

Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board

February 23, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Approved

A meeting of the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board was held on February 23, 2011 in the Conference Room of Building 158, North County Complex, Hauppauge at 2:10 pm, Chairperson Frank Krotzschinsky representing Beverly Cody presided.

PRESENT:

GROUP A

Frank Krotzschinsky, Esq.	Representing County Executive Steve Levy
Jack Caffey	Representing Presiding Officer William Lindsay
Terry Maccarrone	S.C. Department of Parks
Barbara Falkman	S.C. Dept. of Health Services/Div. of Services Children with Special Needs

GROUP B

Debbie Epple	Member, S.C. Department of Civil Service/Public Info.
Kleo King, Esq.	Member, United Spinal Association

GROUP C

GROUP D

Mitch Shapiro	Member
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GUESTS: Mike Stoltz, Clubhouse of Suffolk, Sharon Garcia, Clubhouse of Suffolk, Doug & Erin King

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

EXCUSED: Beverly Cody, Leg. Kate Browning/Timothy Rothang, James Kokindo, Linda O'Donohoe, Valerie Lewis, Carolyn Bossert/Donna Passin, Roy Probeyahn, Tedd Godek/Lew Johnson, Chris Chatterton, Teresa Strum, Glenn Campbell, Esq., Jodi Nicastro/Rep. Ingo Gloeckner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF December 1, 2010: Frank asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes as distributed. There were none. Debbie made a motion to accept the minutes as distributed and Jack seconded the motion. All were in favor and the minutes were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: Beverly was excused. Beverly recently contacted Frank and said she is feeling much better and hopes to attend the next SCDAB meeting in March.

SCDAB

February 23, 2011

Page 2

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Architectural Barriers - Tedd/Lew was excused.

Community Partnership - Frank had nothing new to report.

Education - Teresa was excused.

Housing - Vacant.

Mike Stoltz/Clubhouse of Suffolk and Co-Chair of Sober Homes Committee, reported that 'Welfare-to-Work' Commission is addressing sober homes. Leg. Kate Browning raised awareness regarding this issue and the legislature successfully had the S. C. Dept. of Social Services develop an (RFQ), Request for Qualifications for sober home operators. The RFQ will create an opportunity for sober-home providers to receive enhanced payments in return for their compliance with the terms of the RFQ. Non-profits are reviewing current sober housing and the hope is to potentially open or move emergency housing at an increased rate to help support people in early sobriety.

Legislation - Vacant

Transportation - Vacant

Employment - Carolyn/Donna was excused.

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

Suffolk County Office of Handicapped Services - Frank spoke about appointments and vacancies on our board.

Frank reported that OHS received many complaints about snow in handicapped parking spaces and bus shelters that were inaccessible during the recent snowstorms.

Frank reached out to "Chad", person in one of the handouts, "Frozen in Place" article from Newsday, dated February 4, 2011. The article was about how recent snowstorms have kept many disabled residents homebound and even sidewalks that are clear are still too narrow for wheelchairs to navigate.

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.

Old Business - None

New Business - Frank mentioned that the Advisory Board needs to publish an annual report for 2010. At this time we would like each department to submit a blurb on what their departments accomplishments were for the year 2010 so a report will be done for 2010. Please email Frank or Heidi with this information.

S.C. Department of Health/Division of Children with Special Health Care Needs - Barbara reported that a morning and evening Transition Workshop was held on February 8, 2011 for parents of children turning 3 years of age who are going to receive preschool services through their local school district. An additional Transition Workshop will be held in the evening on March 2, 2011 at the Riverhead public library. Many parents registered to attend this session.

SCDAB

February 23, 2011

Page 3

S.C. Department of Public Works/Transportation Division – Chris was excused.

Jack reported that there has been a proposal to raise the fee for SCAT and the Eastern End of Long Island and Leg. Schneiderman introduced the bill to help people receive Sunday service. He put legislation in for this service but it was defeated. It would have resulted in an increased fare and the legislature didn't think it was worthwhile to raise the fee. Recently at the "Welfare-to-Work" committee Legislator Schneiderman gave them an introduction to his new legislation for Sunday service. He showed outlines on a map and all the various services that we have in existence right now and where he would like to include the Sunday service. He showed areas from the North fork and South fork where the bus is being used quite regularly. They feel that there are enough people using the system that they probably wouldn't have to increase any fare because it would pay for itself. He is looking more closely as to what is paying for itself and what isn't. Nassau County Bus service is also in trouble but assuming they stay in business we want to make sure that when the person is dropped off at the Nassau/Suffolk border that there is a bus service to continue for the person going west. If not, than at least we are going to do it somewhere there is a train station, or some means so they can continue their travels west.

Sharon Garcia said she travels with SCAT and she has asked several people if they would mind the increase in fare if Sunday service is offered and they said they wouldn't mind at all.

Frank has heard the same from other people as well, but for people that need to travel only 3 or 4 blocks, the \$3.00 fee is too much money for them.

Jack encouraged Frank to get in touch with Mr. Koubek, Chair of the 'Welfare to Work,' Commission or Mr. Schneiderman and find out exactly what's going on with this issue and maybe someone can come in and talk to the Advisory board about this issue.

Frank said the "Transportation Task Force committee", which is a sub-committee of SCDAB and which also looked at the braille bus signs should be a starting point for getting some of this input. Another issue Frank has been dealing with is the $\frac{3}{4}$ of mile issue. The Federal government requires SCAT to cover within $\frac{3}{4}$ of mile from a bus route and also encourages SCAT to travel beyond that, but they don't require it of them and they don't fund it either. Frank has received a number of complaints in the last couple of months regarding the $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile rule. Frank has also discussed this issue with County Executive's Office. One of the things we had talked about was getting the statistics on how many of those people are affected by the $\frac{3}{4}$ rule. Frank saw a list with a couple hundred names of people who live outside the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile limit but have still gotten their rides. We probably have about between 13,000-15,000 SCAT riders so the percentage of people being denied rides outside the $\frac{3}{4}$ of mile isn't that high. Jack suggested the board form a sub-committee and Frank should be informed of what's going on. Frank said as of right now no permanent decision has been made yet regarding $\frac{3}{4}$ mile limit. People who have been getting rides will continue to receive service until otherwise informed. For new SCAT riders who live outside the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile rule, if they can get themselves within $\frac{3}{4}$ of mile from a bus route they will be given SCAT service.

SCDAB

February 23, 2011

Page 4

Mitch suggested possibly offering a pro-rated bus fee for people outside the ¾ of mile rule. Kleo said the SCAT fare is based on the fixed route bus fare under the ADA regulations.

Jack mentioned that at the 'Welfare-to-Work' meeting, the Commissioner of S.C. Dept. of Social Services handed out information booklets to everyone. Jack read a draft of a pamphlet to the board which is given to people who go to DSS. "Did You Know, Special accommodations for people with disabilities...." this flyer tells you how DSS may help you get or keep your benefits...continued.

At the end of the pamphlet, Roland Hampson is listed as a contact person but surprisingly there is no mention of Frank Krotschinsky, Suffolk County Handicapped Services.

Frank said there was a meeting of the "Welfare to Work" Commission and at that meeting S. C. Dept. of Social Services was somewhat criticized for the not adequately explaining to their customers what their rights are under the Americans with Disability Act. One of Frank's responsibilities as the ADA Compliance Officer is to make sure that the county is in compliance with the ADA.

There are a number of federal websites such as www.ada.gov that are extremely helpful when it comes to ADA compliance. This website has toolkits with recommendations and they also have court settlements that were done in other municipalities that you can look at. As part of one of the settlement cases they had a sample notice on what a reasonable accommodation is. Frank emailed that sample notice to Roland Hampson after that meeting and suggested he modify it for this local jurisdiction. Roland then put the draft out without running it by Frank first and that's how this all came about. Frank plans on discussing the draft with Roland and making any necessary modifications to it.

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

S.C. Community Development - Joseph was excused.

S.C. Library System - Valerie was excused.

SILO - Glenn was excused.

ADJOURNMENT: Jack made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Kleo seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:28 p.m. The next meeting will be held on March 30, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference room, Building 158, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Zeitler