

**Metro Area Mayor's Committee (MAMC)
For People with Disabilities
March 9, 2006 Minutes
Location: Fryin' Pan, Main Avenue**

Present: Judy Siegle, Roman Rezac, Lisa Schornack, Tammy Stuart, Dan Mahli, Jeannie Krull, Ellen Dunn, Tom Thompson, Ron Sandness, Kelly Boeddeker, Sarah Huovinen, Mary Beth Collier, Mark Breitbach, Robert Anderson, Paula Aalgaard, Paulette Ness, Brenda Majerus, Stephanie Sheets, Allan Peterson, Jen Erickson.

Treasurer's Report:

Checking: \$6, 583.12
Grace Tweiten Account: \$3,442.95
Savings: \$1,204.77
Total: \$11,230.84
Deposits: \$0

Parking Fees collected for 2005: \$3,297.50 (as compared to 2004: \$6,721.00) – the next highest collection since 2001 was in 2003, which was \$4,790.50.

There continue to be 2 applications pending for Grace Tweiten grant awards for individuals needing work clothes. More information is needed in order to make a decision.

Guest Speaker: Dennis Lyon – North Dakota Client Assistance Program

Dennis explained that Client Assistance is an advocacy program for individuals seeking/using vocational rehabilitation services and independent living services. He indicated that eligibility is determined by identifying whether or not an individual has a disability (physical or mental impairment that is a substantial impediment to a major life activity). Dennis indicated that individuals with disabilities who are underemployed are also considered for services.

Dennis spoke briefly about individuals diagnosed with chemical dependency and how they may or may not be eligible for services, recognizing that an individual who is well-established in their recovery might not have functional limitations that limit one or more major life activities at a given time.

Other notable points:

- If an individual is receiving SSI or SSDI he/she is presumed eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

- Individuals always have a right to re-apply for services.
- Residency requirements cannot be imposed so individuals applying for services can apply for services in another state.
- **Expense of services** is not a legitimate reason for denying services.
- **Disagreeing with an employment plan** is not a legitimate reason for denying services.
- Client assistance (CA) can request a fair hearing if client assistance doesn't agree with vocational rehabilitation's decision. CA can hire an attorney to represent the individual if warranted.
- CA can take vocational rehabilitation to District Court.
- CA is 100% federally funded.
- Individuals incur no fees for assessment to determine the possible presence of a disability. Other services are generally provided on a sliding fee scale.
- There's a Vocational Rehabilitation Project (121) for enrolled members of tribes who live on/off a reservation.

Awards Banquet Date: April 13, 2006

Submit award nominations to Tom Thompson, Tammy Stuart, or Mark Breitbach by April 1st.

The following are identified as table sponsors, thus far.

- Friendship
- West Acres
- State Bank
- RSA
- Employment Training Center (ETC)
- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- City of Fargo

The deadline to sponsor a table is April 12th.

ChamberChoice Nominees:

Reception details for the ChamberChoice Nominees are listed below:

Thursday, March 16, 2006

Wells Fargo Bank

730 Center Avenue, Moorhead

5:30 to 7:00 p.m. (this addition is from Tom's email on March 13)

The top 3 finalists for each category will be announced at this reception. The final choices will be announced on April 6th at the Holiday Inn.

Contact Tom Thompson by Tuesday, March 14th if you would like to attend (701) 298-4575.

C.O.P.P.'s update:

Of the letters that were sent to businesses who are not in compliance with parking codes, 17 were returned to sender.

Tom met with Keith Ternes (interim chief of police - Fargo) to discuss the prospect of getting more volunteers involved in evaluating parking compliance.

New Business:

Tom Thompson introduced the idea of establishing criteria for eligibility for MAMC members to attend professional development events where costs would be covered by the MAMC. One criteria discussed was to authorize funding (if approved) for members who have attended at least 60% of the Mayor's committee monthly meetings within the year. This topic was tabled for future discussion.

Announcements:

- Reminder: Transition Fair in West Fargo for students (age 14+) is scheduled for Tuesday, April 11th – contact Ellen Dunn for details.
- Diversity Expo. will be held on October 3rd – Brett Eastburn is a speaker being considered for this event. There will be more to come on this event in the future. Please contact Tammy Stuart or Carrie Frie at Job service (701) 239-7300 for more information or to collaborate on this event.
- **Awards Banquet - Thursday, April 13, 2006 @ Ramada Plaza Suites** (see future email for exact time). **NOTE: no additional meeting scheduled for April.**

Respectfully submitted:
Jen Erickson