

Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board

September 25, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Approved

A meeting of the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board was held on September 25, 2013 in the Conference Room of Building 158, North County Complex, Hauppauge at 2:00 pm, Chairperson Roy Probeyahn presided.

PRESENT:

GROUP A

Frank Krotzchinsky, Esq.
Marjorie E. Acevedo
Barbara Falkman

Representing County Executive Steven Bellone
Representing Presiding Officer's Office
S. C. Dept. of Health Services/Div. Services for Children
with Special Needs
S. C. Department of Social Services
Representing SCDPW Transportation Division

Linda O'Donohoe
Chris Chatterton

GROUP B

Joseph Delgado
Erik Heins, Rep. Michelle Santantonio
Valerie Lewis
Mike Stolz

Member
Member
Member
Member

GROUP C

Joani Madarash
Teresa Strum
Carolyn Schick
Diane Gaines

Member
Member
Member
Member

GROUP D

Roy Probeyahn
Douglas King
Beverly Cody
Sandy Silver
Garrett Hulett
Albert Rizzi
Mitch Shapiro

Member, Chairperson
Member
Member
Member
Member
Member
Member

GUESTS: Robin Mayr, Erin King, Brenda De Jong, Dan Hittleman, Juanita Smith

STAFF: Heidi Zeitler, Principal Clerk, Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities

EXCUSED: Barbara LoMoriello, Rep., Legislator William Spencer, MD, Carolyn Bossert, Donna Passin, Terry Maccarrone, James Kokindo, Stephen Astuto, Kleo King, Clifford Hymowitz, Glenn Campbell, Esq.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 26, 2013: 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 Linda seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: Roy reported that he met with Albert Rizzi, IT Commissioner Rodgers and several others re: 508 Committee and hopefully Albert will be here later so he can fill us in on details.

Roy also reported that the O.P.W.D.D. Commissioner has been promoted to a position in the State Dept. of Health and Erin Kelly has been appointed interim Commissioner. Roy also had his Task Force on Aging Out meeting in September and Jaci Best is the new director of the regional office for OPWDD. There was much discussion at the meeting about OPWDD's "Front Door" initiative. This is single point access for people with developmental disabilities that prioritizes individual choices, needs, and desires in making decisions.

Architectural Barriers - Lew was excused.

Community Partnership - Frank reported that the County is currently working on lessons learned from super storm Sandy. There was a planning meeting with other county departments in regard to how the county responded to Sandy and how they are going to plan for future storms. Procedures are still being worked on and our office is participating, so one of the things we are going to continue to work on is the registry. Frank said it also looks like his office will be participating in the long term recovery group where there will be a focus on people with disabilities and they are hoping to make things better for future storms as well as addressing the current situations.

Education - Teresa reported that this past July, Office of Mental Health (OMH) announced their plan to eliminate Sagamore Children's Psychiatric Center in Dix Hills. There have been committee's and groups' meeting periodically since this news was announced, to try to get (OMH) to alter their plan and look for cost savings in other ways. OMH's plan is to close all 54 inpatient beds by July 2014. Outpatient programs will remain and be administered by the New York City's Children's Center, located in Queens, Bronx and Brooklyn. There will be no State-operated inpatient psychiatric beds for children from Montauk Point to Bellerose, Queens. Youth needing State inpatient services will be directed to inpatient services in Queens or the Bronx. There are several other changes that would occur and it was discussed at length by the board.

Mike added that Senator Hannon hosted hearings about this a couple of months ago and several families as well as advocacy groups spoke about how these drastic changes would impact them. . Albert Rizzi made a motion for the board to send a letter opposing the closure of Sagamore Children's Psychiatric Center, Doug seconded the motion and the motion carried. Mike wants to make sure that the letter clarifies that Mike, nor his organization, locally, statewide or nationally are going to advocate for institutional care for people with psychiatric disabilities. Mike said the focus in this letter of support should be on the need for resources in the community. Roy said he might be in touch with Teresa, Diane and Mike in regards with helping to draft this letter.

Mike wanted everyone to know that October 6th - October 12th is National Mental Illness Awareness week. The Mental Health Association of Suffolk County, Clubhouse of Suffolk and Suffolk

County United Veterans are hosting a series of films to promote a better understanding of what mental illness is. Check out the events calendar at www.miaweek.org

508 ADA Compliance Committee – Albert reported he had a very productive meeting with Legislator J. Schneiderman, Roy, Frank, and some other people from Al's office and IT Commissioner Rodgers, where they discussed IR 1300 and the steps that are being taken to make county websites accessible.

Al said they were surprised to find out that the county has decided to rebuild their website. Al feels this is a great opportunity, because it's easier to build accessibility into the site as opposed to retrofitting it. Commissioner Rodgers advised he would be providing sample pages of different sections of the website to the committee. Al's company has offered to review the pages to see if they are either accessible or usable and to get some beta testers should that be needed. Al said they are expecting to get some information from the Commissioner in the coming weeks about what he is going to provide. Al also said they felt strongly that if IT Dept.'s direction doesn't compliment the effort, the 508 committee would suggest and urge consideration be given to putting the audit and assessment of their site out to bid. They would also want to get accessibility experts in the field to look at them as options to compliment what is happening on the county level. In Al's personal opinion, he doesn't have the confidence at the moment, that without the assistance of some accessibility experts they will be able to expeditiously and effectively make the site compliant and conformant with 508. Further, they are going to make sure the Suffolk County Disability Advisory Board (SCDAB) guides and drives suggestions from a technology standpoint because they feel there is a need to understand the programmatic attention that needs to go into what the Commissioner and his team are trying to do. Legislator Schneiderman offered to champion a discussion with the towns to make sure they get support from them too.

Housing – Erik said L.I. Housing Services is seeing a lot of disability complaints. A couple of determinations were made regarding accessibility issues and one client from Knob Hill received a probable cause determination, because there was a lack of ramps outside, in the common areas. Another complaint had to do with construction of a path across a lawn for a resident who needs to use their rear patio exit. Erik said it's the first time he has seen one of the investigators at the State Division of Human rights support the state law that says modification of common areas have to be done at the expense of the landlord. This law was changed back in 2010, but hasn't been enforced very much. Erik also mentioned they have an appeal coming up in November, they lost a federal court case back in December that deals specifically with the issue of people with disabilities getting exceptions to the 55 and over rule for housing. Many people are not aware that an exception has to be made to this rule if someone with a disability has a reason to live there.

Beverly spoke about the ongoing problems in the Windbrook/Fairfield Properties where she resides. Beverly said no progress has been made since the last time she spoke about this back in June.

Legislation – Vacant.

Transportation: Valerie had to leave early.

Employment – Carolyn & Donna were excused.

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities - Frank reported that we are most of the way through the budget process and the County Executive presented his budget last week. Marjorie added that if there are any non-for-profits that receive funding from the County, if they have a line item that they are looking at or if there are any functions they want to comment on to come to the committee meetings.

Frank also reported that he is on SILO's transportation committee and at these meetings they discuss bus shelters, accessibility issues etc.

Albert wanted to know if anything was going on with the SCAT Appeal Committee which was formed by SCDAB to review SCAT applications. These are applications that were denied, then appealed by the applicant and then are reviewed by the committee. Frank said that he and Chris have met but Frank still has to check with the county attorney on some issues, but he did find out that we don't need to have a formal procedure with a hearing examiner and/or a court reporter and most of the cases we had, have already been informally settled. Appeals will be coming up so Frank wanted to know from those people who have agreed to serve on this committee, if they want to make those determinations after the SCDAB meetings or do they want to have those hearings at some other time. Frank said he will follow-up by email to those who have agreed to serve on this committee to see what their availability is. Those who have agreed to serve on this sub-committee to review these appeals are Robin Mayr, Albert Rizzi, Cliff Hymowitz, Carolyn Schick.

S.C. Parks - Terry was excused.

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

S.C. Dept. of Health/Division of Children with Special Health Care Needs - Barbara Falkman said her office will be having a transition workshop for parents on September 30, 2013 at the Suffolk County Dept. of Health Services Division of Services for Children with Special Needs, 50 Laser Court, Hauppauge from 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. session English or Espanol or 6:30 P.M. – 8:30 p.m. session English or Espanol. Another workshop will be held on October 2, 2013 6:00 P.M. – 8:00 p.m. (English) and it will be held at the Riverhead Free Library, 330 Court St., Riverhead.

S.C. Department of Public Works/Transportation Division - Chris reported that Sunday bus service for 10 routes will be funded through the JARC Program and is set to begin Jan. 1, 2014. Those 10 bus routes will be the S1, S33, S40, 41, S54, S58, S66, 3D, S92 and 10C and they will run on the Saturday schedule.

S.C. Human Rights Commission – James was excused.

S.C. Community Development - Vacant.

SILO - Joe announced flyers will be going out shortly for SILO's Open House scheduled for mid-October and a Halloween Party for consumers on Oct. 30th. They will also participating in Mental Illness Awareness week by providing a workshop for one of those days. They are also very involved in Project Search and have partnered with Access-VR and they have been wonderful. Through Project Search, BOCES Parent Center was able to place 9 students at the Medford Multi care which is a Nursing facility for people with disabilities.

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Acces-VR – Sandy reported that his staff continues to be the leaders in the state for successful job placements and for the number of people coming into the system. The Core Rehabilitation Services (CRS) contract has been finalized and will take effect January 1st, 2014.

Advantages will be higher rates for services, new services, new definitions and quality bonuses when a good placement occurs. If people are placed at a specific dollar amount or higher the facility gets more money, this is based upon milestones. Access-VR will also be hiring 3 more staff members.

Suffolk County Rehabilitation Council - Joani had nothing new to report.

Old Business - None

New Business – Roy wanted to acknowledge the passing of William Lindsay, Presiding Officer of the legislature for many years. He was a great legislator, leader and very supportive of our issues.

ADJOURNMENT: Garrett made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Doug seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m. **The next meeting will be held on October 30, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference room, Building 158, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge.**

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Zeitler