

Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board

March 28, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Approved

A meeting of the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board was held on March 28, 2012 in the Conference Room of Building 158, North County Complex, Hauppauge at 2:00 pm, Chairperson Beverly Cody presided.

PRESENT:

GROUP A

Frank Krotzschinsky, Esq.
Marjorie E. Acevedo
Barbara LoMoriello
Barbara Falkman

Representing County Executive Steven Bellone
Representing Presiding Officer William Lindsay
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 Labor
Representing Tedd Godek, R.A., S.C. Department of
Public Works, Design & Construction Division

Linda O' Donohoe
Chris Chatterton
Jennifer Blaske
Carolyn Bossert
Lew Johnson

GROUP B

Beverly Cody
Valerie Lewis
Kleo King, Esq.
Debbie Epple

Member Secretary & Acting Chair
Member
Member, United Spinal Association
Member, S.C. Department of Civil Service/Public Info

GROUP C

GROUP D

Jodi Nicaastro
Roy Probeyahn
Mitch Shapiro
Glenn Campbell, Esq.

Rep., Peter Conticello, Member, ACCES
Member
Member
Member

GUESTS: Doug & Erin King, Bruce Blower, Juanita Smith, Robyn Mayr, Sharon Garcia, Patty Furino, Judy Wieber, L.I. Foundation for the Blind, Caterina Henter

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

EXCUSED: Terry Maccarrone, Teresa Strum, Cliff Hymowitz

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 29, 2012: Beverly asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes of October 26, 2011. Frank said he had a correction on page 4, it should read, Frank said, the federal government states you cannot sanction someone unless their cancellation of a ride is equivalent to a no-show. Marge made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected and Linda seconded the motion. All were in favor and the corrected minutes were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: Beverly updated everyone on the East End accessibility issues. Both The Golden Pear and John Pappas restaurants are now in compliance. East End Code Enforcement Officer Thomas Lawrence has been keeping Beverly informed regarding these issues.

Beverly said we still haven't heard back from Supervisor Wilkinson, Town of East Hampton regarding The Sole East Resort in Montauk about the lack of handicapped parking. Beverly wants to send a follow-up letter. Beverly said there was any article in the East Hampton Star about the Surf Lodge, a popular Montauk club and restaurant going to trial. They were charged between May 28 and Sept. 16 of last year with 686 violations of the town's zoning code and 1 fire code violation, many of them repeated citations for the same handful of issues. Richard wanted Beverly to pass along a thank you to our board for getting involved because he has fighting some of these violations for years. In Sunday Newsday, March 25, 2012 there was an article in the paper about the Hicksville railroad station being refigured so that it meets ADA standards. Someone had made a complaint about it and now the Town of Oyster Bay will be reconfiguring the parking lot to meet the ADA standards. The handicapped parking was out of compliance by not having the required access aisles and not enough parking. The old configuration dated back decades and since the town had not received any complaints town spokeswoman Phyllis Barry said, "No one figured anything was wrong." The town's other commuter lots are now being inspected to determine whether similar reconfiguration is necessary. At the end of the article Newsday included this email, watchdog@newsday.com so people can let Newsday know whether their community's parking lots meet ADA standards. Kleo said NYS parking is more restrictive than ADA so she hopes they follow the NYS laws as opposed to the ADA otherwise they will be in violation. Mitch suggested the board reach out to Public relations and do a story to make people more aware of these problems. Beverly asked Frank to write a letter to Newsday.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Architectural Barriers - Lew said the county is in the process of replacing cracked sidewalks in several different parking lots. Frank suggested that when they work on the sidewalks to also make sure that the curb cut is also in compliance because he has come across many that are too steep. Lew added that vigilance as a board is necessary to make sure buildings are in compliance.

Community Partnership - Frank said he spoke to Joel Vetter, Fire Rescue and Emergency Services (FRES) about the JEEP Program and asked if he would be available to make a presentation. Joe said he would be glad to make a presentation and reported that they have 500 people registered for JEEP but their goal is to have 10,000. Valerie had a complaint though; she said FRES doesn't have any promotional materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities.

Frank also reported that he took a tour of Suffolk County bus recently and he observed phone calls coming into the reservation system and watched dispatchers at work.

Frank explained that Suffolk Bus has a tracking system that counts the number of calls on hold and they try not to have any caller on hold for more than 3 minutes. The reservationist are told they have to be quick and they have a certain amount of time to try and schedule the ride and if they can't schedule the ride within a certain amount time it is sent over to the helpdesk. If one of the scheduled rides has a problem it's also sent over to the help desk. Frank said he emailed some comments to DPW Transportation with regards to suggestions on the no-show policy.

Frank had a chance to read some of the FTA reviews and he thinks that the transportation department should consider those reviews. The policy that is proposed right now is for people to receive a warning after 3 no-shows and if they continue there would be further sanctions. The Feds recommended transportation look at the total number of rides that are scheduled. Chris said they are aware of this and are looking to make some modifications. Frank thinks the bus company has an obligation to let people know the situations where transportation is responsible for a cancelled ride.

Education - Teresa was excused.

Roy thanked the board for their support with the IEP diploma letter and also to Teresa for bringing us the information to the board. The Suffolk County Community Board and the Task Force on Aging Out will also be sending similar letters to the same group of people.

Roy reported that OPWD director's position is open because the previous director was promoted to Associate Commissioner. For the present time Bob Lopez, Community Services Director of the L.I. Development Disabilities Services Office is the interim director. Gerry Huber the former director is working out of Long Island. Roy sits on 11.15 Waiver board which meets via video conferences monthly with the Commissioner and the next video conference is scheduled for April 5th. Long Island will continue with direct services and oversight for people in the community being served by not-for-profit agencies. It will remain a Nassau/Suffolk function however the state operated side is now going to become a separate office with its own director and will be united with Queens. In addition the state has vested itself of 6 group homes, 3 are in Suffolk and 3 are in Nassau County. The Office of Mental Health has also gone through some major changes as well.

Sharon said there will be an Educational training held on March 31st at East Hampton High School from 9:30 – 3:00. They will have booths set up and will also have a panel discussion with a speaker attending.

Housing – Vacant.

Legislation – Vacant.

Transportation – Vacant.

Employment – Carolyn reported that the Labor Department is in their 2nd year of their health grant. There are training opportunities for entry level careers in the healthcare field. If anyone interested they can call (631) 853-6600.

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities – Frank announced that June Roberts's assistant, Maureen Sutherland recently passed away. The viewing will be held on Friday, March 30th from 2-5 and 7-9 and on Sat., 2-5 at Tuthills funeral home in Riverhead. Beverly asked Heidi to send a card to the funeral home so they can forward the card to the next of kin on behalf of the board.

Frank said he was invited to a dedication ceremony for an audible traffic signal which was installed at the request of Judy Weiber and her husband. Beverly asked who to contact in order have more audible traffic signals installed. SILO was suggested, Frank Pearson NYSDOT and Legislator Cilmi can also be contacted.

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 thanked everyone for their good wishes while she was home recuperating.

Old Business - None

New Business - None

S.C. Dept. 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 wanted to know if anyone had any comments or suggestions on transportations proposed no-show late cancellation policy Marge suggested asking for a consumer's cell phone number as part of the scheduling process so that they would be able to contact the consumer if they need to. SCAT Transportation was discussed at length. Robin said Nassau County's window begins at their pick-up time and continues for half hour after. Chris said he is looking to get input from the board on the no-show policy before it goes out. Bruce said he has made several suggestions for Suffolk County to use the same point system in place that Nassau County has been using for 10 years. Beverly would like to see Suffolk County try the Nassau County Able Ride system and implement the penalty. She is 100% in favor for a penalty for chronic abusers. Chris added that transportation is hoping to have the AVL system up and running within a year. When a driver arrives at a location the driver will hit a button, the time will be stamped in, a call to the dispatcher and how long the bus waits will be tracked. Chris said no-shows/cancellations are reported when the bus arrives outside the window and the person is not there to take the ride, it's reported as a missed trip by the County. It won't be reported as a no-show because the bus arrived outside the window. DPW Transportation will be instituting call back system within the next couple of months. Kleo King said she is very concerned because in the ADA & DOT regulations are very clear that there has to be participation from the people the service is set-up for. Kleo is hearing from everyone who is a scat rider in this room that they really weren't given an opportunity to give their in-put. It would be a huge violation if these policies are put forth without the input of the riders. Beverly would like DPW to furnish to this board a complete copy of what was filed with the FTA including DPW's suggestions, and give us the addresses of the officials, agents and whoever DPW Transportation sent it to so that we can send a counterproposal.

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

S.C. Community Development - Vacant.

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

SILO - Glenn had nothing new to report.

Judy Weiber , L.I. Council of the Blind informed everyone about their fundraiser called, "4th Dinner In the Dark which will be held on April 30, 2012 from 6:30 - 10:30 at the Sterling in Bethpage NY. They invite you to come and share a unique dining experience in which you don't need to use your eyes to "see" your food. For more information contact Mike Godino or Lori Scharff (516) 887-1336

ADJOURNMENT: Lew made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Debbie seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m. **The next meeting will be held on April 25, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference room, Building 158, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge.**

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Zeitler