

Autism Council Committee Minutes

November 6, 2008 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Daly; Supervisor Veitch; Wes Carr, Youth Bureau; Cathi Duncan, Public Health; Mary Beth Hynes, Town of Ballston.

Chairman Daly called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Carr, seconded by Mr. Veitch the minutes of the June 23, 2008 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mr. Carr said last week he attended the State Youth Bureau Association annual conference. He said, after sitting in on a workshop with regard to inclusive recreation, he learned that The New York State Inclusive Recreation Resource Center at SUNY Cortland is working to make facilities such as state parks and communities centers more accessible for people with disabilities.

Mr. Carr said Dillon State Park near Tupper Lake is now completely handicapped accessible.

The website for the New York State Inclusive Recreation Resource Center at SUNY Cortland is as follows: www.cortland.edu/nysirrc.

Mr. Carr said he would be receiving updates periodically offering statewide training programs.

Ms. Hynes said she would like to see more inclusive recreational programming where typical and disabled people could participate in sports together.

Ms. Daly said Senator Elect; Roy McDonald has just recently allocated \$50,000 to Saratoga Bridges for a Recreation Program.

Ms. Daly said there is a list of outside agencies that the county funds. She suggested perhaps having an individual come to do a seminar for them, which would include topics such as trail signage and how to make programs more inclusive.

Ms. Daly said with the balance of \$4,600 left in the Autism budget an idea was to hold a conference with public safety volunteers.

Ms. Daly distributed a handout entitled Autism Risk & Safety Management by Dennis Debbaudt. Mr. Debbaudt is an expert that the committee could work with to put together a conference targeting law enforcement, officials and public safety volunteers in how to work with people with Autism or Aspergers, she said. Mr. Debbaudt does all the training

for the NYPD, as well as providing training DVD's to the entire membership to use for new hires as they come into their system.

Ms. Daly said Mr. Debbault is available to speak at a cost of \$2,000. Mr. Debbault would provide a meet and greet the day before with parents or caregivers of children with Autism. The following day he would provide a full day conference of training, initially targeting Public Safety volunteers, Law Enforcement Officials, and First Responders. At a follow up conference it was suggested to include school personnel, and others that would have to be called upon for a public safety initiative.

Ms. Daly suggested holding the conference in Clifton Park, anticipating approximately 100 attendees. The committee agreed. Ms. Daly said she would report back to the committee once a location has been confirmed. The estimated cost of the conference would be approximately \$6,000 - \$6,500.

Discussion took place with regard to a tentative date for the conference in March. Ms. Daly said she would discuss the proposed dates with Mr. Debbault and report back to the committee.

Mr. Carr said the grant period has been extended through the end of March.

On a motion made by Mr. Carr, seconded by Mr. Veitch the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom