

Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board

April 25, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Approved

A meeting of the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board was held on April 25, 2012 in the Conference Room of Building 158, North County Complex, Hauppauge at 3:10 pm, interim Chairperson, Frank Krottschinsky presided.

PRESENT:

GROUP A

Frank Krottschinsky, 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

Linda O' Donohoe
Chris Chatterton
James Kokindo

GROUP B

Kleo King, Esq.
Debbie Epple

Member, United Spinal Association
Member, S.C. Department of Civil Service/Public Info

GROUP C

Teresa Strum

Member, Western Suffolk BOCES

GROUP D

Clifford Hymowitz

Member

GUEST SPEAKER: Joel Vetter, S. C. Dept. of Fire & Rescue (FRES)

GUESTS: Bruce Blower, Robyn Mayr, Mike Stolz, Clubhouse of Suffolk, Sharon Garcia, Patty Furino, Judy Wieber, L.I. Foundation for the Blind

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

EXCUSED: Beverly Cody, Lew Johnson, Jodi Nicasastro, Valerie Lewis, Terry Maccarrone, Marjorie E. Acevedo, Rep. Presiding Officer William Lindsay, Carolyn Bossert, Donna Passin, Roy Probeyahn, Mitch Shapiro, Glenn Campbell, Esq.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 28, 2012: Frank asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes as distributed. There were none. Cliff made a motion to accept the minutes as distributed and Debbie seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: We received a thank you card from Maureen Sutherland's family for the sympathy card the board sent.

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The board also received correspondence back from Senator Kenneth P. LaValle regarding the IEP letter which the board sent on March 1, 2012. Senator LaValle enclosed a copy of a letter which was sent to Chancellor Tisch and was signed by numerous members of the Senate Delegation in support of keeping the IEP diploma in place for students with disabilities.

Beverly also forwarded e-mail she received from Richard Rosenthal regarding an article stating that East Hampton Village will be issuing a massive notification to all village businesses with a reminder about ADA requirements.

Cliff said he is trying to help get a process in place at the Town of Brookhaven that would require people to obtain permits before parking lots can be striped or repaved.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: Frank said he recently spoke to Beverly, she has been in and out of the hospital since her surgery and because she needs to put all her attention into getting better she feels it would be in her best interest to resign as Chair.

Joel Vetter, Fire & Rescue said the J.E.E.P. has a secure encrypted website that exceeds the current federal healthcare standards for medical records. It allows them to input data, allows for client access and use of multiple streams of notifications. They are trying to get away from the title of "Special Needs Registry" and want to change it to a community registry. Joel met with Valerie Lewis a couple of times and she was instrumental on helping to make their website ADA compliant. They are now working with county IT to take this knowledge throughout the county website. FRES needs help promoting the JEEP Program, they have identified that there are 280,000 residents in this county at a minimum that could enroll in this program. Joel asked everyone to help promote the registry and to get in contact with him because he can customize it to whatever suits your needs. With the help of Valerie, 24 libraries out of 56 have already signed on to help distribute information about the JEEP Program. FRES isn't going to wait for an emergency before they contact people in the registry, so their office utilizes the FCC call out at least twice a year. Another goal they have will be to call registered clients on their birthdays as well as conduct audio interviews over the phone. Anybody can register for JEEP, not just special need individuals. Cliff suggested a prompt specifically added for people with cognitive disabilities so that they can add their service coordinator on the form. The last piece they are working on is pushing all their data into the county 911 Cad computers so that the specific needs of the client can be known at the time of the call. Code Red mass notification system can batch load an entire agency within a matter of minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Architectural Barriers - Lew was excused. Cliff said he hasn't heard back from Lew about signs in the North County Complex and he wanted this noted in the minutes.

Community Partnership - None

Education - Teresa said that the Board of Regents is moving ahead with the new commencement credentials for students with severe disabilities and it will be put in effect for students graduating in 2013.

Housing - Vacant.

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Mike Stolz said Clubhouse of Suffolk has gotten involved with the Nursing Home Diversion Waiver and they recently noticed that one of gaps in the program has been in the Medicaid waiver. People are able to get a housing subsidiary by moving out of a nursing home but unfortunately the subsidiary is time limited and once time runs out there is no catch provided, so they can up homeless. The state did recognize this and recently put out an RFP for housing for people who were diverted from nursing homes. NYC had some housing added with a few beds in Nassau County and zero for Suffolk County. Mike said he would get more information about the RFP.

Cliff said he has been getting a lot of calls from people who are on Social Security Disability and are living in their cars. Cliff said it seems that there is no direction at the DSS centers, people end up waiting on line for hours to ask questions about services, then they are directed to fill out the application and end up waiting on line again. He is looking for a point of access to make it easier for people. Linda said DSS will provide shelter to anyone who comes to the center and says they are homeless. The person needs to fill out an application requesting assistance and they need to bring ID with them. Linda told Cliff he can e-mail her for more information.

Cliff wanted to know if there are accessible shelters for people with special needs. Linda said there are some accessible shelters, but the individual needs to be able to get to the restrooms on their own. Linda said they don't have any shelters for severely disabled individuals but most of those individuals go to Nursing homes.

Legislation - Vacant.

Frank was recently contacted by John Bussani, John is one of a few providers on L.I. whose business is to convert vehicles into being accessible for people with disabilities. These businesses used to do all of the modifications to make vehicles accessible for those with disabilities. These modifications may include raising a roof, lowering the floor, and installing lifts, hand controls, and remotely operated doors and other specialized equipment.

In more recent years, basic vehicle chassis modifications are such as raised roofs and lowered floors are made by two or three large companies like Braun. This results in greater manufacturing efficiency, consistency, and compliance with federal safety requirements. The vehicles are then shipped to individual "Mobility Dealers", like Bussani, who perform the final installation of hand controls, etc. Up to this point, the vehicles have not been titled, and are considered new, albeit modified.

The problem is that mobility vehicle dealers are considered used vehicle dealers and are not allowed under current law in New York to sell new vehicles. The Department of Motor Vehicles could decide to strictly enforce the law and shut them down. This would have a negative effect on people's ability to obtain appropriately modified vehicles.

A bill currently pending in Albany, A4298/S2913 would modify section 415 of the Vehicle & Traffic Law by allowing Mobility Dealers to sell new modified vehicles.

Franks recommendation is to take a position on this and write a letter of support to our Legislators as a board. Barbara made a motion, Cliff seconded it, all were in favor and the motion carried. Frank said he would forward the above information to everyone on the board.

Cliff said there is legislation stating that all public pools have to be accessible.

Kleo explained that the new design requirements went into effect on March 15th. Some hotel lobby groups got the White House to require that the Dept. of Justice postpone the effective date for existing pools only, so if you were building a new pool today, you would have to comply. All the Mom & Pop hotels were taking a hard hit economically so the Department of Justice took the existing pool regulations and pushed those back 60 days to May 21st. At the same time they issued a notice of proposed rulemaking, asking for comments in a 15 day time frame and closing comments by the beginning of April, for whether the requirements for existing pools to retro fit should be extended further until September 21, 2012. The same lobby groups went to their Congressmen and were trying to get Congress to change the laws instead of relying on the regulatory process. Hearings were held yesterday on this subject and several groups are coming together to oppose that legislation. Cliff made a motion for the board to send a letter to the Congressional delegation expressing our opposition to extending this period, Kleo seconded the motion, everyone was in favor and the motion carried.

Transportation – Vacant.

Employment – Carolyn & Donna 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 had nothing new to report.

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 reported that the county had originally desired to implement a no show/late cancellation policy as well a reduction in the days of advance reservation period for SCAT, and it was to begin on May 15 of this year. A letter was sent out to all registered SCAT riders as required by legislative resolution. The County Executive's office has since decided to postpone the implementation of those policies so a subsequent letter will have to be sent out.

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

S.C. Community Development – Vacant.

S.C. Library System – Valerie was excused.

ADJOURNMENT: James made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Kleo seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m. **The next meeting will be held on May 30, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference room, Building 158, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge.**

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Zeitler

