

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

December 23, 2002

MINUTES

Location: First Floor Conference Room
200 Ross Street
Pittsburgh, PA

Members Present: John Tague, Chairperson, Paul O'Hanlon, Co-chair, Ruth Walter Brenyo, Al Condeluci, Liz Healey, Milton Henderson, Jeff Parker, Penny Perlman, Kate Seelman

Members Absent: Aurelia Carter, Bill Chrisner, Linda Dickerson

Others Present: Eileen Stewart, Chuck Keenan

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Tague at 10:15.

Introductions:

Mr. Tague introduced Dr. Kate Seelman as the thirteenth member of the Task Force, noting that she was chosen during the recent election. Other members and guests present introduced themselves and explained their responsibilities and interests. Mr. Tague asked Mr. Keenan to send all pertinent information concerning the Task Force, including by-laws and past minutes, to Dr. Seelman so that she knows what the Task Force has been doing. Mr. Condeluci gave Dr. Seelman a copy of the "Small Differences" video and briefly explained how it was done, how it was distributed, and how it may be revisited in the future.

Approval of Amended Minutes from November 26, 2002 Meeting:

Mr. Tague noted that the Minutes from last month's meeting were included in the packet and asked if any members had any corrections to them. Mr. Keenan also noted that he had received no comments or revisions to the Minutes when he sent them out with the meeting reminder last week.

Ms. Brenyo moved that the Minutes from the November 26, 2002 Meeting BE APPROVED AS PRESENTED. Mr. Condeluci seconded the motion. The motion to APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED WAS APPROVED unanimously.

Correspondence:

Mr. Keenan pointed out that the agenda packets included two letters concerning the possible construction of an amphitheater on the North Shore adjacent to Heinz Field. The first letter was sent to Tom Armstrong, Chairman of the City of Pittsburgh Planning Commission, and asked him to condition the Planning Commission's approval of the amphitheater on the Steelers (the

amphitheater's developers) meeting with members of the Task Force. This letter was written so that members of the Task Force, most notably the Design Committee, could ensure that the facility will be constructed and designed so that people with disabilities can participate in all activities held at that site.

The second letter will be sent to Art Rooney of the Steelers and it asks that he meet with members of the Task Force to get input on the amphitheater's design. Again, this letter was written so that members of the Task Force could have a chance to review the plans for the amphitheater prior to its construction and make sure that all patrons, including those with disabilities, will have an opportunity to use and enjoy it.

Dr. Seelman and Mr. Condeluci offered suggestions to improve the letter to Mr. Armstrong before it is sent. All members were in agreement that the letters were sufficient after the proposed changes and that they should be sent out as soon as possible. Mr. Keenan agreed to make the necessary changes and to send out the letters later today.

Mr. Tague also notified the members that a letter had been sent to the Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh concerning their construction and rehabilitation of accessible units. The letter will hopefully start a formal relationship between HACP and the Design Committee of the Task Force, whereby that committee will review plans and drawings for newly designed or rehabilitated units for conformance with accessibility standards. Ms. Brenyo stated that she had not yet seen this letter, nor had she heard anything from the Housing Authority about starting this relationship. Mr. Tague asked Mr. Keenan to send a copy of the letter to Ms. Brenyo. He also said that he would follow up with a phone call to the Housing Authority to see when they would like the Task Force to begin its work in this area.

Financial Report:

Mr. Parker handed out the December 2002 Fiscal Report, which detailed monies spent to date under the City-County Task Force for fiscal year 2002-03. He noted that in December, he was able to encumber the dinner that Ms. Brenyo held a few years ago, money for interpretive services, and all money associated with the Task Force meetings held to date.

Mr. Parker noted that he determined that the Task Force had earned income of \$16,000 from the sale of the "Small Differences" video. He noted that according to last month's meeting minutes, he was to review options for investing those proceeds. Mr. Parker consulted with members of his staff at United Cerebral Palsy on the feasibility of investing the money in the stock market, which was not deemed viable due to its current volatility, and in setting up a foundation, which too was not deemed viable due to the high start up costs associated with trying to do this. Mr. Condeluci asked if investing the money in a short-term certificate of deposit (CD) would be appropriate. This would be possible according to Mr. Parker, but the money would not be readily available for Task Force use due to the nature of these types of deposits.

Finally, Mr. Parker noted that he had read the discussion on trying to revisit the "Small Differences" video, saying that this may be a good use of the proceeds. He said that doing this may sustain the interest in the video's message and a new video may spark sales of both the first and a subsequent video. Ms. Healey said that she had been able to contact some of the former participants in the video and felt that finding all would be possible. Dr. Seelman felt that updating the video would be a better investment than putting the proceeds in the bank. Ms. Healey noted that the focus of a great deal of work in the disability field is in the area of transition and that the former participants are just about to enter that period of their lives. She felt that it

would be helpful to interview the participants to see how they are tackling the issues associated with their transition into adulthood.

Mr. Tague asked if the Task Force should appoint a committee to work on how best to use the proceeds from the video and asked Mr. Parker to chair that committee. He asked that Ms. Healey join as well. Mr. Condeluci suggested that if the focus of the committee would be to revisit the video, then Tony Buba (the producer from the “Small Differences” video) should be asked to join the committee as well. Mr. Keenan volunteered to staff the committee and Mr. Condeluci volunteered to serve as a member.

Sub-Committees Report (Design):

Mr. Tague reminded the Task Force members of the three letters that were written this month, one that had been sent to the Housing Authority and two that were drafted and will be sent out today concerning the North Shore Amphitheater.

Sub-Committees Report (Executive):

Mr. Tague reported that the Executive Committee had not met this month and that, therefore, he had no report to give.

Disability Agenda Report:

Mr. Tague noted that no members of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services were present for the meeting, so there would be no report on the activities of Disability Agenda this month. He said that he would ask Ms. Barricella for a written report if she knows in advance that she will be unable to attend.

Mr. Condeluci reminded all members of Jorgene Seleyo’s passing earlier this month. Mr. Tague noted that he had intended to send flowers to her funeral on behalf of the Task Force, but that he was unable to do so due to the timing of her death. He asked if the Task Force would like to make a contribution to her identified charitable fund. Mr. Condeluci asked if this was permissible with public funds and felt that if members wanted to contribute, that they should do so privately. The group felt that this was a better approach and asked Mr. Keenan to send out an e-mail to all members informing them of this and where they should send contributions. Mr. Condeluci was also concerned about how Ms. Seleyo would be replaced at the County, for she had a number of projects on which she had been working. He said that he would follow-up with Ms. Barricella to see what she was doing and where the Task Force may need to fill in.

Visitability Update:

Mr. O’Hanlon gave a brief summary of a Visitability Ordinance introduced to Pittsburgh City Council by Councilman Jim Ferlo and others on October 9, 2002. He explained the concept for those who were unfamiliar with it and where the Ordinance stands presently. He noted that the Ordinance had been tabled at a Council Meeting held on December 10 and that it would be re-introduced in March. The reason for the tabling of the Ordinance was that not enough votes in favor of its passage had been secured, primarily due to a perceived lack of participation by the development community in its drafting. Mr. O’Hanlon stated that the group working on the ordinance had adopted a new strategy to incorporate anyone with an interest in Visitability into the process of rewriting the ordinance. He said that Susan Golomb, Director of City Planning, was working on assembling a Task Force to work on this.

Mr. O'Hanlon noted that he is currently working on several events and efforts designed to elicit support and input on the ordinance. Among the events on which he is working is a seminar for architects on visitability hosted by Dr. Ed Steinfield of the University of Buffalo. He is also planning to have Eleanor Smith of Concrete Change come to Pittsburgh in February for a "town meeting" on Visitability and working with members of the Community Design Center and the Department of City Planning to host a charette on Visitability as soon as possible. Mr. O'Hanlon is working with Ms. Barricella and others on a public relations and marketing campaign to create a positive message for the Visitability legislation. A design competition and sign-on process are also being developed.

Ms. Healey asked if an organizational "infrastructure" had been built to tackle all of these tasks. Mr. O'Hanlon said that he has a number of volunteers already lined up to serve on committees in charge of each activity outlined above. Mr. Condeluci also reminded the Task Force that he and Mr. O'Hanlon will again be meeting with staff members of the Pittsburgh Urban Redevelopment Authority in early January to discuss the ordinance and to address some of their concerns with it.

In light of the importance of this undertaking, Mr. Condeluci made a motion that VISITABILITY BECOME THE HIGHEST PRIORITY AND PRIMARY PROJECT FOR THE TASK FORCE UNTIL AN ORDINANCE PASSES CITY COUNCIL. Dr. Seelman seconded the motion. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADA Coordinator Update:

Mr. Keenan reported that he will begin working with the Department of Parks and Recreation on their Summer Booklet, which lists all activities that the department will sponsor during that period. He will be helping them to create the booklet on tape, large print, and text only formats so that it can be accessed by those who are blind or who have low vision. He reported that he also hopes to have specific activities designed for those with disabilities, like wheelchair basketball, incorporated into the booklet as well this year.

Open Discussion:

Mr. Tague asked that members look at their calendars so that they could begin to select meeting dates for the upcoming year. Dr. Seelman asked what would be on next year's agenda (on what would the Task Force be working). Mr. O'Hanlon noted that in previous years, the Task Force typically had a planning retreat to discuss its agenda, but that with the lack of meetings earlier in the year, this did not happen this year. Mr. Tague noted that the Task Force should try to revisit a strategic planning process and asked for volunteers to serve on a committee to address an agenda for the upcoming year. Mr. Tague, Ms. Healey, and Mr. Keenan will serve on the committee.

Mr. Tague again asked members to look at their calendars to determine future meeting dates. The group agreed that the third Monday of each month from 1:00 to 3:00 P.M. would be the set meeting time. All agreed that the Task Force should continue to meet monthly until June 2003 at the same location, the First Floor Conference Room at 200 Ross Street. Meetings could then become bi-monthly beginning in August 2003, with dates, times, and locations to be determined later.

Mr. Tague reported that he has been working with members of Governor-elect Rendell on his Transition Team and ways that people with disabilities can be included in his administration and better served during his term of office. He hopes to work with the Transition Teams for the

Departments of Labor and Industry, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Public Welfare. Mr. Condeluci noted that he will be holding a meeting with Mr. Keenan and a small group of advocates on January 6, 2002 concerning issues to raise with Governor-elect Rendell during his transition to the office. He wants to look at the creation of an advisory board like the City-County Task Force at the state level and at the potential appointment of people with disabilities to cabinet level positions. Mr. Condeluci also wants the Governor to sponsor a "Disability Summit" on issues affecting people with disabilities throughout the Commonwealth. Dr. Seelman further noted that Pennsylvania has never issued a special report on the health of people with disabilities and that this should be put on the Governor's agenda as well.

Mr. Tague mentioned that the FISA Foundation is setting up a focus group of people with disabilities who have had trouble finding dental care in the region. He noted that they are currently looking for males to serve on the group and that they need to be people who do not currently have dentists because they have been refused service due to discrimination or a lack of insurance. He explained that the Consumer Health Coalition is helping to foster this study.

Announcements:

Ms. Stewart announced that Sal Sirabella, Deputy Mayor for the City of Pittsburgh, is resigning at the end of the year to take a position in the Commonwealth.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00.

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING:	DATE:	January 27, 2003
	TIME:	1:00 P.M.
	LOCATION:	First Floor Conference Room 200 Ross Street Pittsburgh, PA 15219

FUTURE MEETING DATES:

February 17, 2003
March 17, 2003
April 21, 2003
May 19, 2003
June 16, 2003

All meetings will be at 1:00 P.M. in the First Floor Conference Room at 200 Ross Street, downtown Pittsburgh, PA 15219 unless otherwise noted.