

Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board

October 27, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Approved

A meeting of the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board was held on October 27, 2010 in the Conference Room of Building 158, North County Complex, Hauppauge at 2:05 pm, Chairperson Beverly Cody presided.

PRESENT:

GROUP A

Frank Krotschinsky, Esq.	Representing County Executive Steve Levy
Jack Caffey	Representing Legislature Presiding Officer William Lindsay
Timothy Rothang	Representing Legislator Kate M. Browning
Linda O'Donohoe	S.C. Department of Social Services
James Kokindo	Representing S.C. Human Rights Commission
Carolyn Bossert	S.C. Department of Labor
Lew Johnson	Representing S.C. Department of Public Works, Design & Construction Division
Chris Chatterton	Representing SCDPW Transportation

GROUP B

Beverly Cody	Member, Secretary & Acting Chair
Debbie Epple	Member, S.C. Department of Civil Service/Public Info.
Kleo King, Esq.	Member, United Spinal Association

GROUP C

Teresa Strum	Member, Western Suffolk BOCES
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GROUP D

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

GUESTS: Mike Stoltz, Clubhouse of Suffolk, Doug & Erin King

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

EXCUSED: Terry Maccarrone, Valerie Lewis, Glenn Campbell, Esq., Barbara Falkman

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 11, 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 Teresa seconded the motion. All were in favor and the minutes were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letter of Appeal on Agenda – Frank said that when a decision is made by SCAT to deny transportation or someone's service is being affected and they disagree with Transportations decision they have a right to appeal it.

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Frank's understanding is that a sub-committee of SCDAB is supposed to be put together to handle these issues. This appeal involves the 3/4 mile requirement on the paratransit. Under the ADA, any municipality like Suffolk County which provides regular bus service has to provide a paratransit service within 3/4 of mile of a fixed route bus stop. The municipalities are free to cover an area greater than 3/4 of mile. Recently there was an article in Newsday about the paratransit service in Nassau which was going beyond the 3/4 mile limit and when the MTA started to have problems, they said they were no longer going to continue doing it. Suffolk County similarly has in past covered people outside the 3/4 mile limit. Transportation has directed Suffolk Bus to no longer cover people outside the 3/4 limit in an effort to save money. This person is appealing on behalf of his son who attends services at a facility and comes home to visit his family in N. Huntington which is 3/4 outside of the range.

Chris asked if there was specific language in the brochure that describes the appeal process. Chris said the rule applies to everyone whether they are new to the paratransit system or if they have always been using it. Chris said it's not just to save money, it's using what we have and are required to provide so that people don't get trip denials. It's to make sure that everyone has equal access to the system.

Roy asked if there was anything preventing this individual from having Huntington pick them up at the SCAT drop off point and take them as far as SCAT could go and then get them the rest of the way to the house. Chris said that could be arranged. Frank asked if Huntington paratransit could make the transfer to whatever facility Huntington paratransit uses.

Mike asked Chris if they had a map which would show the areas that are outside of the 3/4 of mile. Chris said he would be able to bring the map to the next meeting. Mike also added that Leg. Schneiderman had hearings in the spring about raising the fare on both SCAT and the fixed routes and about potential expansion of Sunday service. Some of the feedback was, if you're going to raise fares maybe you need to look at other uses as well that may be better economically or socially for the County. Mike thinks this issue might need to go under this umbrella as well.

Beverly asked if Chris could get a figure to the board on how many people this rule has been affecting. Beverly said she would like to table the appeal letter until the next advisory board meeting because we need to find out how many people have been asking for trips and are being denied first. It was decided that the constituent would continue to receive SCAT paratransit trips until further notice. Beverly asked for volunteers for a sub-committee to review the appeal.

Chris asked if what is decided by the Disabilities Advisory Board committee, if it would it be a recommendation or a determination. Frank's understanding is that it's a determination. Chris suggested checking the policy that is in place. Beverly asked Frank to look at the policy regarding appeals and to let Beverly know and if we need more people for the committee then we can ask for volunteers.

CORRESPONDECE continued....Beverly read a thank you letter she received from Legislator John M. Kennedy, Jr. for speaking at the Legislature's general meeting in Riverhead and at the legislative budget hearing against the proposal of moving OHS to under the Dept. of Health. She also read a thank you letter addressed to Kleo for her concerns as well regarding this issue. We also received an email from board member Cliff Hymowitz who was also very concerned about the issue.

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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: Beverly reported she spoke at the Legislature's general meeting in Riverhead on 10/12/10 and at the Legislative budget hearing on 10/21/10, against the proposal of moving OHS under the Dept. of Health. The final committee meeting will be held on November 3, 2010.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Architectural Barriers – Lew had nothing new to report.

Community Partnership – Frank had nothing new to report.

Education – Teresa reported she was looking into the IEP diploma issue and found a document dated 10/13/10 which was drafted by John B. King and was addressed to the College and Career Readiness Working Group which is part of the P-12 Education Committee. They suggest an offer of alternative or supplemental credentials and states they would be looking at this as a career skills credential. In January 2010 the Board of Regents supported the staff's recommendations to begin developing a career skills credential that would document student achievement against the Career Development and Occupational Studies learning standard (CDOS). It stated that this credential would supplement the regular High School diploma or for some students with disabilities it would replace the current Individualized Education Program diploma (IEP). It also says because a credential would be available to all students it would have more value to employers than the IEP diploma would. Teresa handed out copies an organizational chart of the Board of Regents which shows department heads and branches. Teresa also handed out copies of a revised IEP model which is now going to be a statewide IEP which every school district must follow. In the past all the school districts had their own version of it. The state was looking for more of a regimented IEP that would be identical from district to district to make sure that all requirements are met. Teresa handed out copies of the draft form that school districts will be using to document the IEP information and it should be in place for the 2011-2012 school years.

Roy said that he has moved into the legislative advocacy aspect of the IEP diploma issue and has spoken to Assembly Representatives on L.I. and NYS Senate Representatives and they have made inquiries to the Board of Regents.

Housing – Vacant

Legislation – Vacant

Employment - Carolyn reported that the Suffolk County Dept. of Labor was recently awarded a one million dollar grant from the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Family Assistance. This grant will support increasing the skills and career ladders for individuals targeting a career in the healthcare industry. The eligibility under the grant is for temporary assistance and food stamp eligible recipients and individuals under the 200% federal poverty line. The training will include nursing assistant, medical assistant, medical records clerk, medical billing, pharmacy technician and laboratory aide. A person who has a disability or is collecting SSD it might become eligible under this grant as a family of one. Their spouse's income wouldn't need to be included but that determination would be done on a case by case basis.

The job accommodation network, also referred to as (JAN), provides information about job accommodations and disability employment issues. The services they provide are free of charge and their website has a listing of free webinar trainings. You can access this information by googling Job Accommodation Network (JAN).

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

Suffolk County Office of Handicapped Services – Frank had nothing new to report.

Suffolk County Parks - Terry was excused.

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S. C. Department of Social Services – Linda had nothing new to report.

S.C. Office of Public Information – Debbie announced that the Office for the Aging will be holding their annual public hearing on 11/1/10 at the Southampton Community Center at 10:30 a.m. For further information please call (631) 853-8200.

Old Business – None

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 – Chris Chatterton reported that he will now be representing SCDPW Transportation on SCDAB and will be attending our monthly meetings. Also, Garry Lenberger is the new interim Director for SCDPW as reported in last month's minutes.

Chris reported that he is still looking into the braille bus signage and suggested the Transportation Task Force reconvene again. Chris said he would like to get an idea of where the project came from because it's not in the regulations under the ADA. Chris said he is not aware of any other municipality in the country that has such signage. Jack said, New York City does and this information was brought to the sub-committee by DPW Transportation.

Frank said when we talk about the ADA we talk about the ADA and the regulations to implement the ADA. The ADA will give you general requirements saying the bus system has to be accessible. Frank said just because the regulations don't say anything about signs doesn't mean it relieves us of the responsibility to provide them.

Kleo said all this information should be in all the past minutes. Heidi gave Chris the minutes from the last two Task Force meetings that were held. Jack asked Chris to find out where the signage stands with Transportation and get back to Frank about it so know whether or not the Task Force should reconvene.

S.C. Human Rights Commission – James had nothing new to report.

S.C. Community Development – Joseph was excused.

S.C. Library System – Valerie was excused.

SILO – Glenn was excused.

Beverly asked for a motion to go into executive session, Roy moved and Kleo seconded the motion and the motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: Roy made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Kleo seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m. **The next meeting combines the November & December meetings and will be held on December 1, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference room, Building 158, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge.**

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Zeitler