

BEAUFORT COUNTY BOARD OF DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL NEEDS
1804 OLD SHELL ROAD
PORT ROYAL, SC 29935

May 18, 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jonathan Brown, Grace Dennis, Beverly Smith-Dore, Margaret Gatch, Helene Gruber Jim Mathews, Nancy Pinkerton, Elizabeth Santagati and Gardenia Simmons-White

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ann Wirz and Morris Campbell (Ex-Officio)

STAFF PRESENT: Mitzi Wagner and Joe Anne King

GUESTS PRESENT: Ladson Howell, Beaufort County Attorney

I. CALL TO ORDER – Elizabeth Santagati, Chair

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m.

II. WELCOMING GUESTS

Ms. Santagati welcomed Mr. Howell and thanked him for coming.

III. MINUTES OF THE APRIL 20, 2010 BOARD MEETING

MOTION WAS MADE BY NANCY PINKERTON AND SECONDED BY BEVERLY SMITH-DORE TO APPROVE THE APRIL 20, 2010 BOARD MINUTES WITH CORRECTIONS AS NOTED. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ms. Santagati had some corrections, however did not bring them. She said she would email them. One mentioned correction was that she did not make the motion to accept the April minutes with corrections as noted.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE MAY 18, 2010 AGENDA

MOTION WAS MADE BY GRACE DENNIS AND SECONDED BY BEVERLY DORE TO ADOPT THE MAY 18, 2010 AGENDA AS WRITTEN. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, Elizabeth Santagati, Chair

Ms. Santagati said she was glad to have Mr. Howell here representing Beaufort County. She said it is always important for any organization to go back and look at their bylaws and ours has not been looked at since 2003. She said she would like to forgo her report to give Mr. Howell as much time as he possibly needs and take care of any questions.

Mr. Howell said he had not had a chance to look at the Advisory Board Bylaws. He said that generally you, as board members, occupy a very important role in the Beaufort County Disabilities and Special Needs Advisory Board. As a type of advisory board you work on being candidates who

fulfills an obligation and a public service to the various functions of county government that makes this a better place to live. The folks that volunteer for our public boards are an integral part of the necessary function of the entities being represented. Without you there would be very little public input and more importantly there would not be trumpeting on an outcry to the general public about how much you care about this particular facility. He said you folks are more interested in supporting the Disabilities and Special Needs Board than anyone else in the county and you have expressed that many many times in devotion to your service on this board. As a member of this board you make recommendations regarding policy that county may make from time to time, most importantly is the funding. Where is the money? If you are under funded and don't have enough funds to operate it as a first class facility and you folks represent the public as an integral part of the folks who are interested in providing the care and upkeep and support of our special services, then there is nobody else to do it so you are vital to that network. He said the employees who work here, all of them are cash employees. He said Ms. Wagner as well as other directors serves under Mr. Campbell and he serves under Mr. Kubic.

He said there is nothing wrong in amending the bylaws if you would like to state different purposes that you may want to put in, but keep it light. It is your function, or in the nature of advisory, as opposed to decision-making. There are some decision-making boards in the county; however, most of them are actually political sub-divisions of the state. He said it is always good to look at your bylaws if you feel they are outdated in any fashion. It contains your duties in regards to the election of officers, the fellowship qualifications and the terms you may serve as with all county boards and commissions, term limits are pretty much the same so all citizens are given a chance to serve on a given board so that nobody will serve on one any length of time. Three terms are usually the limit on most boards. You must get eleven members of county council to approve reappointment.

Ms. Pinkerton asked what constitutes an excusable absence. Mr. Howell said that was put in several years ago as some folks were appointed to various boards and never showed up and there are folks who are interested in serving. He said if there was a family emergency or an illness that would be an exception.

Ms. Gruber said her experience with bylaws is that they rarely change. Policies change, procedures change and bylaws are frequently not changed. Mr. Howell said that was correct but sometimes circumstances are what you want to make them. Sometimes meaningful changes are made.

Ms. Santagati said in the Beaufort County Template that there are various definitions for various boards/agencies/commissions that are obvious but do not identify an advisory board. She said there are some boards that take on positions as board director and there is nothing in the template that this position exists. Mr. Howell said when John Perry was County Administrator he instituted a program whereby the template was created and various charters. The bylaws charge that each one of the agencies and committees that it identifies whether or not they are advisory. In some cases, the budget is greatly affected by Beaufort County and in some cases they are not. The hospital gets very little money from county, only for indigent care, and that is pretty impressive given these times when hospitals are going broke. We can thank our county leaders and those who serve on that board. They have done a wonderful job of making them self sustained. There are some changes in Medicare but generally; the money trail is an issue. I do not think the template mentions them by name but there are some aspects of Board of Directors but more likely than not, all of them are advisory like this one and a very important one. He said this one is strictly an advisory board and is

pretty much a thankless job. Ms. Santagati said, for her, the issue has never been that the bylaws need changing, The issue was to make sure that what we are doing is what we are supposed to be doing and understand that the board has no decision making authority for Beaufort County; but I am under the understanding that, as the board of directors, when we make a decision as to something we are going to do as a board then that is a board decision. Mr. Howell said not if it affects the policy of this agency. He said for example. If you wanted to make a decision that you wanted to try to discipline one of the employees, I don't think you could. If you wanted to conduct a blood drive for the foundation in support of special needs, yes you could do that. If it is within the support of this particular agency, those types of decisions, of course you could. If it is policy, administration or personnel those are all functions of county the county government.

Ms. Wagner said Beaufort Memorial Hospital has a foundation that is strictly instrumental in helping to keep the cost down and is part of their structure that could be true for us. We have a foundation that was originally started by members of this board and that is acceptable that there is a connection within the board and the foundation. Mr. Howell said the advisory board is part of the county's umbrella as far as the generosity of charitable organizations so that when somebody makes a donation it is tax deductible. If you have the ability to create a foundation for special needs and receive gifts, the benefactor can take tax deductions, which is very important. Ms. Pinkerton asked if that means that a member of this advisory board and sit on the foundation board is a conflict of interest. Mr. Howell said he would not recommend it, if you have the same goals. He said the ones you may want to sit on the foundation board are those folks who have the time and energy to go into the community and make contacts. They would report to you on how well they are doing and what you as a board could do to help them solicit.

Ms. Santagati said we in this room represent the public and if the public doesn't know we are here, then it would be our responsibility to make sure the public is aware of who we are, but what happens as a board when someone from the public asks the board to sort out a problem. Mr. Howell said if it is a problem, they are always welcome. If the public has an issue and feels the need to bring it to your attention as representatives of the public at large, they can bring it but you would, if it is within your function you would refer it to Ms. Wagner who in turn would refer it to Mr. Campbell to deal with it. He said you are embraceries of your community, which is why you are here. You are here to tout all of the accolades of this agency and also to receive input from representatives of the community. Each one of you was chosen very special to represent those in your community. That is what you should be proud of, and that is what you should tell your neighbors about. This is a worthwhile agency that provides a vital service to a wonderful segment of our society who for a very long time did not get what they deserve.

Ms. Dore asked if it was appropriate to serve on two county boards. Mr. Howell said he would not recommend it. It may be under two categories meaning one county board and one decision-making board or maybe a state board. If one is a decision making board you could not serve on another that is a decision making body.

Ms. Santagati asked is there is a relationship between county council and those selected for appointment. He said it a wonderful relationship. He said there is a very in depth procedure that they go through to appoint folks to all of the boards in the agency. It is pretty gratifying. If they don't know you personally they know you by name and they know you by the recommendations of one of their fellow council members. He said public service is wonderful but understand that one tenth of

one percent of citizens anywhere serve publicly. It is wonderful that you agree to serve as so many of your neighbors don't. You give of your time to be away from your families, your work and community involvement in order to come here and serve without pay. You make a difference in the quality of life in Beaufort County and that's what it's all about.

Ms. Gruber asked if the advisory board chairman should submit an annual report. Mr. Howell said she should submit that to Ms. Wagner who would pass it on to Mr. Campbell. It goes through his ministry. If there is some important news that deserves mention it should go right to the "horses Head" then arrange to make a presentation before county council. He said Ms. Wagner comes every year with some of the crafts and that is a wonderful happening and a good day for everybody and a real good day for the folks that sit on County Council because they need to see the faces and personalities of those folks and it is your job to make sure they do. Ms. Dore mentioned she was glad to hear that because this year we are planning a companion tour, "Each one take one". We are inviting members of the board to select a council member and a member of the legislative delegation to take them on a tour of some of the facilities in our program. Mr. Howell agreed that it is good public relations. Ms. Wagner said many of the board members have been very faithful to show up and county council hears the names of people from this board who are there in support of whatever it is. That is another reason that we have been able to replace the homes that we have with the help of county money. Ms. Dore said board members also met with Representative Shannon Erickson and the legislative delegation and received some excellent feed back from her.

Mr. Howell thanked the board and said he is always available if there are more questions.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Mitzi Wagner

Ms. Wagner mentioned she went by the new building site to see several trucks and 10 or 15 men and a bunch of cable. She said she also received a phone call from MIS asking how we wanted the new conference room wired. She said the contractor is still being held to the completion date of the March 31, 2011 deadline.

She told board members that we have been looking for a replacement home for the Broad River CTH II and have found a home on Lady's Island. It is a four bedroom home that will take minimal work to bring it up to ADA standards. She said it has a nice size fenced in backyard on Cottage Walk Circle. She said the home is two years old and to her knowledge has never been occupied. She also said all the plumbing was replaced at Ivy Lane CTH II, as it was all corroded and rusted through.

VII. FOUNDATION REPORT – Grace Dennis

Ms. Dennis said the bylaws were reviewed and adopted at the last foundation meeting. She said there were some changes made. It seems that the real members are beginning to feel that they want to start meeting on their own. They do want board members to continue to seek out members to serve on the foundation. We need more members than we have. Ms. Santagati asked about those not necessarily wanting to be members of the foundation but would be willing to assist with a particular project. Ms. Dennis said she liked the ideas of having "friends" of ABLE who would be the extra arm of membership to work on projects and look for grants. Ms. Wagner said she applied for a grant with Long Cove and interviewed with us this week. She said that in talking with them about the

grant she asked how they got started in the foundation. He said they have only been in operation for three years and now have a \$250,000 a year endowment that we can give to charities. He said everyone in the neighborhood is committed and through their efforts have been able to fund the endowment.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

~Personnel Committee, Jonathan Brown, Chair

- Mr. Brown said he received an email saying that Carol Myers had resigned. Ms. Wagner said the county received the email and accepted it as her resignation. Ms. Wagner said Ms. Myers represented PEP and suggested, for board diversity, that the committee may want to look at the possibility of recruiting someone who is part of PEP to fill that position. She said we received two applications from county, one from Beaufort and one from Hilton Head. Ms. Wagner said she requested from Beaufort County Human Services to not make an appointment right away to allow Mr. Brown and the Personnel Committee to look into possibilities and talk to the two applicants and choose a suitable person. She said that in the past the committee recommended someone for that position.

~Policy/Directives Committee, Gardenia Simmons-White, Chair

- Nothing to report

~Public Relations Committee, Ann Wirz, Chair

- Ms. Dore said at the last meeting they talked about taking tours of the CTH II home, the Port Royal facility and the Day Program. She said everyone signed up to participate in taking one of the county council members and/or one of the members of the legislative delegation on a tour. We talked about doing it the third or the fourth Monday in June at 3:30 p.m. She circulated a form to be completed with who each member would like to accompany on the tour and suggested they contact their potential candidates for which day would be more convenient for them. The members discussed alternative dates and times and the schedule. If consumers are to be in the day program, which would be between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. it was suggested they go to day program first, starting at 2:00 p.m., stay until 2:30 p.m., then go to the CTH homes on Lady’s Island then back to the Port Royal Residence.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Santagati said the next meeting will be held at PEP on Hilton Head on June 15, 2010.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION WAS MADE BY BEVERLY DORE AND SECONDED BY JIM MATHEWS TO ADJOURN THE MARCH 16, 2010 MEETING. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Elizabeth Santagati, Chair

Date

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Beverly Smith-Dore, Secretary

Date

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