

Town of Groton
Real Choice Systems Change Grant Meeting
Tuesday, November 4, 2004

Committee members present: Gary Lehrman, Chris Gaynor, Paul Duarte, Gary Patterson, Kate Peruzzotti, Michelle Giaewski, Mary Hannigan and Leslie Westhaver

Guests: Susan Fitzgerald, Patty Lang, Sheryl Cramer Joyce Armstrong

Mary Hannigan gave a report concerning the recent Disabilities Mentoring Day. Approx. 10 departments including Parks & Recreation, Human Resources, Police Department and Planning participated. Twelve students were placed for the day. Among the tours they participated in were the Golf Course, Senior Center, Water Pollution Control Facility and Town Hall.

Gary Lehrman reported that he was in the process of setting up some training sessions with the Council of Government for Southeastern Connecticut. Attorney Melissa Marshall will be leading these sessions and the topics will include sensitivity training and opportunities for those with disabilities.

Sheryl Cramer briefly spoke on a preliminary proposal to request money from the Grant Committee to implement a weekend program for those living with cerebral palsy. After much discussion, it was suggested that Sheryl continue to work with the grant committee and explore the possibility of beginning a mentoring program that would cover some of the shortfalls that are a result of state funding changes. Chris Gaynor spoke briefly on the guidelines of the grant and the possibility of requesting money from the grant and what procedure the committee has to follow. Chris also reminded the committee that the purpose of the grant was to change a process which would cover a mentoring program and the purpose of the grant was not to fund a program which is what UCP was looking to the committee to do.

Chris Gaynor spoke on the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services and the possibility of their organization looking toward the model communities for support and ideas for some new funding that they have concerning employment programs. One of the programs that they were planning on implementing was a Benefits Counseling Program and a Connect to Work Project. People, who may not have any mental disabilities and thus are not connected with the proper resources for disabilities, may not be receiving the correct services.

Mary reported that members of our committee are invited to attend the "Operation Respect" on the up-coming Teachers Professional Day at Fitch Senior High School.

Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 18, 2004 at the Annex beginning at 11:30 a.m.