

**Welfare to Work Commission
Of the Suffolk County Legislature**

Minutes of the June 8, 2018 Meeting

Present:

Richard Koubek, Chair
Ayesha Alleyne (Wyandanch Homes and Property Development Corporation)
Traci Barnes for Commissioner John O'Neill (SC Department of Social Services);
Christina DeLisi (Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory)
Charles Fox (EOC-LI)
Greta Guarton (LI Coalition for the Homeless);
Kim Gierasch (Suffolk County Department of Health); Michael Haynes (LI Cares/Harry Chapin Food Bank)
Karen Klafter for Legislator Tom Donnelly
Ellen Krakow (Nassau/Suffolk Law Services)
Richard Krebs, (SC Department of Labor)
Christian Limbach (SC Association of Municipal Employees)
Donna Raphael for Dr. Jeffrey Reynolds (Family and Children's Association/LICADD)
Michael Stoltz (Association for Mental Health and Wellness)
Luis Valenzuela (LI Council of Churches)

Excused: Peggy Boyd (Family Service League); Barbara DeFina (Suffolk County Community College); Barbara Egloff (Eastern Suffolk BOCES); Don Friedman (Empire Justice Center); Kathy Liguori, Vice Chair

Absent:

Sr. Lisa Bergeron (Catholic Charities); Rachel Seiler (Community Development Corporation of LI)

Guest: Beth Zweig, Nassau/Suffolk Law Services; Vincent Rothaar, SCDSS

1. **New Commission Member:** Chair Richard Koubek announced, with deep regret, that Ellen Krakow would be stepping down from the Commission due to new assignments at Nassau/Suffolk Law Services. Her replacement is Beth Zweig. Ms. Krakow stated that Ms. Zweig specializes in public-assistance benefits law and policies and would be an excellent addition to the Commission. Mr. Koubek thanked Ms. Krakow for her many years of service and her expertise, especially with regard to disabilities law and policies.
2. **Minutes:** Mr. Koubek asked if there were any changes to the draft May minutes. Seeing none, a motion to accept the May minutes, made by Luis Valenzuela seconded by Michael Stoltz, passed unanimously.
3. **Adoption of the Supportive Housing Work Group Report:** Mr. Koubek stated that he served as facilitator for the Supportive Housing Work Group which conducted 17 meetings over the past 2 ½ years. Co-Chaired by Michael Stoltz and Kim Gierasch, the Work Group met with 26 stakeholders representing agencies that provide mental-health services or supportive-housing options on Long Island. He noted that the report began with a discussion of the Commission's 2016 goals at which time there was a suggestion to revisit the Commission's 2007 report on the lack of affordable housing in Suffolk. That topic was delimited to the lack of housing options for chronically-homeless people and people with mental illness. However, as the project unfolded, it became clear that the lack

of supportive-housing options was linked to the lack of affordable housing for low-income Suffolk residents, and therefore this topic was addressed in the report as was the deinstitutionalization of mental-health treatment. Mr. Koubek thanked the members of the Work Group, noting that over the period of their research, they uncovered many facets of a very complex policy area while helping one another understand the issues related to supportive housing. The Commission then reviewed the report, which they had received in advance of the meeting. Mr. Koubek stated that the body of the report consists of meeting notes recorded by him during the sessions with stakeholders. He noted that all the stakeholders referenced in the report were provided opportunities to review and amend the notes shortly after each session.

- a. Greta Guarton proved an overview of the section on Long Island's homeless population. Kim Gierasch summarized the section on SPA housing. Ms. Gierasch stated that the Suffolk County Department of Health, Division of Community Mental Hygiene Services, had no suggested amendments to the report.
- b. Vincent Rothaar summarized the section on DSS housing, offering a number of minor amendments that were accepted by the Commission. One amendment clarified the difficulties DSS sometimes has finding housing for people with mental illness.
- c. Michael Stoltz summarized the section on services provided by the NYS Office of Mental Health and NYS Office of Substance Abuse Services.
- d. Mr. Koubek reviewed the report's recommendations which, he noted, took the Work Group several months to develop.
- e. With no further amendments to the report, a motion was made by Greta Guarton, seconded by Charles Fox, to adopt the report as amended. The motion passed: Yes: 14; No: 0; Abstentions: 0. [Note: 6 additional Yes votes were submitted by proxy: Peggy Boyd; Barbara DeFina; Barbara Egloff; Don Freidman; Christian Limbach) who had to leave the meeting prior to the vote) and Kathy Liguori] bringing the vote to 20 Yes.
- f. Michael Stoltz and Ms. Gierasch thanked Mr. Koubek, on behalf of the Work Group and Commission, for facilitating the Work Group process and for drafting report.

4. **Next meeting:** Friday, July 13.