

Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board

January 30, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Approved

A meeting of the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board was held on January 30, 2013 in the Conference Room of Building 158, North County Complex, Hauppauge at 2:06 pm, Chairperson, Roy Probeyahn presided.

PRESENT:

GROUP A

Frank Krotschinsky, Esq.
Marjorie E. Acevedo
Barbara Falkman

Representing County Executive Steven Bellone
Representing Presiding Officer William Lindsay
S. C. Dept. of Health Services/Div. Services for Children
with Special Needs
Representing SCDPW Transportation Division

Chris Chatterton

GROUP B

Valerie Lewis
Michelle Santantonio
Kleo King, Esq.
Mike Stolz

Member
Member
Member
Member

GROUP C

Teresa Strum
Joani Madarash

Member
Member

GROUP D

Roy Probeyahn
Diane Gaines
Beverly Cody
Garrett Hulett
Douglas King
Sandy Silver

Member, Chairperson
Member
Member
Member
Member
Member

GUESTS: Erin King, Juanita Smith

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

EXCUSED: Carolyn Bossert, Donna Passin, Cliff Hymowitz, Terry Maccarrone, James Kokindo, Stephen Astuto, Albert Rizzi, Barbara LoMoriello, Representing Legislator William Spencer, Linda O' Donohoe, Carolyn Schick, Mitch Shapiro, Glenn Campbell, Esq.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF December 5, 2012: Roy asked if there were any changes to be made to the minutes as distributed. There were none, Doug made a motion to accept the minutes as distributed and Teresa seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: Roy mentioned Cliff couldn't be here today but asked us to hand out the attached travel training resource information from Easter Seals Project ACTION.

Roy also said he received a copy of a letter from the Brookhaven Supervisor's Office regarding time limits Town Hall has been putting on handicap parking spaces. The Supervisor wrote to the Public Safety Administration stating that since no other parking spaces have time limits this would be considered discrimination against people with disabilities and a possible violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Roy said he did not get a definitive answer as whether or not the time limit was removed or not.

Frank said the ticket that initiated that inquiry was dismissed.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: Roy reported that Jackie Best is the new Regional Director of OPWDD for Long Island. They restructured their operation so that Jackie and the Community Services Office are a separate unit called Region 5 for Nassau and Suffolk only, and are located exclusively at 415A Oser Ave., in Hauppauge. OPWDD published a new 5 year plan for 2013 - 2016 and testimony was accepted.

Joani mentioned that Jackie Best will be their guest speaker at the Suffolk County Rehabilitation Council meeting on February 14th, and if you would like more information you can see Joani after the meeting today. Roy added that Jackie will also be attending the Task Force on Aging Out, Legislative brunch scheduled for February 8th located at the Regional office on 415A Oser Ave., Hauppauge at 11:00 a.m. and all are welcome. Roy said the Task Force invited 'the entire legislative contingent from Long Island'.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Architectural Barriers - Lew was absent.

Community Partnership - Frank reported that some of the FEMA funding is running out. Emergency Services and the Human Service Departments are working together to assist people who are having housing troubles since the hurricane.

Education - Teresa thanked Sandy Silver and Susan Packard for coming to Western Suffolk BOCES, where 18 component district representatives were presented with ACCES services by Susan Packard. These information packets explain what is available to special need students to help them transition into their school districts.

Sandy reported that ACCES is finalizing the new contract process and it's anticipated to be posted Feb. 1st. The new contract will probably begin October 1st and most of it will be dealing with milestones where vendors that provide service will get paid, and when they reach a milestone it will help lead to employment outcomes.

Housing – Vacant. Michele Santantonio asked Frank what kinds of referrals our office offers people that are seeking housing. Frank said we refer them to L.I. Housing Services and the Suffolk County Dept. of Social Services housing unit. Michele also handed out literature on what Long Island Housing Services, Inc. provides. Their website is also accessible to people with visual impairments.

Valerie said she was involved in a webinar with the National Council on Disabilities and one of the main parts FEMA was involved with was emergency evacuation. Valerie wanted to know if any organizations are helping with emergency housing. Michelle said they are a number of groups. She recently attended a meeting that was brought together by the Robinhood foundation which apparently raised a lot of money by holding a concert to benefit all the Sandy victims. Twenty-three not for profit organizations were there plus some other groups. L.I. Housing Services gave detailed information about the kinds of problems they are seeing with people since the aftermath of Sandy and FEMA is on the top of everybody's list. A housing sub-committee was formed through Long Island VOAD, which is administered through FEMA funds. The next meeting of the housing sub-committee will be Feb. 20th and they are looking for agencies that are concerned with the issues to come participate, share information and identify problems and needs. Michelle said some funding has been given out by the Robinhood foundation to Catholic Charities and FECS.

Mike said he is the Chair of Board of the Health and Welfare Consulate. Their roundtable has been a national model and has been being handling the process of what is done with the donated dollar after traumatic events. He said the process works extremely well because there is a national process which must take place and the requests have to be initiated by a caseworker.

Legislation – Vacant.

Transportation – Valerie thanked everyone for voting her in as the new Chairperson on this committee and she will create a way to proceed as Chairperson and intends to speak to Frank and Chris.

Roy said information about the public hearing and SCAT fare increase was circulated to everyone, which in turn led to a discussion on needing to get this information in accessible format for people with disabilities.

Employment – Carolyn & Donna were excused.

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities – Frank reported that some of the FEMA funding is running out. Emergency Services and the Human Service Departments are working together to assist people who are having housing troubles since the hurricane.

Our office is now able to determine which scat riders have requested correspondence in alternate formats. Those individuals will now be able to receive correspondence in either braille, audio or large print.

Frank had a meeting with Al Rizzi by phone for the ADA Compliant Website committee. The federal government considers it important that all municipalities website be made accessible.

Al was appointed Chair of this committee because he has experience with this. Their next plan is to meet with someone in the Suffolk County IT Dept.

Valerie said she met with the Suffolk County IT Dept. back in 2011 and gave a four hour presentation on making websites accessible, so if you need any contacts give her a call.

Frank has an ADA Task Force meeting scheduled for tomorrow and one of the issues they are working on is the MTA half fare card. Our office issues handicapped ID cards to persons with disabilities to ride the fixed route buses for half fare, so the suggestion is why can't our card be used to get a reduced fare on the LIRR as well.

Marjorie suggested Frank ask the County Executive to write a letter to the MTA Chairman about this issue. Frank said that was a good suggestion. Valerie asked if we could include in the letter that it's very dangerous for visually impaired people to hear announcements when there are people playing their guitars on the platform.

Frank also participates on the SILO transportation committee and they have also been discussing the SCAT fare increase.

Suffolk County Parks – Terry was absent.

S.C. Department of Social Services - Linda was excused.

Old Business – None.

New Business – Roy wanted to know why the fare increase for SCAT. Chris said it was included in the County Executive's 2013 Operating budget. Chris said the program has been growing by 10% every year. The proposed fare increase of \$4.00 doesn't even cover the cost for one ride.

Valerie suggested Suffolk County look into other options such as the cabs NYC has been using, because the majority of the people using scat don't use mobility devices.

Other suggestions were to increase the fare on fixed route buses instead.

Roy wanted to know what position if any the board should present at the public hearing regarding the SCAT fare increase.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the proposed fare increase for SCAT.

Mike made a motion for the board to make a formal request by letter to the County Executive asking for justification on the proposal for the fare increase on SCAT. Valerie seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Doug wanted to let everyone know that starting in the middle of February he will be doing a weekly radio show on WRCN, 103.9 and it will be strictly on disability topics. It will air either on Saturday or Sunday mornings.

Mike reported that Suffolk County United Veterans started their veteran peer to peer ptsd support groups all around the county. Mike will forward Heidi the information.

S.C. Dept. of Health/Division of Children with Special Health Care Needs - Barbara Falkman said they will be having their transition workshop for parents whose children will be entering into the preschool program in their local school districts. The Long Island Early Childhood Direction Center will be the presenters and they will be offering the workshop in Spanish and English at the same time but different offices. Feb. 25th in the morning and evening at the Suffolk County Department of Health, Division of Services for Children with Special Needs, 50 Laser Court, Hauppauge.

Valerie told Barbara she if wants she could email the information to her and Valerie would send it to over 1,700 people on their Suffolk County Cooperative Library association list.

S.C. Department of Public Works/Transportation Division - Chris said DPW/Transportation will be holding public hearings for the proposed SCAT fare increase. The first hearing will be held on March 6th from 3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. in the Suffolk County Legislative Auditorium, W. H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York. The second hearing will be held on March 7th from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the Suffolk County Legislative Auditorium in the Evans K. Griffing Building, 300 Center Drive, Riverhead, New York.

Chris said this will be the last year (JARC) and New Freedom Funding will be available as they are because these funds plus the new transportation legislation that was passed will be wrapping these two programs into other funding sources. If you know of any municipalities or organizations that would be interested in either, this would be the year to find out more information.

S.C. Human Rights Commission - James was absent.

S.C. Community Development - Vacant.

S.C. Library System - Valerie also wanted everyone to know that the Suffolk Cooperative Library system has the ability to act as a contracting agency for the most minimal of monies and if you need flyers or brochures they can transcribe that information from a word document as well record minimal amounts onto cd's. They have an entire assistive technology center where they have assisted the Commission for the Blind with assessing people or if people just want to come in to try different types of technology, but they would need to make an appointment to do so.

ADJOURNMENT: Garrett made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Douglas seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m. **The next meeting will be held on February 27, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference room, Building 158, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge.**

Respectfully submitted, Heidi Zeitler