

Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board

September 21, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Approved

A meeting of the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board was held on September 21, 2011 in the Conference Room of Building 158, North County Complex, Hauppauge at 2:00 pm, Chairperson Beverly Cody presided.

PRESENT:

GROUP A

Frank Krotchinsky, Esq.
Jack Caffey
James Kokindo
Barbara Falkman

Representing County Executive Steve Levy
Representing Presiding Officer William Lindsay
Representing S.C. Human Rights Commission
S. C. Dept. of Health Services/Div. Services for
Children with Special Needs
S. C. Department of Social Services
Representing SCDPW Transportation
Representing S.C. Department of Public Works,
Design & Construction Division

Linda O'Donohoe
Chris Chatterton/Jennifer Freeman
Lew Johnson

GROUP B

Beverly Cody
Valerie Lewis

Member Secretary & Acting Chair
Member

GROUP C

Teresa Strum

Member, Western Suffolk BOCES

GROUP D

Clifford Hymowitz
Glenn Campbell, Esq.,
Jodi Nicastro

Member
Member
Rep. Ingo Gloeckner, Member, ACCES

GUESTS: Garrett Hulett/SILO, Bruce Blower, Sharon Garcia, Clubhouse of Suffolk, Juanita Smith, L.I. Talking Book Library, Doug & Erin King and Brad Greenspan

STAFF: Heidi Zeitler-Senior Clerk Typist, Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities
Gina Grassi-Neighborhood Aide, Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities
Justin Ainsworth, Intern, Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities

EXCUSED: Terry Maccarrone, Kleo King, Esq., Carolyn Bossert/Donna Passin, Debbie Epple, Leg. Kate Browning/Timothy Rothang, Mitch Shapiro, Roy Probeyahn, Glenn, Campbell, Esq., Debbie Epple.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 10, 2011: Beverly asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes of August 10, 2011 as distributed. There were none. Cliff made a motion to accept the minutes as distributed and Lew seconded the motion. All were in favor and the minutes were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: Beverly reported that she and Frank and went to the Helen Keller National Center for the Blind and met with Dr. Gene Bourquin to discuss recommendations for the braille bus signage. Dr. Gene Bourquin works at the Center and is a Certified Orientation Mobility Specialist, Certified Low Vision therapist and he also has a doctorate in Health Administration.

Since people with visual problems experience different levels of visual impairment and since the ADA regulations don't have specific guidelines as to what colors the sign should be, Beverly made a motion to accept Dr. Bourquin's suggestion of a high contrast, matte with off white surface and black lettering. The bus number and the direction of the bus should also be included on the sign. Valerie seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion passed.

Valerie also suggested that the size of the sign be 2 or 3 times of the sample size Chris brought to the meeting today. Frank asked that the sign conforms to what the Federal government regulations have set for standard sizes. Beverly said the following websites were very helpful, <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/> for manual, uniformed traffic control devices. Also www.access-board.gov/prowac/draft.pdf starting on page 54 has information about signage. Cliff said the access board has an open comment period on their website right now because they are coming out with new guidelines.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Architectural Barriers - Lew had nothing new to report.

Community Partnership - Frank had nothing new to report.

Education - Teresa included information in the handouts today about NYSED having a public comment period for the proposed amendments of Sections 100.5, 100.6, 100.9 and 200.5. Teresa said they are moving forward with the recommendations to repeal the IEP diploma for students with disabilities upon the expiration of 2012-2013 school years. Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, they would establish a Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential, only for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who have taken the NYS Alternate Assessment and who are not eligible for a regular diploma. Written comments on the proposed amendment will be accepted for 45 days after its October 5, 2011 publication in the New York State Register (must be received by November 21, 2011) and may be submitted to: New York State Education Department, P-12: Office of Special Education, 89 Washington Avenue, Room 309 EB, Albany, NY 12234, Attn: Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential. Comments may also be faxed to (518) 473-5387 or emailed to spedpubliccomment@mail.nysed.gov.

Barbara Falkman made a motion for the Advisory board to compose a letter of support in students keeping their IEP diploma and that we are not in support of the Skills and Achievement Credential that is suggested. Frank seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion passed. Frank mentioned this would be the third letter the Advisory Board has written in support of keeping the IEP diploma in place. Advisory Board agreed to leave it up to the Chair to decide on what will be written in the letter.

Housing – Vacant

Legislation - Vacant

Transportation – Vacant. Cliff reported that he wrote to the State Director of Medicaid Transportation because of inefficiencies with the program. Cliff said he wasn't allowed to use Medicaid Transportation to see 2 doctors in the same day because of problems with double billing. Cliff said the regulations have now changed and the State will be saving money by allowing consumers to see more than one doctor at a clinic, in a day.

Linda said there have been many changes to Medicaid Services and S.C. Department Social Services will be having Advocacy Training again the beginning of October 7, 2011.

The discussion regarding SCDOT Division looking to implement a plan of action to get the denial rates down on SCAT paratransit, continued from our August meeting. Chris said SCDOT would like to put a 'No-Show' policy in place for the habitual no shows within the system and they would like to modify the reservation period by cutting down from a 7 day reservation to a 3 day reservation. They will continue to take comments regarding the policy from our board members and are planning to have a public hearing as well. After all the comments are gathered and reviewed, SCDOT will present the proposed policy to the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board.

Employment – Carolyn Bossert/Donna Passin were excused.

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities - Frank had nothing new to report.

Suffolk County Parks - Terry was excused.

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

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

Old Business – None

New Business – Bruce reported on the handling of tropical storm Irene by the JEEP Program (Joint Emergency Evacuation Program). JEEP is for people with special needs that would need assistance during an evacuation and have already pre-registered with the program. The following report is from the Suffolk County Dept. of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services:

JEEP contacted the entire JEEP database of 414 registered individuals in advance of the hurricane. Approximately 80 people didn't answer their phones, 180 had no specific needs, 20 refused to leave and the remainder had made plans with family/friends.

The new web based JEEP went live on August 25th at Noon with another 82 additional people registering online.

Of the 496 clients an estimated 58 lived in the flood zones. The American Red Cross opened and operated 10 shelters within Suffolk County and an estimated 2,280 individuals were in those shelters within the evacuation time period. JEEP transferred 6 people with special needs to special needs shelters and 1 person was taken to the hospital. Three shelters were co-located Functional Medical Needs clients (est. 200). This was the first time in NYS history that the American Red Cross co-located shelters so that a person with special needs could stay at a local shelter. JEEP said they would be happy to come to one of our future meetings and give us a much more thorough report. Beverly asked Heidi to include Bruce's 2 page storm report in the hand-outs for next month's meeting.

Cliff wanted to know if JEEP followed up with the 80 people who didn't answer their phones. Bruce said you have to remember that since registering with the program, some people may have moved, died etc. Bruce said JEEP calls the individual 24 hours before the storm arrives as well as a few hours prior to the storm. Cliff requested that JEEP come prepared to answer the question; did JEEP follow up with the 80 people who didn't answer their phones prior to the storm?

Frank said when he goes to speaking engagements he encourages people to sign-up for the JEEP program so that the special need population gets the services.

S.C. Dept. of Health/Division of Children w/Special Health Care Needs - Barbara had nothing new to report.

S.C. Department of Public Works/Transportation Division - see above transportation discussion.

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

S.C. Community Development - Vacant

S.C. Library System - Valerie had nothing new to report.

SILO - Glenn was excused.

ADJOURNMENT: Beverly said we would have to continue with the rest of the Agenda at our next meeting because we have run out of time. Frank made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Beverly seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m. The next meeting will be held on October 26, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference room, Building 158, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge.

Respectfully submitted,
Heidi Zeitler