

Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board

December 02, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Approved

A meeting of the Suffolk County Disabilities Advisory Board was held on December 02, 2015 in the Large Conference Room of Building 158, North County Complex, Hauppauge at 2:10 pm with Chairperson Roy Probeyahn presiding.

PRESENT:

GROUP A

Frank Krotschinsky	Rep. County Executive Steven Bellone
Valerie Smith	Rep. Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory
Chris Chatterton	Representing SCDPW Transportation Division
Terry Maccarrone	S.C. Department of Parks
Timothy Carew	S.C. Department of Labor
Barbara Falkman	S.C. Dept. of Health Services/Div. Services for Children with Special Needs
James Kokindo	S.C. Human Rights Commission
Robert Hardie	Rep. SC Dept. of Public Works, Design & Construction Division

GROUP B

Valerie Lewis	Member
Michelle Santantonio	Member

GROUP C

Teresa Strum	Member
Carolyn Schick	Member
Joani Madarash	Member

GROUP D

Roy Probeyahn, Chairperson	Member
Devin Fernandez	Member
Douglas King	Member
Robin Mayr	Member
Beverly Cody	Member

GUESTS: Erin King, Meesha Johnson, Brenda deJong

STAFF: Wendy Hendler Rep., Heidi Zeitler/Principal Clerk, Office for People with Disabilities

EXCUSED: Valerie Lewis, Diane Gaines, Sandy Silver

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF October 28, 2015: Roy asked if there were any changes to be made to the October 28, 2015 minutes as distributed. There were none, Douglas King made a motion to accept the minutes as distributed and Robin Mayr seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: Roy reported that he participated in two events one locally and one in Albany. Eligibility for OPWDD services in the Long Island region and serving people with complex needs. The local meeting was by the Nassau Suffolk School Psychologist Association having to do with people in the spectrum are being asked to provide additional documentation such as an IQ test and additional tests. Dr. Jill Petinger moderated the meeting. This makes the process of eligibility more complicated, delays it, requires more tests which are costly and Medicaid will not pay for it nor will most insurance companies. They are trying to find out if it truly is autism.

Teresa said it is spectrum cases but also across the board too. Roy said he will continue to monitor it.

The Forum was a two day affair. It is online, Roy will get the link. Technology for people with developmental disabilities, community residential services, employment staffing, self-direction. Submit everyone's idea of what they were exposed to, they will submit a video of the best of the best. Roy also added that there were several retirements in the office at OPWDD and many new young bright energetic people are coming in.

Architectural Barriers - Robert reported they are currently working on Probation Building C110, to make it handicapped accessible. As far as Public roadways, he checked in with Highway Dept. and there are several intersections they are currently working on, Nichols Rd., Hawkins and Wireless. They have all been made handicapped accessible. One of the changes they have done with our highway department in regards to maintenance of our public roadways is instead just repaving a roadway the drainage and curb cuts are now being taken into account. Frank asked if they are putting accessible pedestrian signals in or just curb cuts in those particular intersections. Robert said curb cuts and he will find out about the pedestrian signals.

Community Partnership - Frank reported he has been doing some work with FEMA. There was an information session in Yaphank. Douglas was there as were some people from emergency services, FEMA representatives and SILO. They are emphasizing getting more people involved in the planning for disasters. There was a law suit in NYC brought by people with disabilities affected by Sandy. A major problem was that people with disabilities don't get involved in the planning for situations that affect them disproportionately. The judge rendered his decision emphasizing the requirement that people be involved in the planning and suggested that the two sides get together and come up with an agreement.

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FEMA has been doing these presentations around the country. December 14 we will be doing an informational session held in the Town of Babylon or Islip areas affected by Sandy with regards to housing that needs to be raised to avoid future flood damage. Anyone can attend; Frank will keep everyone posted on the location. People who want reimbursement from the Federal government for repairing Sandy damage may be required to raise their homes from 4 to 12 feet depending on the situation. This presents a challenge for people with disabilities and a future challenge for people who do not currently have a disability. There will be an informational session for Universal Design December 14 in the evening and as soon as Frank has the location he will have it mailed out to everyone. There will be a lot of providers there. The last session they held was in Nassau County, there were architects there that were very knowledgeable about Universal Design. Touro Law School will hold a clinic; they have resources as well as Hofstra to help people with these problems.

Education - Teresa reported that she participated in a webinar with a couple of the upstate BOCES and our Regional Information Center (RIC) having to do with the introduction and the transition into computer based assessments for students. It's specific to the New York State alternate assessments that this year will mark the first year that two of the four elements, the Math and the English components will be computer based. The company that received the RFP is the Dynamic Learning Map. The goal is to make the process of the alternate assessment go quicker and easier to administer and to score and more comfortable for the student. The training is December 15th. Questar, the company that got the RFP for the regular assessment anticipates by the year 2020 to have all the paper and pencil bubble sheets transferred to computer based system of student assessment. There's a lot that goes on especially in a region with students who receive accommodations **ie** extended time, access to a device more appropriate to the student.

508 ADA Compliance Committee - Valerie was excused.

Housing - Michelle reported she was hoping to circulate a press release about a settlement with Department of Justice Office for Civil Rights in a case called The United States of America versus Sayville Development Group. LIHS worked on this case over 9 ½ years, involved three different apartment complexes. After three years of postponed trials and prep they finally reached an agreement. She brought a few copies of this press release. There have been ongoing retrofits at the complexes involved; Broadway Knolls in Holbrook, Sayville Commons in Sayville and Oak Creek Commons in Oakdale. Email Michelle if you want a copy and did not get one. There were some victims that were identified that are also going to get some relief in that case; unfortunately some have passed away in the course of waiting. This was senior housing for 55yrs and older, ten years is a long time.

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Long Island Housing Services had initiated complaint in the administrative realm, once findings made in their favor HUD made a finding of reasonable cause then it went to the Department of Justice. Ultimately there was good outcome that will have an impact on making more accessible housing.

October 16 at Torro Law School Long Island Housing Partnership in collaboration with Touro Law Center had a conference on planning and zoning. One of the workshops was bringing in the FEMA elements and the issues of elevated housing as well as Universal Design. Robin asked if they install an elevator in these elevated houses and the power goes out how does the individual with a disability get down. Roy and others responded that the whole house would be on a generator but could cost \$10,000. Frank added that if a storm is approaching the recommendation is to get out of the house before the storm hits.

Legislation - Douglas reported that under New York State there is a new resolution bill that Robin talked about last time, he did more investigating. It is about large print and braille for the Board of Elections. The bill that went in on April 30th was voted on by the assembly and passed then went to the Senate and died. Now it went back to the board of elections committee under the assembly where they are going to reword the document for the law they are trying to get passed. Robin said this bill has been around since 2003 and Roy said they have to renew them every two years. Douglas added that the company Uber is being sued by United Spinal Association because they have 30,000 cars none of which are wheelchair accessible. Jim Flemming from FEMA put Douglas in contact with Dave Whalen who is a professor in Niagara University. He has been doing online classes called Train the Trainer. He is part of a group called CERT-Community Emergency and Response Team. Douglas's responsibility is going to be to train CERT members on how to deal with people with disabilities during a disaster.

Transportation - Valerie was excused.

Employment - Tim reported the Department of Labor held a job fair in recognition of National Disability employment Awareness Month close to 200 people attending and 12 to 15 employers there. Frank was there and helped out. It was asked how many people were employed; Tim has not gotten that information back yet. The employers were looking for full time help and most of the people went were looking for part time because they were receiving supplemental secured income or social security disability they had fears of losing their disability.

COUNTY DEPARTMENTS:

Suffolk County Office for People with Disabilities - Frank sits on a number of different committees. He has been appointed to a domestic violence task force because that issue is important in regards to people with disabilities. There is a lot of abuse towards disabled relatives. Frank has been pushing to make sure that resources are put out in an accessible format by emphasizing that they need to be available in large print and braille. One of the committees he sits on is called the Parks RX program chaired by Legislator Kara Hahn.

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They are encouraging people to use the parks in an effort to be healthy. They are mapping the trails and elevations. Frank wants to add which trails are accessible and where the accessible parking is.

Roy brought up the discussion from the September meeting on whether or not the agency or the specific person is the member of SCDAB. Frank read the statute that they send a representative.

S.C.D.P.W./Division Transportation - Frank asked Chris about the three quarter mile limit to SCAT, asking if they will cover all over Suffolk County and when it will go into effect. Chris responded that they did receive grant funding to provide such service for a period of two years to cover the entire county. Right now it's still in high level discussion between the County Executives. They are waiting for guidance from the county and resolutions to how those operating funds are going to shake out. They are looking to see if we are getting additional State Funds. They are giving us ten million less than we are asking for. Frank hopes that if regular routes get cut that SCAT continues coverage for those routes. Chris does not have the answer of when this would go into effect. Douglas asked if it were possible for Chris to provide the sheets on ridership and denials. Chris responded he could email this information.

S.C. Parks – Frank reported that he attended two photo ops. His picture was in Newsday for the ground breaking on Cherry Ave. in Sayville where the Parks Department and the DPW are building an accessible playground. The other one was at a park out east where they created an accessible Duck Blind so people with disabilities can hunt. This was built in recognition of wounded or wounded warriors.

S.C. Department of Social Services - Traci Barnes was absent.

S.C. Dept. of Health/Division of Children with Special Health Care Needs – Barbara had nothing new to report.

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

S.C. Community Development - Vacant.

SILO - Joe was absent.

ACCES-VR - Sandy was excused.

Suffolk County Rehabilitation Council - Joani reported the Suffolk County Rehab Council partnered with New York State Association for People Supporting Employment First at South Oaks a couple of weeks ago called the Unintended Impact of Good Intentions Balancing Philosophy and Process. It was a great conference, about 25 people attended. Everyone has good intentions but procedures tend to get in the way. The Rehab Council is having their annual Meeting Luncheon Thursday December 10 at the Paradise Diner on Vets Hwy from 1:00 to 3:00 with Mitch Shapiro presenting.

Old Business – Douglas asked about Bruce. Roy said he hasn't seen Bruce since his last report.

New Business – Roy reported subject respite for people with IDD. There was a recent forum locally in the region office which has been requested to be done state wide in view because of the manage care coming into the arena of services for people with Intellectual Development Disabilities. One of the things they wanted to know on a priority basis; what are the greatest needs of the given regions. Downstate New York and Long Island wanted site based crisis houses because we have “bed blockers”, individuals who go into the crisis house but don't leave because they have no place to go where it is safe and permanent. The upstate area is not so interested in that. Site based doesn't make as much sense there because they have so much territory. Medicaid is talking about under managed care, putting a cap on these services.

There was a discussion about switching the SCDAB meeting from the last Wednesday of the month to the first Wednesday of the month. Frank made a motion to table the issue and it was tabled.

Meesha Johnson is a student at St. Joseph's College in the psychology department. The faculty told her she had to have an off campus aid escort her to and from her classes since she is blind. Every time she takes a test she is required to sign an Academic Integrity Agreement. She asked the faculty if other students without disabilities were required to sign this agreement and they didn't have an answer for her. Roy suggested she go to the Dean's office with this issue. She has a scribe and a reader and takes the test at the same time as the rest of the class in another room. There was a discussion.

Devin reported Nassau Suffolk Law Firm in conjunction with Empire Justice Center is having Central Welfare Task Force meeting on December 9th from 1:00-2:30 at their Hempstead office. They will talk about eligibility housing sanctions for people with disabilities and independent living plans.

ADJOURNMENT: Doug made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Jim seconded the motion. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:40p.m. **The next meeting will be held in January 27, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference room, Building 158, Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge.**

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Hendler for Heidi Zeitler