

Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board
May 26, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Approved

A meeting of the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board was held on May 26, 2010, in the Conference Room of Building 158, North County Complex, Hauppauge at 2:09 pm. Chairwoman Beverly Cody presided.

PRESENT:

GROUP A

Frank Krotschinsky, Esq.	Representing County Executive Steve Levy
Jack Caffey	Representing Legislature Presiding Officer William Lindsay
Lew Johnson	Representing S.C. Department of Public Works, Design & Construction Division

GROUP B

Beverly Cody	Member, Secretary & Acting Chair
Kleo King, Esq.	Member, United Spinal Association

GROUP C

GROUP D

Jodi Nicastrò	Rep., Ingo Gloeckner, Member, VESID
Roy Probeyahn	Member
Mitchell Shapiro	Member

GUESTS: Kevin Darcy, SCDPW Transportation
Doug & Erin King

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

EXCUSED: Leg. Kate Browning, Glenn Campbell, Esq., Joseph Sanseverino, Valerie Lewis, Linda O'Donohoe, Alice Young, James Kokindo, Terry Maccarrone, Debbie Epple, Teresa Strum, Barbara Falkman

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 28, 2010: Beverly asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes as distributed. There were none. Roy made a motion to accept the minutes as distributed and Kleo seconded the motion. All were in favor and the minutes were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: Frank read out loud the letter our board (SCDAB) sent on May 11, 2010 to Chancellor Bennett expressing opposition to the NYS Board of Regents intention to eliminate IEP diplomas for students with special needs.

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Roy asked if the letter was copied to all state and county elected officials and Governor Paterson, Frank replied yes.

Jack suggested that we send a letter to Legislator Kate Browning, Chair of the Health & Human Services committee requesting that VESID be called in for a presentation to the legislature regarding the elimination of the IEP diploma.

Roy made a motion to send the letter requesting VESID to make a presentation before the legislature. Kleo seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion was unanimously approved by all. Roy said this wouldn't affect this year's graduating class no what their decision is.

Beverly asked Jodi/VESID if there was any talk about elimination of the IEP diploma at VESID. From what Jodi believes, what we are requesting would be forwarded over to the Special Education Quality Assurance office in Lindenhurst.

Frank said we will also be sending out the letter regarding the visitability legislation which is pending in the senate to all state and county elected officials. There was discussion about this topic at last month's SCDAB meeting and it's not the first time that its legislation has been pending in Albany. Frank said that last year it made it through the assembly but not the senate. Frank read the visitability letter out loud.

Frank explained that the visitability law in Suffolk County states that if a developer gets county funds they must comply with certain requirements. It doesn't apply to somebody who is building a house or a developer unless they received some type of benefit from county funds.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: Beverly had nothing new to report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Architectural Barriers – Lew said there is a revised edition of building codes coming out which will be in effect for next January 2011. Lew also mentioned that the county is under construction at the Riverhead County Center. Jack asked about the handicapped parking and if it has been resolved. Lew said the handicapped parking has been resolved and is now accessible.

Community Partnership – Frank had nothing new to report.

Education – Teresa was excused. Roy mentioned the graduating class coming out of special education, including BOCES from Nassau and Suffolk County is 220. According to the local office of OMRDD they have adequate facilities in terms of day programs, supportive employment, etc. in order to accommodate the graduating class.

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Housing – Vacant. Roy mentioned as stated in last months minutes New State York Cares through the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities grant was released on May 12th for phase three, which has 3 years left to run.

Jack asked about the housing and legislation vacancies and asked why it has been taking so long to fill them. Frank said he has been in touch with the county executive's office and they are working on filling the vacancies. Jack said he would bring it to the attention of Presiding Officer William Lindsay and Leg. Kate Browning.

Legislation – Vacant.

Transportation - Cliff was absent.

Employment – Alice was excused.

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

Suffolk County Office of Handicapped Services – Frank reported that he went to the Abilities EXPO in N.J. last week. At the Expo they had a presentation on pending legislation that affects people with disabilities which Frank missed because of traffic, but he did get a contact number and he will be emailing Frank some information. Frank said the next big thing pending in Congress is competitive bidding for durable medical equipment. This would especially affect people with sophisticated wheelchairs. Frank also reminded everyone that the United Spinal Independence Expo will be held next month on 6/25/10 and 6/26/10 and our office will be participating at the Expo as well. Frank also gave a presentation in Southampton last week on visitability where Frank was part of a panel. Some of the people that were also in attendance from Southampton were an architect, town officials and a highway dept. representative. They also discussed the concept of universal design which is closely linked to visitability but it's different because it encompasses all products. The concept of universal design is for all products to be designed to be used by all people rather than just a small segment of the population. In Suffolk County, Southampton was the first entity that passed visitability legislation and it's already ten years old.

Frank also wanted to mention to everyone that one of our retired staff members and he was also a current disability board member, Jim Sorrentino recently passed away.

Frank also mentioned that another staff member of OHS, Michele DelMonte recently retired.

Suffolk County Parks - Terry was excused.

S. C. Department of Social Services – Linda was excused.

S. C. Office of Public Information - Debbie was excused.

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Mitch said he has been lobbying upstate in Albany because of the disparity with hearing aids. Medicare does not cover the cost of hearing aids nor do insurance companies but cochlear hearing implants would be covered. The surgery for cochlear implants from beginning to end can cost up to \$70,000 where as hearing aides only cost about \$1,800. Mitch's organization (The foundation for Sight and Sound) has provided 56 people with hearing aids nationwide, 1/3 were from the state of New York ages 72 years and up. Since January of last year Mitch's organization has had 25 inquires for applications. On June 8th The Foundation for Sight and Sound will be having a wine pairing fundraiser dinner. They need at least 50 people to attend at \$100.00 per person and will be held at the Oyster Bay Golf Course in Woodbury from 6:30-9:30.

Doug King mentioned that this would be his last week working as an intern with Congressman Steve Israel's office. Doug graduated last week from Empire State College with a BA in social work and is actively looking for employment.

VESID – Beverly asked Jodi about the lengthy waiting time for an appt. for intake at VESID. Jodi said the management team at VESID is working on it trying to make it more efficient. Jodi feels the long wait time is a combination of things like the economy, newcomers, people who are coming back to VESID because they have lost their jobs and new graduates as well.

Old Business – The other two OMRDD funding streams are still in the (RFP) Request for Proposal process.

Roy also mentioned he is on the advisory board to Dr. Strongwater at Stony Brook Medical Center and received an invitation to the ground breaking ceremony at Stony Brook Medical Center on June 14, 2010 for the new psychiatric wing. The new space will be located adjacent to the Emergency Room on the east side of the Medical Center and is expected to be complete by the fall of 2011.

New Business – None

S.C. Department of Health/Division of Children with Special Health Care Needs – Barbara was excused.

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

S.C. Human Rights Commission – James was excused.

United Spinal Association - Kleo said on the federal level, the health care bill required the access board to come out with requirements for medical equipment to make them accessible for people with disabilities and they have 2 years to do it. You can follow the progress by going to www.access-board.gov.

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Kleo said we all know they revised the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and the Architectural Barriers Act Guidelines 2004 but the Dept. of Justice hadn't adopted them yet. Kleo was told at a meeting that they have been sent to the Office of Management and Budget again and they predict they will be out by July 2010.

On a related note Frank said the county wants to have solar panels put over county parking lots. Frank would like to see that some disabled parking is placed under those solar panels as well. The solar panels would provide power back to the grid.

S.C. Community Development – Joseph was excused.

S.C. Library System – Valerie was excused.

ADJOURNMENT: Roy made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Jack seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m. The next meeting will be held on June 30, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference room, Building 158, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Zeitler