

**Bridgeport, Connecticut**  
**REAL CHOICE COMMUNITY INCLUSION TASK FORCE**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**September 12, 2003**

**Place:** City Hall, 45 Lyon Terrace, Wheeler Room A& B, Bridgeport, CT

**Present:** Karen Roseman, Jeri L.Boyd, Laura Micklus, Fred Frank, Donna Franchini-Sparago, Marie Bennett, Rev. Harry S. Carrillo, Jimmy Smith, Loretta B.Williams, Iris Molina, Emily Skinner, Judy Marella, Valerie Sorrentino, Tony LaCava, Emma P. Schulman, Kathleen Hunter, Gloria A. Davis, Collin Vice, Mary L. Bruce, Diana M. LaBoy-Lugo, Jowanne Jackson, Dorothy Grant, Tammy Papa, Marta Bisciglia, and Richard Hudson.

**Guests:** Christine Gaynor and Susan Zimmerman

**Absent:** Michael Boyer, Pasqualina Delcegno, Brenda Dye, Patricia Balazsi, Beverly Kraycar, Vera Johns, Luz Velasquez, Debbie Sims, Bert Carter, Adaline DeMarrais, Reverend David Miller and Roberta Yegidis.

**The Real Choice Community Inclusion Task Force Meeting was open by Karen Roseman at 10:15 a.m. She gave remarks of welcome and thanks to everyone for their participating on the Bridgeport Task Force. She started around the table introductions by each member.**

**Karen called for the approval of the minutes, which a motion for approval was made by Jimmy Smith; second by Gloria Davis. She asked the members if there were any corrections, additions, or deletions, to the July 23, minutes that were sent to each member. The members unanimously approved the motion.**

**Karen introduced Christine Gaynor and Susan Zimmerman the staff at Uconn Extension and funder of the Real Choice grant. Christine remarked on the successful progress of the three Model Communities: Bridgeport; New Haven; and Groton. Also, she informed the Task Force about the List Serve group comprised of those towns that did not receive the grant, but wanted information updates from the selected Model Communities. She let the group know that the information could be found on [www.uconnced.org](http://www.uconnced.org).**

**Susan Zimmerman gave an overview on New Haven and Groton's programs. She stated that New Haven is conducting a Peer Mentoring Program and an Access Monitoring Program of which they have identified six locations for the access assessment. Also they are publishing newsletter and the first issue is schedule to be released next month.**

**Susan explained that Groton has contracted with Consultant and Educator, Melissa Marshall to conduct Sensitivity Training. Initially, the training was**

provided to twenty-five town supervisors. Those attending enjoyed the training. The next step planned is for other city department staff to attend the training. Also, Groton is providing sensitivity and awareness training using Kids on the Block Puppet Show performed for an integrated group of children; children with and without disabilities. In addition, a needs assessment is being mailed to all the town's residents.

Susan gave an update on the disability survey that is being conducted statewide by the Real Choice System Change Grant. She explained that it is a 15-minute survey to learn if Connecticut citizens with disabilities are able to participate in all desired aspects of community life in the town in which they live. She encouraged Task Force members to continue requesting people with disabilities to call and participate in the survey.

**Public Attitudes Team Report - Karen Roseman reported that the team had three meetings and the Team C0-Leaders: Anthony LaCava and Karen Roseman. The team will be reviewing the curriculum of the Project Blue Print Program that is now on hold because of restructuring. Also we are planning a Community Conversation Program that will bring people with disabilities together to discuss:**

- How persons with disabilities can be placed in positions of power.**
- How persons with disabilities acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully serve on boards/commissions.**
- How support can be provided to persons with disabilities to successfully serve on boards/commissions.**

Tony suggested that the team should not wait for Project Blueprint to re-establish its program, but attempt to find similar alternatives for people with disabilities. The next meeting will be Friday, September 26, 2003, 9:30 am at Family Service Woodfield.

**Affordable, Accessible, Safe Housing and Support Services Team Report – Co-Team Leaders: Kathleen Hunter and Jowanne Jackson. Kathleen Hunter reported that the team had two meetings which they discussed and reviewed the initial objectives established in the grant that included the Continuum of Care application for \$600,000 of additional funding, providing awareness training to landlords, and discussing homeownership opportunities. The team decided to align its work closer to the mission of creating more community options, maximizing autonomy and freedom of choice as it relates to housing. Further information is provided in the Housing Team Report detailing Action Steps. The next meeting is Thursday, October 9, 2003, at 10:00 am to 11:00 am at the Bridgeport Housing Authority.**

**Resource Information Gap – Team Leader:** Eileen Lopez-Cordone reported that the group had two meetings which they reviewed objectives of the grant and discussed ways to develop resources both generic and specific for persons with disabilities. The team discussed producing a resource guide, updating directories, and creating a web site. The teams next meeting is be Wednesday, October 1, 2003, at 9:30 am at the United Way.

**Diminishing Infrastructure for Referral, Advocacy and Social Services Team Report – Co-Team Leaders:** Jowanne Jackson and Roberta Yegidis. Jowanne Jackson reported that the team had met and reviewed the grant objectives. The primary focus at this time is to clearly define the objectives and determine the needs and prioritizes them. The team also discussed the following: partnering agencies (non-profit with profit), creating inventory of resources, decrease funding, duplication of services, performing a needs analysis, and ways to increase and provide services. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, October 8, 2003, 2:00 pm- 4:00 pm at City Hall, Wheeler Room B.

**Old Business:** Karen reported that ten (10) task force members attended the Olmstead Luncheon on August 1, 2003 and enjoyed it very much. John McKnight, the author of the book *Building Communities from Inside Out*, was the guest speaker. The group felt that his approaches and thoughts on life were magnificent and well received by all who had attended.

**Next meeting of the Real Choice Community Inclusion Task Force will be Friday, November 14, 2003, at 10:00 am at City Hall in Wheeler Room A and B.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Jeri L. Boyd**