

**CITY OF PITTSBURGH/ALLEGHENY COUNTY
TASK FORCE ON DISABILITIES**

April 21, 2003

MINUTES

- Location:** First Floor Conference Room
200 Ross Street
Pittsburgh, PA
- Members Present:** John Tague, Chairperson, Paul O'Hanlon, Co-chair, Jeff Parker, Treasurer, Ruth Walter Brenyo, Aurelia Carter, Bill Chrisner, Liz Healey, Rich McGann, Penny Perlman, Kate Seelman
- Members Absent:** Al Condeluci, Linda Dickerson, Milton Henderson
- Others Present:** Will Thompkins, Judy Barricella, Lisa Moses, Janine Brinkley, Chuck Keenan

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Tague at 1:10 PM.

Introductions:

All members introduced themselves and briefly explained their occupations and interests.

Approval of Minutes from March 24, 2003

Mr. Keenan noted that a copy of last month's meeting minutes were attached to the Agenda packet and noted that he also sent them out via e-mail to all members prior to the meeting. He noted that, to date, he has received no corrections. Ms. Healey made a motion to APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 24, 2003 MEETING AS PRESENTED. Mr. Parker seconded the motion. The motion to APPROVE THE MINUTES WAS APPROVED unanimously.

Financial Report:

Mr. Parker handed out and reviewed the Fiscal Report, which indicated that the Task Force had approximately \$1175 remaining for future projects. This represents the amount of money not yet encumbered or allocated to future expenditures. Other money may be available from Disability Agenda, which still has approximately \$9100 remaining in its budget. To date, Mr. Parker noted that the Visitability campaign has cost over \$8400, including rental of the Sheraton for the day-long conference, the honorarium to Eleanor Smith, buttons, interpreters at the conference, and various other items. Mr. Parker explained that he ordered 150 copies of the *Small Differences* video at a cost of \$429 and that they are in stock and available for distribution. Ms. Healey noted that the strategic planning process may require using additional funds for room accommodations and/or meals. Mr. Tague asked what would happen to any money left over from this year's budget. Ms. Barricella indicated that it would go back to the county. Mr. Parker notified the members that he spoke to Tony Buba about doing a sequel to the *Small Differences* video and that he would like to help.

Dr. Seelman moved that the TASK FORCE APPROVE THE FISCAL REPORT AS PRESENTED. Mr. O'Hanlon seconded the motion. All voted in favor to APPROVE THE FISCAL REPORT AS PRESENTED.

Sub-Committees Report (Design):

Ms. Brenyo reported on the activities of the Design Committee over the last few months. She noted that she is in the process of reviewing the committee's membership in the hopes of restarting their meetings with the Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh. She has been in contact with Keith Kinard, Executive Director of HACP, to start formalizing a process whereby the committee can again review plans for new construction and rehabilitation of Housing Authority units. She also noted that she hopes to begin working with the Allegheny County Housing Authority some time in the near future to do similar activities.

Mr. Keenan announced that the City Planning Commission will be reviewing the first new cinema building constructed within the city in many years at its meeting on Tuesday, April 22, 2003 at 2:00 PM. He stated that the cinema will be built on the South Side in the new South Side Works development and will need Planning Commission approval for conformance with the City's Zoning Code before construction will be allowed to proceed. Finally, he noted that the Planning Commission will take public testimony at their meeting, so if members have concerns or comments, they should raise them at the meeting.

Dr. Seelman asked how the Task Force could get an agenda for upcoming meetings, noting that she thought it was important that members have a voice in new construction and developments that take place in the City and County. She also requested that the Task Force invite the Chair of the Planning Commission to an upcoming Task Force meeting so that he is aware of the organization's objectives and responsibilities. Ms. Carter noted that the Task Force should ask the same of County Officials and other bodies associated with new development. Mr. Keenan, Ms. Healey, and Dr. Seelman volunteered to work on this issue.

Disability Agenda Report:

Ms. Barricella reported on the activities of Disability Agenda. She reported that they will again be working with the Three Rivers Arts Festival this coming year, most notably in providing wheelchairs upon request, providing information on parking and other amenities, volunteer training, and providing volunteers to work at the festival. She explained the success of those efforts last year and how she hopes to expand the services to people with disabilities at the festival this summer.

Ms. Barricella informed Task Force members that the Housing Ombudsman position has been secured and a person hired at ACTION-Housing, who will help with the first closing on a home through the program next week. She also announced that the County Department of Aging has funds available for elderly parents who are caring for their grown children with disabilities through a new respite care program. Ms. Carter asked for an update on the County's Family Support Centers, where Ms. Barricella said that trainings on serving people with disabilities have been taking place.

Visitability Update:

Mr. O'Hanlon reported on efforts that he and others have undertaken to secure passage of the Visitability Ordinance in Pittsburgh City Council. He noted that the Committee appointed by members of City Council met two weeks ago and that he felt differences among advocates for and against the bill had begun to narrow. He reported that Susan Golomb, Director of the Department of City Planning, had asked each committee member to list the circumstances where they felt visitable housing could be constructed and then to report that to her. He also noted that a second meeting of the committee had not yet been scheduled. Mr. O'Hanlon informed Task Force members of other activities that are being undertaken to grow support for the passage of the Ordinance, including the development of a brochure by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and holding individual meetings with City Council members. Mr. O'Hanlon felt that Council needed to take a vote on the Ordinance by the middle of June in order to keep it from being taken off Council's agenda in the wake of the City's budget debate.

Strategic Planning Process

Ms. Brinkley introduced herself and reminded members of her role as facilitator for the Task Force's Strategic Planning Process. She passed out the notes that she had taken at last meeting and reviewed them for the members. She also outlined the next steps that members had identified for the process, including the structure (who, what, when, where, and process) of a public forum to be held in the coming months of advocates from outside of the Task Force, the internal prioritization of issues raised at the public forum, and the final synthesis of that information into the strategic plan.

Mr. Thompkins asked if City or County Council members or staff from the Allegheny County Department of Economic Development ever attended any Task Force meetings. Members could not remember anyone from the Councils or County Department of Economic Development being present at a meeting. He felt that these people should be invited due to their ability to influence public policy. Ms. Healey noted that the Task Force has not historically had a strong connection to governmental decision-makers, even though it was a creation of those leaders and was set up to advise them on policies affecting people with disabilities. Mr. Chrisner stated that the Task Force needs to create better inroads to leaders within the City and County government. Mr. Thompkins suggested that the Task Force hold its meetings in the County Courthouse or the City-County Building in order to raise the presence of the Task Force, making it even closer to the City and County administrations.

Dr. Seelman noted that there are different kinds of leadership groups to which the Task Force should be responsive. She noted that there are leaders from the disability community, foundation community, education community, political leaders, and others and that each of those leaders should be approached appropriately. She explained that different means may need to be employed to reach the leaders of each of those sectors.

Ms. Brinkley asked how this should affect the planning process. She asked what members felt people outside of the organization would ask it to do. She felt that, by holding a large public hearing with people having a variety of issues and problems, the Task Force may be asked to solve a large list of problems, even though it may not presently have the "authority" to solve them due to the disconnect with governmental decision-makers.

Mr. O'Hanlon felt that advising local governments was only one function that the Task Force has and that perhaps it should be expanding its focus to include both the government and the

community at-large. Ms. Brinkley noted that the process may involve an education of the general public on what the Task Force does and has done historically and then it can ask for input from them on what it should be doing in the future.

Ms. Brinkley summarized the work on the strategic plan thus far and then outlined a plan for the upcoming months. She noted that the Task Force should continue to work internally on the process, with Ms. Brinkley, Ms. Healey, Mr. O'Hanlon, Dr. Seelman, and Mr. Keenan forming a sub-group to set up the public meeting process that may need to take place in the fall. She also noted that budget issues may dictate that the public process be moved to the early summer.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15.

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING:	DATE:	May 19, 2003
	TIME:	1:00 P.M.
	LOCATION:	To be determined

FUTURE MEETING DATES:

June 16, 2003