteristics.
- ✓ Chris Gaynor encouraged all members of the committee to spread the word concerning the up-coming program ADA 14th Anniversary Event Accessible Voting on Monday, July 26 from 10 a.m. - noon at the LOB in

Hartford. Topics include Barriers for People with Disabilities and Voting Machine Demonstration and an opportunity to register to vote if someone is not already registered in their community. Chris also spoke about the one stop wheel chair accessible vehicle that includes a computer station that will be visiting key locations during the up-coming fall. Further details to follow. Chris encouraged committee members to check out the updated website for the UHC and the Real Choices Grant. She also mentioned that committee members would find www.rewardingwork.org of interest to our committee members. This website has information concerning personal care assistants and an up-coming workshop schedule for October.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.