

November 6, 2008

The third meeting of the Disability Commission for the 2008 interim was held at the General Assembly Building in Richmond on November 6, 2008. Following opening remarks, the Commission heard scheduled presentations.

Emergency Planning

Robert Mauskapf, Director of Emergency Operations, Planning and Logistics at the Virginia Department of Health provided an overview of emergency planning for individuals with disabilities. Mr. Mauskapf explained that hospitals, long term care facilities, and home health agencies are required, by regulations, to have plans for sheltering in place and for evacuating and transporting their patients and supporting their patients' medical needs during such evacuation and transportation. The Department of Health provides guidance and technical assistance to these facilities in creating such plans. Mr. Mauskapf explained that the Department also works with localities to develop emergency evacuation and relocation plans for medically dependent individuals. The Department has assisted with location of shelter facilities for special needs populations, including medically fragile populations and populations with sensory disabilities. The Department has also worked to develop and support the establishment and operation of Public Health and Special Medical Needs state-managed emergency shelters, staffed by medical personnel and equipped with special resources to support individuals with special medical or other needs. Mr. Mauskapf stated that Goodwill Industries has assisted the Department by providing medical equipment to meet the needs of persons in shelters.

Annette S. Kelley, joined by Leslie Knachel and Karen Cullen, provided information on emergency preparedness and response requirements for facilities licensed by the Department of Social Services. Ms. Kelley provided an overview of the populations served by assisted living facilities, adult day care centers, children's residential facilities, and child day centers and some characteristics of these facilities. She stated that facilities of these types are required to have contact with local emergency coordinators in order to understand and evaluate local disaster risk, community-wide plans to address disasters and emergency situations, and any assistance which might be available from the local emergency management office during an emergency. Emergency response plans are required to include analysis of potential hazards, written emergency management policies, notification procedures, shelter-in-place procedures, evacuation and relocation procedures, and procedures for addressing medical, mental health, and missing persons emergencies. Facilities are also required to conduct staff, resident, and volunteer training and practice drills, and to review and revise plans annually. Ms. Kelley concluded by describing the Special Facilities Emergency Operations Plan Review Matrix, which is available online at www.vdem.virginia.gov.

Disability Commission Housing Work Group

Teri Barker-Morgan, representing the Disability Commission Housing Work Group provided additional information on recommendations suggested by the Work Group. Ms. Barker-Morgan explained that the Work Group continued to recommend increasing the Livable Homes Tax Credit from \$500 to \$1000; writing a letter to

members of Virginia's Senate Delegation requesting support of the Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act of 2008; supporting the plan set forth in Report Document 30 (2008) - Auxiliary Grant Portability: A Report on the Feasibility of Restructuring Auxiliary Grants for Certain CSB Case Management Consumers, with the goal of extending the portability of auxiliary grants to all persons qualifying for such grants; and supporting a Joint Resolution encouraging the use of the THA Toolkit with the development of local comprehensive plans. Ms. Barker-Morgan also offered two new recommendations, including a recommendation to amend § 15.2-2225 and § 15.2-2226 of the Code of Virginia to require local planning commissions and local governments to post draft and approved comprehensive plans on a website maintained by the local planning commission or local government to enhance collaboration and regional planning efforts, and a recommendation that the Commission request the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation to, in collaboration with the Department of Housing and Community Development, use federal HUD grant funds for development and dissemination of a booklet or field manual that would educate builders and building officials about the requirements of ANSI A117.7 (2003), relating to accessibility and usability for persons with physical disabilities.

Review of Recommendations

Following presentation of information and recommendations by the Disability Commission Housing Work Group, the joint subcommittee reviewed recommendations previously received, including the recommendations of the Disability Commission Housing Work Group. With the information before them, the joint subcommittee decided to vote on the recommendations at the next meeting.