

Town of Greenwich

First Selectman's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities

Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2019

9:15 a.m.

Department of Human Services Conference Room

Opening remarks: Alan Gunzburg welcomed the group

Approval of Minutes: January Minutes were approved with motion from Michael Beloff and second by Amy Siebert

**Presentation: Ndidi Moses, Assistant US Attorney from the US Attorney's office, civil division:
Handout ADA Update: A Primer for State and Local Governments**

A quick review of Title 2 and title 3 ensued – these are practically the same in terms of funding but is different in its implementation. The majority of phone call complaints regarding ADA non-compliance is the overwhelming belief of not being heard. 90% of these issues can be resolved with a phone call. Discussion arose around compliance issues with service animals in the schools and individuals with hearing impairment in police matters. Reasonable accommodations can be made with some sensitivity and creativity without creating more obstacles to information and access. Mary Ford from Greenwich Schools discussed conflicting interests with people with disabilities or those people who feel inconvenienced due to a ruling to accommodate. Chief Heavey explained practices the police utilize to assist people with hearing impairment (green envelope) and resources to translate different languages. Obligations to ADA and detailed solutions are offered on the website ADA.gov. There is no such thing as a building being “grandfathered in” thus released of its obligations to create access to entry or restrooms. Even with old buildings, any modification over the years nullifies the claim of grandfathering inaccessibility. Conservation and Development presented their Vision statement and seven Guiding Principles. They wish to further the conversation with the Advisory Committee with further action points.

Property Tax Credit for Persons with Disabilities: Property tax credit for persons with disabilities and a continuation for property tax credit for seniors has been approved by the BET and will be presented to the RTM.

Old Business - ADA compliance updates: Ms. Moses recommended copying the US Attorney's office on letters sent to building managers whose structures have been identified as not ADA compliant (usually highlighting problem areas as parking, access, restrooms). Many obstacles can be resolved with a conversation to the Building manager and, if applicable, expanding the discussion to include Greenwich Hospital (should they have an office in the building) and HHS can become involved as well.

Next Meeting: Monday, May 13 at 9:15 AM