

**Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board**  
**June 24, 2009 Meeting Minutes**

Corrected & Approved

A meeting of the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board was held on June 24, 2009 in the Conference Room of Building 158, North County Complex, Hauppauge at 2:05 pm, Chairwoman Beverly Cody presided.

**PRESENT:**

**GROUP A**

Michele DelMonte	Representing Frank Krotschinsky/Representing County Executive Steve Levy
Jack Caffey	Representing Legislature Presiding Officer William Lindsay
Tedd Godek	Representing S.C. Department of Public Works, Design & Construction Division
Terry Maccarrone	S.C. Department of Parks
Alice Young	S.C. Department of Labor
Barbara Falkman	S.C. Department of Health Services/Div. of Services with Special Needs

**GROUP B**

Beverly Cody	Member, Secretary & Acting Chair
Debbie Epple	Member, S.C. Department of Civil Service/Public Info.

**GROUP C**

**GROUP D**

Roy Probeyahn	Member
Jim Sorrentino	Member
Glenn Campbell, Esq.	Member

**GUESTS:** Kevin Darcy-SCDPW Transportation, Judy Wieber, L.I. Council for the Blind, Douglas & Erin King, John Mikochik & his PCA Karen

**STAFF:** Heidi Zeitler, Senior Clerk Typist, Suffolk County Office of Handicapped Services

**EXCUSED:** Leg. Kate Browning, Frank Krotschinsky, Esq., Judy Record, Joseph Sanseverino, Valerie Lewis, Paulette Bartunek, Linda O'Donohoe, Kleo King, Esq., Teresa Strum, Mitchell Shapiro, Ingo Gloeckner

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 27, 2009:** Beverly asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes as distributed. Tedd mentioned he was listed in the minutes as attending and excused at the same time. Roy made a motion to approve the minutes as changed and Jim seconded it. All were in favor and the corrected minutes were unanimously approved.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Michele had nothing new on correspondence to report.

**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:** Beverly said Frank was unable to attend today's meeting because of the budget hearing today but he wanted us to know that the next SCDAB meeting which is the combined meeting for July & August, needs to be changed because the "Stand Up for the Homeless" event is on the same day. We would like to change the SCDAB meeting to the following Wednesday, August 12, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. Beverly made a motion to have the meeting changed to August 12<sup>th</sup> and Roy seconded that motion. All were in favor and the motion was approved. Beverly asked Heidi to please send an e-mail to everyone about the date change.

Beverly said she called Independent Technology, which is a division of Johnson & Johnson regarding the iBOT which was discussed at our last meeting. The woman who answered the phone said that Johnson & Johnson is out of the picture and that she should contact the inventor, Dean Kamen at DEKA Research for more information. Beverly did try to contact him but didn't hear back. Beverly also spoke to Frank and Frank in turn spoke to Bruce, they talked at length and Bruce brought up the point that SCDAB might want to get involved with the larger issue at hand. There are many other technical products for the disabled besides the iBOT that aren't covered by Medicare. Frank said he will get in touch with Kleo and hopefully at the next meeting he will have an update on how we should proceed. Beverly handed out copies of the article she brought along regarding the iBOT. Beverly said there are several video demonstrations of the iBOT on You Tube, if anyone is interested in seeing it in action.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Architectural Barriers** - Tedd Godek had nothing new to report.

**Community Partnership** - Michele had nothing new to report for Frank.

**Education** - Teresa was excused.

**Housing** - Vacant.

Beverly said she has noticed more "for sale" signs. Roy said it's a terrible irony for the development of group homes because the houses are available dirt cheap but there isn't any money to buy them. Jack mentioned that in today's paper it states that over 16% of people in the Northeast have relocated in the past year.

**Legislation** - Michele had nothing new to report for Frank.

Roy said there is a move to change the name of the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, deleting "mental retardation" and changing it to, Developmental Disability Services Office (NYSDDSO). This has already passed through the Senate and is pending in the Assembly. There is substantial opposition to it and The Task Force on Aging Out has agreed to oppose it and they will be sending a letter to Assemblyman Silver and to the entire delegation.

**Transportation** - Cliff was absent.

**Employment** – Alice reported that many more folks who have Asperger's Syndrome are utilizing the One Stop Employment Center. We currently collaborate with the Code Center @ Stony Brook where job ready candidates are referred to the One-Stop to register for services. In the past, DDI (Developmental Disabilities Institute) had run a pre-vocational job hunt club on site. These are all positive steps toward people wanting to be in competitive employment. The One-Stop Employment Center works very hard to make sure they are accessible to all. Carol Tetro from the Social Security Administration did a presentation at the S.C. Rehabilitation Council meeting where she handed out updated 2009 Red books. Alice brought a Red book along and also a Social Security updated "Fact Sheet". Yesterday the One Stop had their quarterly meeting and Glenn/SILO had brought up the difficulty of understanding the Medicaid buy-in for individuals with disabilities. They don't have a date yet but they will be having a community presentation with county offices through DSS to explain the Medicaid buy-in.

The One-Stop counseling staff just received "How to Gather Evidence of Rehabilitation"; this is up-to-date information from the Legal Action Center to help individuals with felonies in their backgrounds find employment. Alice also brought along an updated "Work Support Resource Guide" which has all the benefit services for the unemployed. The last thing Alice brought along was a New York Prescription Saver Card application. The N.Y.S. Department of Labor Business Services Unit spoke to the One-Stops Services Unit yesterday, 13 agencies' were represented and they deal with all different target populations to try to secure employment. Beverly asked if Alice had any figures on how many people with criminal records have been hired, especially now since unemployment is so high. Alice said there are people in non-profit agencies that work as employment specialists that try to assist these clients. It's very difficult in good times to place these individuals and of course in these times it's even harder. Alice does not have any numbers but she does know of two people who have become employed, one as a cook and one in maintenance. The Youth Program has a lot of stimulus money so the salary being offered for the 6 week employment is \$8.00 per hour and the age was extended from 14-21 to 14-24 years of age. Judy Wieber/L.I. Council for the Blind asked Alice if the resources at the One-Stop Employment Center are in accessible format such as Braille, cassette or web-site. Alice said they do have screen readers at the One-Stop. Roy added that the Suffolk County Script card is honored through-out the state. Judy asked if any counselor's from the NYS Commission for the Blind are present at the One-Stop. Alice replied, no but they are invited to the One-Stop's quarterly meetings. Alice added that they do work with CBVH, usually one on one.

### **COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:**

**Suffolk County Office of Handicapped Services** - Michele reported that Frank did attend the Hofstra Leadership Summit on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at Hofstra University. The workshop that Frank found most informative was on health care reform. Michele said one of the biggest issues is that healthcare reform is being done on a national level but we are not addressing Long Term Care. Frank also attended the opening ceremonies for the NYS Games for the Physically Challenged in Nassau County. Frank also wanted to make sure that everyone is aware of the fact that the S.C. Office of Handicapped Services, S.C. Department of Health Services/Div. of Services with Special Needs, S.C. Office for the Aging and S.C. Veterans Services will all be at the L.I. EXPO at Suffolk Community College, June 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>. It is free but you do have to register if you would like to attend one of the workshops. The information about the EXPO is also in your meeting handouts.

Jack reported that the business of the Legislature has been put off for 6 weeks by an 18-0 vote because the union and the administration have been in disagreement.

Beverly mentioned an article in Newsday about the amount of traffic tickets going on since the Sherriff took over but Beverly said it seems to her that Sheriff Cars are giving out more tickets than the patrol cars did. Jack said the Sherriff cars were not equipped with all the devices that the highway patrol cars had so it took time for the various equipment to be installed. Judy said she had read in Newsday that 50 traffic lights in Suffolk and Nassau will be equipped with red light cameras. Judy said they did post where they would be installed in Nassau but hasn't heard where they would be installed in Suffolk. Judy is bringing this up because of her concern for pedestrian safety, crossing the street without vision is difficult. She would like to see more accessible pedestrian signals that let you know when traffic patterns are ok to cross. She wanted to know if when they install these cameras, that accessible pedestrian signals be placed at those stops as well. Glenn/SILO said they have been working with the Lion's Club and one red light camera is going to be installed in Patchogue at the intersection of Main St. and the other one is going to be installed right by their SILO office.

Glenn said if Judy does have certain areas of concern that she would like to suggest she should call his SILO office and they would help advocate for it. Judy said she has already written a letter to a Mr. Frank Pearson, NYS Dept. of Transportation in regards to a particular traffic light in Babylon and they seem to think it would be a good location for an accessible pedestrian signal. Judy's not sure how to go about finding out when and if it will be installed. Glenn said SILO can assist Judy with finding out. Jack added that the law has not passed yet, it is one of the bills hung up in the senate and both counties are still waiting for the ok.

**Suffolk County Parks** - Terry had nothing new to report.

**S. C. Department of Social Services** - Linda was excused.

**S. C. Office of Public Information** - Debbie had nothing new to report.

**VESID** - Ingo was excused.

**Old Business** - Roy mentioned that Bruce's retirement was great. It was well attended and kudos to Michele DelMonte, Heidi, and staff for a job well done. Bruce will be sorely missed by us all. Leg. Kate Browning, Leg. John Kennedy and Assemblyman Jim Conte all attended the retirement party as well. Jack mentioned that the Suffolk County Legislature presented Bruce with a proclamation at the last legislative meeting.

**New Business** - Michele brought up the fact that Healthcare reform is being done on a national level but nothing much is being done in terms of Long Term Care. It is a very expensive ticket item in any insurance agency. Medicare has very limited coverage of home care, usually connected with a hospitalization. Michele suggested that the Advisory Board might consider looking at this very important issue. Beverly said when she was trying to purchase long term care insurance, which is very expensive; she wasn't eligible because she has lupus. Roy supports the board looking into healthcare reform for Long Term Care. Roy also suggested looking into a catastrophe medical policy which usually has a very high deductible of about \$25,000 or \$50,000 deductible.

Roy also reported that the Commissioner of OMRDD had a series of forums around the state. This was the second round of forums on the five year plan. These forums will produce the draft and then there will be another set of hearings in the fall on the final draft. The Long Island Developmental Disability Services Office has received its annual allocation from this year's state budget and Family Support Services received the highest single allocation ever of \$982,000. The down side is that 75% of the money must go to people in the Autism spectrum and only 25% to everyone else. Roy feels the money should be allocated to where the needs of people are, not by diagnosis. They are considering respite services, as services for people in the spectrum. There is \$3.5 million dollars in state money for N.Y. State Cares, which is group home development over the next 4 years. That money is doubled with the federal share so that makes it \$7 million total. The problem is that we have over 2,000 people on the registry. It costs about \$600,000-\$1 000,000 a year in costs to open a group home. L.I. received \$300,000 a year in supportive employment money and recently distributed a new grant for enhanced supportive employment. L.I. also received over a half a million dollars for at home residential rehabilitation. Long Island Family Support Consumer Council is going to have its legislative breakfast this fall, October 30<sup>th</sup> at the Huntington Hilton, registration begins at 8:30 am.

**S.C. Department of Health/Division of Children with Special Health Care Needs** - Barbara Falkman had nothing new to report.

**S.C. Department of Public Works/Transportation Division** - John retired.

**Glenn/SILO** - Glenn reported that SILO just received funding from CBVH for a mobile computer lab. It will provide basic computer training and will also have assistive technology for people with visual impairments. It will be up and running in a month or so, if you have an interest in it, please give SILO a call. Glenn also reminded everyone about the Nursing Home Transition Diversion Waiver, SILO is still looking for referrals for people who are in institutions as well as diversions for people who are at risk. The person needs to be on Medicaid and if they aren't, SILO can help them achieve that. Glenn also mentioned that SILO's ADA Celebration will be held on Saturday, August 1, 2009 from 11:00 – 4:00 at the Clubhouse at Suffolk in Ronkonkoma. They are working with a number of agencies this year and will have entertainment, theatre groups and activities for kids. You can find more information about it on SILO's website, [Suffolkilc.org](http://Suffolkilc.org)

**S.C. Human Rights Commission** - Paulette was excused.

**S.C. Community Development** - Joseph was excused.

**S.C. Library System** - Valerie was excused.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Roy made a motion to adjourn and Jim seconded the motion. All were in favor to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m. The next meeting will be held Wednesday, August 12, 2009 at 2:00 pm in the conference room, Building 158, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Zeitler