

Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board

May 18, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Approved

A meeting of the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board was held on May 18, 2011 in the Conference Room of Building 158, North County Complex, Hauppauge at 2:00 pm, Chairperson Frank Krotzschinsky representing Beverly Cody presided.

PRESENT:

GROUP A

Frank Krotzschinsky, Esq.	Representing County Executive Steve Levy
Linda O'Donohoe	S.C. Dept. of Social Services
Terry Maccarrone	S.C. Department of Parks
Lew Johnson	Representing S.C. Department of Public Works, Design & Construction Division
James Kokindo	Representing S.C. Human Rights Commission
Chris Chatterton	Representing SCDPW Transportation
Barbara Falkman	S.C. Department of Health Services/Division of Services for Children with Special Needs

GROUP B

GROUP C

GROUP D

Roy Probeyahn	Member
Jodi Nicastro	Rep., Ingo Gloeckner, Member, ACCESS-Adult Career & Continuing Education Services (formerly known as VESID)

GUESTS: Doug & Erin King, Sharon Garcia and Garret Hulett

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

EXCUSED: Jack Caffey, Rep., Presiding Officer William J. Lindsay, Timothy Rothang, Rep., Legislator Kate M. Browning, Donna Passin/Carolyn Bossert, Debbie Epple, Kleo King, Beverly Cody, Teresa Strum, Valerie Lewis, Glenn Campbell, Esq., Mitch Shapiro

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 27, 2011: Frank asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes as distributed. There were none. James made a motion to accept the minutes as distributed and Barbara seconded the motion. All were in favor and the minutes were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: Frank reported that OHS participated in the Veterans Stand Down on April 29, 2011 and it was well attended. There was also a DPW Transportation Committee meeting which is Legislator Schneiderman's committee. Frank gave testimony regarding transportation the issue of braille bus signage came up. Back in the minutes from February 18, 2009 the Transportation Task Force made a recommendation to purchase metal bus stop signs in braille marking with raised lettering describing bus, bus route, traveling direction and end destination. These metal signs would be affixed to the bus sign posts at the height required by USDOT ADA regulations. They would also be in contrasting colors with a light blue background and a dark blue raised lettering except that Frank has a hand written note from Joe Arian stating that the actual recommendation was for dark blue on white. This subject is open to discussion but at this time there isn't anyone present at today's meeting with a visual impairment to offer their suggestions.

Also at the last Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board meeting there was discussion of Doug King being voted in as Chairperson of the Transportation Committee in place of Cliff but Frank said Cliff continues to serve until he is replaced. Terry thought that there was a resolution in place that states if a board member misses more than 3 consecutive meetings they are automatically off the board and Cliff has not been to one of our board meetings for at least 3 years. Roy asked if we as a board elect the Chairperson or does the County Executive. Frank said he received a call this week from the County Executive's Office asking him to submit resolutions reappointing and filling the vacancies on our board. Doug hasn't been officially appointed to the board but Frank's suggestion is to make him Chairperson of the Transportation Task Force which has the immediate issue of the braille bus signs. Roy made a motion for Doug to Chair the Transportation Task Force sub-committee and Frank seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion carried. Terry asked if as a representative of a Suffolk County Department can make motions or vote on board issues. Frank said he wasn't certain but he doesn't remember seeing anything stating that representatives can't vote. Frank said he will look into it. Chris said he wasn't clear on the responsibilities of the person who is the Chair of the Transportation Committee listed on the Agenda. Frank said that is the committee that discusses general issues that arise with SCAT or the regular fixed route buses.

Frank said a representative of a product called the Mobi Mat came to OHS and gave a presentation. This product allows people in wheelchairs or a person using crutches or people with baby carriages to access beaches as well get down to the water. The mat is staked into the sand, is made of polyester mesh and is about 50 feet long x 60 inches wide and cost approx. \$5,000-\$7,000 each. Some towns are already using this product but the main issue is there is no money. Terry was also at the presentation and said he spoke to Parks Deputy Commissioner Joe Montuori who used to be the Superintendent of Heckscher State Park and the Commissioner is already familiar with the product. Terry said the manufacture said we could try the Mobi Mat at one of the beaches for 30 days to see how we like it. Frank said there is a parking fund which was derived from parking fines which we might be able to tap into but he has to look into further. Terry said if we are able to tap into this parking fund the Parks Dept. would buy the Mobi Mats and they would also like to tap into this fund to build wheelchair ramps at some of the beaches as well.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Architectural Barriers – Lew reported that Parks is in the review process of working on bathroom renovations at Peconic Dunes.

Community Partnership - Frank had nothing more to report.

Education - Teresa was excused.

Housing - Vacant.

Legislation – Vacant.

Transportation – Vacant.

Frank said OHS will be doing a mailing to inform SCAT riders of the Sunday Service Pilot Project which is set to begin shortly on the S92 and 10C routes only. Base fare for public transportation will increase on June 17th from \$1.50 to \$2.00 and the SCAT fare will remain the same at \$3.00.

Garrett/SILO said he held an instructional class for bus riders this past Saturday for both fixed route and SCAT. They are hoping to have another class in September.

Employment – Donna/Carolyn were excused.

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

Suffolk County Office of Handicapped Services – Frank reported earlier in the Chairperson’s report.

Suffolk County Parks - Terry had nothing more to report.

S.C. Department of Social Services - Linda reported 522 active CDPAP cases and in April DSS registered 6,789 Medicaid applications. The April caseload increased to 109,813 which was an historic high from 100,675 the year before in April. Linda handed me the Caseload Statistics for April 2011.

Suffolk County Office of Public Information - Debbie was excused.

Old Business – As Roy reported in last month’s minutes, there was a \$900,000 RFP for Family Support Services Expansion and the committee that Roy sits on reviewed them just last week and all the money was spent. A tremendous emphasis was put towards Crisis Intervention for people in the Autism Spectrum with challenging and difficult behaviors. Another focus was in the lack of development of group homes because the burden is falling onto the families. They also took some new money and enhanced the existing monies in the Nassau/Western Suffolk regions. They also did some free standing respite opportunities for people in the spectrum with challenging behaviors. A significant amount of money was put into non Medicaid service coordination because many people don’t know how to go about getting the services. They also put a significant amount of money in respite programs for after school, weekends and vacation. This brings the total amount of money spent annually on Family Support Services in the bi-county region close to 14 million dollars.

Commissioner Burke from the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) held a Listening Forum last week at the Community Services Office at LLIDSO.

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Roy said he was very encouraged by this forum since this was the first time a Commissioner had made themselves available to speak to the parents and advocates of individuals with intellectual disabilities. The Director and Associate Director for Community Services were also in attendance and it was well attended.

Roy Chairs the Suffolk County MR/DD committee and mentioned that the name cannot be changed until the state changes the law. DDI has a base in Smithtown and in Huntington and are expanding the residential school. 21 residential school placements will become available when the expansion does, hopefully by their target date of September 2012.

Task Force on Aging Out will be having their final liaison meeting on June 22, 2011 at 1:30 at the DDSO Office, 415A Oser Ave., Hauppauge. Director Gerry Uber, from DDSO will be speaking. Roy stepped down as Chair of the Family Support Consumer Council and Mary Fasano took over as Chair. They will be meeting tonight at Oser Ave. and their quarterly meeting will be on 6/15/11 same place with topic to be announced.

Suffolk County MR/DD Committee meeting will be held on June 1st at 10:30 and the Community Board will be meeting on June 8th at 1:30.

The Family Support Breakfast will be held at the Hilton Hotel in Melville on Friday, November 4th at 8:30.

It was also mentioned that a bill was filed by Assemblyman Harvey Weisenberg for background checks to be done for people who work in direct care with individuals with intellectual disabilities. Roy asked Heidi to forward the email he sent Frank to everyone on the board.

New Business – None

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

S.C. Department of Public Works/Transportation Division – Chris reported the following paratransit statistics: In April 2011 there were 48,715 SCAT rides requested, 46,821 were approved, and 1,264 were denied which is 2.6%. From the rides that were approved there were 10,947 cancellations which is 23.4%. Through the year they are running at 25.4%, which means that one out of every four rides that was accepted was then cancelled. Chris reported that DPW Transportation will be taking steps in the future to lower cancellations, with policy changes. They had 39,239 passengers in April so far this year which is a 5.4% increase in total passenger's compared to same period last year. They haven't put their bid in yet but they expect to get new paratransit buses by the end of this year. All the buses still run on diesel and are fueled on site by the contracted operators. Garrett thinks the high percentage of cancellations comes about by the reservationist opening up a new ticket instead of going into the same ticket to make the change.

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S.C. Human Rights Commission - James announced S.C. Human Rights Commission will be having their 2011 Awards Dinner next Wednesday, May 25, 2011. James handed out invitations for those who are interested in going. Their Annual Report is at the printer and hopefully he will have copies to hand out at the next meeting.

S.C. Community Development – Vacant.

S.C. Library System - Valerie was absent.

SILO - Garrett/SILO said he held an instructional class for bus riders this past Saturday for both the fixed route buses and SCAT. They are hoping to have another class in September.

ADJOURNMENT: Roy made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Frank seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m. The next meeting will be held on June 29, 2011 at 3:00 p.m. in the Conference room, Building 158, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Zeitler