

**Social Security Advisory Board
Minutes
Board Meeting
March 23-24, 2015**

Location: New York, New York

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (March 23)
9:40 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (March 24)

SSAB Members: Henry Aaron, Chair
Lanhee Chen
Alan Cohen
Jagadeesh Gokhale
Dorcas Hardy
Barbara Kennelly

SSAB Staff: Claire Green, Staff Director
Jackie Chapin
Anita Kelly
Sterling Laudon

Participants

New York Region: **Fred Maurin**, Regional Commissioner
Julio Infiesta, Acting Deputy Regional Commissioner
Bryant Wilder, Acting Assistant Regional Commissioner –
Management and Operations Support
Ray Egan, Acting Deputy Assistant Regional Commissioner –
Management and Operations Support
Bernie Bowles, Executive Officer
Jeremiah Schofield, Acting Assistant Regional Commissioner –
Processing Center Operations
Frank Barry, Deputy Acting Assistant Regional Commissioner
– Processing Center Operations
John Shallman, Communications Director
Caren Unger, Chief, Operations Support Branch, Northeastern
Program Service Center
Rick Bailey, Area Director Manhattan, Bronx, Staten Island and lower Hudson
Valley
Dean Frenkian, Area Director, New Jersey
Andrea Wilder, Area Director, Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island
Dan Karp, Center Director, Automation
Victoria Shteyman, Deputy Center Director, Automation
Joe Cafaro, Acting Center Director, Disability
Melissa Bruckner, Deputy Center Director, Disability
Stephanie Francis, Center Director, Material Resources
Greg Narowski, Deputy Center Director, Material Resources
Mary Groot, Center Director, Programs Support
Tracey Saverino, Deputy Center Director, Programs Support
Diana Valdes, Center Director, Human Resources

Jonathan Addy, Deputy Center Director, Human Resources
Denise Hachicho, Teleservice Center Operations Director
Althea Phipps, Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity Director

Office of Disability

Adjudication and Review:

Monica LaPolt, Regional Chief ALJ (Acting)
Thomas Harper, Regional Management Officer

**Office of the Regional
Counsel:**

Steven P. Conte, Regional Chief Counsel
Som Ramrup, Deputy Regional Chief Counsel

**Office of the Inspector
General:**

Edward J. Ryan, Special Agent In Charge
John Grasso, Assistant Special Agent In Charge

**Brooklyn Field Office
Management:**

Melvina Douse, District Director

**Brooklyn Card Center
Management:**

Valerie McNeil, Manager

Legal Services NYC:

Ann Biddle, Deputy Director
LaTanya White, Staff Attorney

**Disability Determination
Services:**

David W. Ramsay, Director, NJ Division of Disability Determination Services
Gloria Toal, Deputy Commissioner, NY Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance
Joseph Cafaro, Director, NY Regional Center for Disability
Melissa Bruckner, Deputy Center Director, NY Regional Center for Disability

In March, the Board traveled to New York for two days of meetings on program administration and disability programs. The Board had several meetings with SSA executives, management and staff, as well as outside groups. The Board also visited SSA's enumeration center and district office.

While visiting the New York Regional Office, the Board met with executives, management, and then staff to learn about day-to-day operations, hear about issues faced in the region, and gather suggestions for improving administration of the Social Security programs.

During the visit, the Board also met with management from New York and New Jersey DDSs to learn about disability evaluation in each state. Managers discussed the ongoing prototype model being used in New York and offered insights into impact of reconsideration and the single decisionmaker on the evaluation process. Next, the Board met with management judges from the Office of Disability Adjudication and Review. The Board discussed the backlog of disability cases waiting to be heard, hiring challenges, ideas for streamlining the hearings process, and ensuring consistency of decisions. The Board then met with the Office of General Counsel to discuss the component's workload in federal court and

potential reforms to improve the process. Lastly, the Board met with agents from the Office of the Inspector General to learn about efforts to combat fraud in the disability system. Agents showcased recent investigations in New York and Puerto Rico and discussed ways to increase their fraud-fighting capabilities.

In addition to visiting the Regional office, the Board travelled to a field office and card center located in Brooklyn. The Board met with field office staff to discuss their interactions with the public, learn about challenges of working in a diverse urban office, and gather input for improving administration of the Social Security programs. The Board also met with staff in the card center to learn about the operations and interaction with other SSA components. Finally, the Board met with representatives of New York Legal Services who described their experiences representing claimants to SSA. Representatives explained their major interactions with the agency and the issues that cause the most difficulty for their clients. The Board discussed ways that legislation might be able to simplify administration of the program that would reduce the administrative burden for the agency and compliance challenges for the public.

I certify that the minutes written for the March 23-24, 2015 meeting of the Social Security Advisory Board are correct.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Henry Aaron".

Henry J. Aaron

Chairman
Social Security Advisory Board