

Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board

January 25, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Approved

A meeting of the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board was held on January 25, 2012 in the Conference Room of Building 158, North County Complex, Hauppauge at 2:06 pm, Chairperson Beverly Cody presided.

PRESENT:

GROUP A

Frank Krotschinsky, Esq.
Mark Malizia
Barbara Falkman

Representing County Executive Steven Bellone
Representing Legislator William Spencer, MD
S. C. Dept. of Health Services/Div. Services for Children
with Special Needs
S. C. Department of Social Services
Representing SCDPW Transportation Division
Representing SC Human Rights Commission
S.C. Department of Parks
S.C. Department of Labor

Linda O' Donohoe
Chris Chatterton
Jennifer Blaske
Terry Maccarrone
Donna Passin/Carolyn Bossert

GROUP B

Beverly Cody
Valerie Lewis
Kleo King, Esq.

Member Secretary & Acting Chair
Member
Member, United Spinal Association

GROUP C

Teresa Strum

Member, Western Suffolk BOCES

GROUP D

Jodi Nicastrò
Roy Probeyahn

Rep., Peter Conticello, Member, ACCES (formerly known as
VESID)
Member

GUESTS: Doug & Erin King, Garrett Hulett, Bruce Blower, Judith Weiber, L.I. Council of the Blind, Juanita Smith, Brad Greenspan, Pat & Camille Agugliaro, Robyn Mayr, Virginia Collins-Innersight

STAFF: Heidi Zeitler-Senior Clerk Typist, Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities

EXCUSED: Debbie Epple, Mitch Shapiro, James Kokindo, Lew Johnson, Cliff Hymowitz, Glenn Campbell

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 26, 2011: Beverly asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes of October 26, 2011. There were none. Frank 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: None

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: Beverly read out loud the letter the board sent to Town Supervisor William J. Wilkinson regarding lack of handicapped parking at the Sole East Resort in Montauk NY. This information was brought to the board's attention by our past Chairperson, Richard Rosenthal. We requested they have Town inspectors look into this complaint and take appropriate action. (As of today's date, we have not heard back a response.)

Beverly read another letter which was drafted from the board and will be sent to Mayor Rickenbach, Jr., regarding the lack of handicapped accessibility at two local restaurants in the town of East Hampton, the Golden Pear Café and John Papa's Restaurant. Board members suggested that copies of the letter also be sent to the Village Code Enforcement Officer, Managers of both restaurants and the Editor of the East Hampton Star Newspaper.

Jennifer said Suffolk County Human Rights Commission takes complaints under New York State Human Rights Law and they can send out letters to these establishments as well.

Beverly also reported that she gave testimony at the recent Suffolk County DPW Transportation Hearings which were held in Hauppauge and Riverhead, regarding SCAT. Beverly said the concerns she has expressed at these advisory board meetings regarding SCAT were also expressed at the hearings. The turnout was extremely low; approximately 18 people showed up at the Hauppauge hearing and approximately 3 in Riverhead. Some of the SCAT riders who spoke said they heard about the hearing through word of mouth; not by any notice on the buses.

Beverly said the public hearing was held primarily to put forth the idea of reducing the reservation period from seven days to three days. Those who attended the hearing expressed concern that by making the reservation period shorter, it would totally overwhelm the SCAT Reservation system. Beverly said she didn't hear anything DPW presented at the hearing, justifying a change that would affect almost 12,000 people. Beverly said the statistics show that there are about 19 SCAT riders who cause the majority of the no-shows/late cancellations. This would be a major change affecting 12,000 people who might have to make up to three phone calls a week to make a reservation instead of one phone call with the present system. As the Chair, Beverly would like to call for a Motion that the board propose to keep the seven day reservation period.

A Motion was made by Chris Chatterton, DPW Transportation to table the vote until the board can review DPW's proposed policy changes regarding changing the reservation window from 7 days to 3 days.

The Motion was seconded by Frank Krotzchinsky, Director O.P.W.D.

VOTE: In Favor: 3
Opposed: 7

A vote was held, be it resolved that the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board (SCDAB) opposes tabling the vote. Motion failed

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Another vote was held, be it resolved that the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board (SCDAB) recommends the Suffolk County Accessible Transit (SCAT) Paratransit keep its present seven day advance reservation period.

Motion made by: Beverly Cody, Chair

Motion Seconded by: Valerie Lewis

VOTE: In Favor: 8

Opposed: 2

Beverly also asked for a motion to send the above motion to the County Executive and to all the Suffolk County Legislators. Kleo moved to send the letter and Valerie seconded the motion. Six board members were in favor and one was opposed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Architectural Barriers - Lew was excused.

Community Partnership - Frank had nothing new to report.

Education - Teresa spoke about the recommended changes to the status of diplomas. All this information was sent to Heidi and forwarded to all board members on 1/13/12. The proposed amendment, if passed, would be put into effect for the 2013-2014 school year. This is for students who are aging out in June of 2014, and those students would no longer be eligible for the IEP diploma but instead be eligible for a Skills and Achievement Commencement Credential. There was also a proposal to put in place to have safety net provisions for students with disabilities.

Roy made a motion for the board to send another letter asking to propose legislation to direct the Board of Regents to implement a diploma for the special education students that wouldn't have qualified for an RTC. Roy suggested we send the letter to the Governor, Suffolk County Legislators, Assembly, Senate and to the respective Chairs in the Education Committee of each house of legislation. Kleo seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion was unanimously approved.

Robin Mayr made a suggestion to have the parents of special needs students sign the letter too.

Roy invited everyone to the L.I. Citizens Task Force on Aging Out, Legislative Brunch on February 10, 2012 at 11:00 a.m., L.I.D.D.S.O., 415A Oser Ave., Hauppauge, N.Y. Suffolk County Legislators will be in attendance and Roy said our concern regarding the IEP diploma will be brought up at the Brunch.

Beverly asked Roy to draft the letter and he accepted.

Housing - Vacant.

Roy reported that there has been an auspice change with group homes that are presently operated by the State in the bi-county region. The State is asking that not-for-profits private agencies file a RFS to take over the operation of those homes.

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Legislation - Vacant.

Transportation - Vacant.

Kleo said the Governor introduced a bill which only affects New York City taxis. N.Y.C. sells taxi medallions, but before the city can issue 2,000 new taxi medallions the governor said they need to talk about accessible cabs first. The city was given the green light to issue the first 400 new medallions, but will have to hold up on the other 1,600 until they come up with a plan to make taxis and livery cars accessible first. The governor told the N.Y.C. Taxi & Limousine Commissioner that he would reject any plan that doesn't require 100% accessible yellow cabs. While this was going on, United Spinal, other advocacy groups and individuals had a federal court case under ADA Title II. Since the City is the one who sells these medallions to the cab companies the judge said nothing can be sold, not even the first 400 unless they are accessible. The City Corp. Council tried to stay the judge's decision, and as of last week the judge refused the stay, so his decision stands. Kleo said it's big business to sell these medallions they auction them off and last year some of these medallions were sold for one million dollars.

Employment - Donna had nothing new to report.

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities - None.

Suffolk County Parks - Terry had nothing new to report.

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 - None.

S.C. Dept. of Health/Division of Children with Special Health Care Needs - Barbara informed everyone that their department will be having a Transition Workshop for Parents of Children in the Early Intervention Program. This is an informational meeting for families who have a child who will turn three years old between July 1, 2012 and December 31, 2012. Dates are as follows: Riverhead Free Library, January 23, 2012 6:00pm-8:00pm or Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Division of Services for Children with Special Needs, Hauppauge, February 1, 2012, 9:30 am-11:30 am session & 6:30 pm-8:30 pm session.

S.C. Department of Public Works/Transportation Division - Chris said the reason they want to reduce the reservation period down to three days is so that people book the rides they intend to take. When DPW/Transportation makes this change, they are expecting to have zero denials, which will mean everyone will get the rides they want.

Chris said that this change is not to be punitive but to enhance the system for everyone. Chris also said the public hearing was held to discuss the no-shows and late cancellations as well. Chris said that Transportation has been listening to what the board has been saying. Suffolk Bus is going to be tracking and reporting on company no-shows. Suffolk Bus will start tracking "missed trips" which arrive more than 15 minutes after the end of the pickup window. These will be considered missed trips by the bus company. Chris said education to the riders will be a key component to reducing problems with trip denials.

Chris handed out the following information to everyone:

- Proposed SCAT Passenger No-Show/Late Cancellation Policy
- Operational Changes to Increase Efficiency and Accountability in SCAT services
- Reducing the Reservation period from 7 days to 3 day window
- Notice of Public Hearings on Proposed Suffolk County Transit Fare Increases

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

S.C. Community Development - Vacant.

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

SILQ - Glenn was excused.

ADJOURNMENT: Kleo made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Valerie seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m. Right after the motion passed to adjourn the meeting, Beverly mentioned that the January issue of Able Newspaper contained the obituaries of Board member Judy Record and Board member Roy Probeyan's wife Arleen, who was also a disability right advocate.

The next meeting will be held on February 29, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference room, Building 158, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge.

Respectfully submitted,
Heidi Zeitler