

City of Pittsburgh/Allegheny County  
Task Force on Disability  
Monday July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014  
Meeting Minutes

**Task Force Members in Attendance:** Paul O’Hanlon, Aurelia Carter-Scott, Jeff Parker, James C. Noschese, Dr. Katherine Seelman, Joe Wasserman, Karen Warman, Janet Evans, Richard McGann, John Tague, Milton Henderson, Judy Baricella, Sarah Goldstein

**Task Force Members Absent:** Liz Healy

**Also in Attendance:** Laura Gibbs (Aviation Safeguards), Donna Lechlitz (Aviation Safeguards), Georganne Lingenfelter, Don Kovack, Michelle Loar (Disability Options Network), Mike Matthews (Disability Options Network), Joy Dore (MBH), Varun Viswanathan (Fair Housing Partnership), Ali R. Abdullah (HACP), Chuck Half (VETaxi), Steve Errard (Alleg. Co. DHS OID), Michelle Sipple (Familylinks), Marc Pinchalk (Pittsburgh EMS), Sally Jo Snyder (CHC), Sarah Kinter (PGH Commission on Human Relations), Robin Smith (HACP), Dianne Gallagher, Shirley Abriola, Deluca, Lauren Mitchell, Joe Caruso, Mai Nguyen, Toni Johnson, Tyler Smith, DeJuan Webb, Brian Foster, Chania Vera, Richard Meritzer

**Welcome and Introduction**

The meeting began with introduction of Task Force members and other individuals in attendance.

**Review and Approval of May and June Minutes**

RICHARD WILL ADD

**Aviation Safeguards**

Ms. Gibbs: They are not employees, they are volunteers. So, you cannot always have an ambassador at your disposal when you need them because they are not there from open to close. Just a volunteer basis. We at AS start the day at 3:30 am and don’t leave until the last passenger that needs assistance gets it. That can be until 1, 2, 3 am.

Dr. Seelman: Can you tell us what happens when someone arrives in a wheelchair and probably immediately needs assistance? What is the process for accommodating a person coming in and out, either off or on the plane?

Ms. Gibbs: The proper process is if they are going to be traveling and are capable of communicating with the airline, we ask they you contact the airline, so that airline will put that information in your itinerary. So, every stop you make on your way to your destination, you will have assistance. If you don’t go through the airline, but go straight to us, we can pick you up wherever you need us. We can drop you off wherever you need to be dropped off, but you really need to contact that airline so the airline knows every step of the way you need someone.

Dr. Seelman: Starting with curbside?

Ms. Gibbs: Yes. We have skycaps out on the curb from 4 am until around 7:30 each night, and they can take you in, take your bags in, get you checked in. And then they contact us, and we send a wheelchair escort out to meet you and take you to wherever you need to go.

Mr. Noschese: I reviewed the papers that we got, and it shows a phone number here for the public to call, but I believe that is an old number. In regards to calling with a TTY, it's about 1% of the deaf population that use a TTY. About 99% of the deaf/hard of hearing population now use a video phone. Also, suppose I were to come into the airport and it has phone numbers as to who we can call to make hotel reservations. There is only a phone that hearing people can use. The phones are not accessible to the deaf. I can't access the phone there to make a reservation for a hotel. If I have my laptop, I can use the video phone on my laptop, but the problem with that is wifi accessibility. I can't always get the password, or the wifi is down. I tend to use the airport services once a month, and I know that you're behind as far as tech goes, but my request would be improving the phone system so that you have access for deaf and hard of hearing individuals. That would be my only request.

Ms. Gibbs: I can pass that on to the airport authority tomorrow and have them get moving on that.

Dr. Seelman: In relation to hard of hearing people, the induction loop is big across in London, but it doesn't come here that much. So we can talk about that population in terms of hearing announcements. The induction loop is a loop that goes around an area and amplifies the communication directly to my hearing aids. There are a lot of deaf and hard of hearing clubs, hear loss associations, that would be right behind you.

Mr. O'Hanlon: One of the things that we're learning is that the airports are complicated in terms of whose jurisdiction is what. If you're in the airport and there's an announcement being made, whether you can hear the announcement becomes a concern. Do you have anything to do with that?

Ms. Gibbs: We don't, but I can pass that onto the airport authority. The contact would be Jeff Martinelli. He's one of the communications managers.

Dr. Seelman: We're talking about two different communication situations here. One is video phones for those who receive information visually, and those who receive it perhaps at least by audio, perhaps visually, too. There's something called an induction loops. It's really an inexpensive technology. And Paul is right, I suppose even you get confused by who is supposed to do what. And certainly we do.

Ms. Dore: I'm somebody that's legally deaf. You mentioned something about calling you, but if we're deaf, is there a way to text you, for example, to get assistance? And, the problem with hearing aids is they magnify background noises. Sometimes, even with the hearing loop, it helps sometimes, but sometimes airports are just busy, noisy places. That's the nature of an airport. It helps to have a backup way to understand. A text, or with a deaf-blind person, maybe ask his or her preference for communication, because everybody's situation is different. So is there a way to text you for assistance?

Ms. Gibbs: You can always text either me or Donna, but we still have to get you in direct contact with the airline to follow the processes that you need as a traveler to get that information put into your

record. We can always set it up, whether or not you're a frequent traveler, to have our cell phone numbers for you to text, for us to then help you.

Mr. McGann: I want to say that I am very proud of you and your group. I utilize your services often and very much appreciate all that you do. It would be nice if you had a few people who could use basic sign language, even just the ABCs, but again, thank you for your services and what you are providing.

Ms. Evans: I didn't know we had this service, so I want to make sure I understand it. So I call my airlines, and do I call you, or do they contact you?

Ms. Gibbs: They contact us when you get to the airport, and they tell us where we need to pick you up. We send a representative to pick you up and take you to wherever you need to go. We take you to the gate, and then the airline personnel will make sure you get on board that flight, and then that airline will make sure that you have assistance when you get to your destination as well. That's why it's so important that you call the airline, so that is in your record.

Ms. Evans: That's very good news, and I'm glad you came today.

Ms. Baricella: What's the name of your office?

Ms. Gibbs: Aviation Safeguards. The airlines contracted us to do the work that they don't have their own employees do. Those services include wheelchair escort, skycap on the curb, baggage handling.

Ms. Baricella: Sometimes I wish we had a little cheat sheet explaining who exactly does what. It gets confusing.

Ms. Gibbs: It does get very confusing. That's why we outfit our employees to be readily seen in bright red vests. We're always milling around the airport for people. But I understand what you're saying.

Mr. Meritzer: One of the complaints we've gotten about the airport, ongoing, is that there is an issue with Access. Because of the Homeland Security Division, Access is not allowed to park and leave their van and get people. Is there any chance that you are working with Access, or could work with Access, to bridge that gap?

Ms. Gibbs: We're working with the airport authority now to get a better process, because there is no process there at the airport yet. We're trying to get a process where you are going to be able to pull up to a blue line on the curb, let someone off that needs our assistance, wait a few minutes to be able to pick someone up that may be traveling back to Pittsburgh. That's in the works, because at this point, a lot of times we're so busy, we can't sit with someone for an hour before their ride comes. So we're trying to come with a program that there will be someone down in baggage waiting with you, getting you what you need. That's in the works, and that's coming soon.

Mr. McGann: If I could add, my experience with the Blue Van has been wonderful. They watch and make sure of who is here and who is not, and as soon as they get there, they come to me and guide me to the van. So that's another wonderful service to use.

Mr. Noschese: The Blue Van service is called SuperShuttle.

Ms. Evans: Does that have a lift?

Mr. Noschese: Yes.

Dr. Seelman: Now that we know this service exists, where can it be placed on our website so that it can be shared with other people?

Mr. Meritzer: As you know, Joe, my legal intern, is doing a lot of work on airport accommodations. After this meeting, we can go over the airline checklist. Eventually, we can put a section on the ADA page specifically related to airport accommodation. My web intern will be back in the beginning of August, and he will be able to do this and hopefully to have set up by the end of the summer. I hope I can get some additional information for you to post on it or link to so that people know this is here. And of course, we'll use social media to get the word out.

Dr. Seelman: To support your program, we can give good references.

Mr. Noschese: In my experience with three canceled flights, two were at the Pittsburgh airport, and one in New York. At the gate in Pittsburgh, at the counter they let a lot of words flow, and all the people in the area heard, but I didn't hear what was being said. All these people were tearing away to where they needed to go, and I didn't have a clue of what was going on. I walked up, and I said, "Excuse me, what's up?" Someone then told me the flight was canceled, and the other passengers were checking with another gate. So I went over, and it was too late. I had to stay overnight, two times. In New York, I met someone and let them know that I was deaf. When the flight was canceled, they came over and got me and explained the changed plans, then announced to everyone else. I was able to be the first one at the other gate, so that was nice. That was a weakness in the Pittsburgh airport.

Ms. Baricella: If you have new information, I will get it onto the county website. Right now, if you go onto the county website, on the left-hand column of the website, it says "For Accessibility," and that's where my contact information is. Anytime you feel there is anything that needs to be on the website related to accessibility, let me know.

### **Update on the Meeting with the Mayor**

Mr. O'Hanlon: We've been back and forth with dates. I've been the problem, and I just want to make that clear. The dates that they offered me, I couldn't keep. I'm expecting today to get another date.

Ms. Carter-Scott: What does the format look like, with the meeting with the mayor?

Mr. O'Hanlon: It's going to be Kate and I, if Kate's available. We wanted to talk to him about the relationship of the new administration to the Task Force. Hopefully we'll be moving on the appointee that we haven't gotten appointed. What we should really talk about is something that's more of an outreach between the Task Force and the county. We should look at how we relate in focusing in the

county as the Task Force. With the mayor, we want to get an acquainted meeting to find out where we are with the appointments. What we do with the next step beyond that is up for discussion. We should maybe put on a future agenda a discussion about how we reach out to city and county government as the Task Force, how we let them know what we're up to, what our issues and concerns are, what areas of collaboration we could identify. That requires discussion.

### **Update on Oakland Accessibility**

Mr. Parker: The last meeting was on June 20<sup>th</sup>, and there was a lot of brainstorming during that as the follow-up to the tour we had done of Oakland. Ultimately, a representative from the city is letting Accessible Oakland use the same company they use for marketing to develop a marketing package or strategy to help encourage the Oakland businessman. That marketing firm is supposed to come this Friday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, at 3pm. There was a lot of opportunity for creative thinking and brainstorming at this meeting. We considered types of possible funding, who else could be at the table, who else could be involved, and where we could take it. Some thoughts included looking ahead a year at the ADA's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and using that as a goal to look toward. But the real outcome here is the fact that there's a marketing/advertising firm coming to encourage the businesses in Oakland.

Mr. Meritzer: We have evaluated businesses both in the Forbes Fifth Corridor and the Semple Street business district below Bates. Many of these businesses actually have ramps, so we're working with them to make it clear how to get accessibility. So there is some movement at least with temporary fixes. We're proceeding very aggressively to let the businesses know that they are out of compliance, and working with them to make those improvements.

Mr. O'Hanlon: Do you have any data breakdown? I'm curious whether we can compare it to any other business district in the city.

Mr. Meritzer: At this point, we've done those districts, North Oakland, and Liberty Avenue. We're in the process of evaluating them now. At the next meeting, I can have a report.

Dr. Seelman: It could be within Oakland, just as we did with voting. How many are accessible now, and what has changed over x amount of time?

Ms. Dore: Are you focusing on just the sidewalks themselves? Or did you include the schools in the study? Have you done a similar study Downtown?

Mr. O'Hanlon: It's mostly the business district rather than the university hubs.

Mr. McGann: The problems with Pittsburgh is that there are so many old buildings. The design of those buildings do not permit for accessibility. You're right, the business districts are where we need to focus first because of the old buildings.

Mr. O'Hanlon: The colleges are also a whole generation better in accessibility.

## CareerLinks Building Update

Dr. Seelman: I asked the UPMC work office to look at CareerLinks and forwarded it to Judy.

Ms. Baricella: My issue is not the fact that they're not accessible, because they are accessible if they get the lift working, but rather, why did they move there in the first place? Also, let's not have this happen again with another company. The last thing I heard from the Workforce Investment Board is that Stephanie **Pashman** (sp?) was going to look into it the whole issue of why they chose to move into a building that required they install a lift. I haven't heard anything since then. Their attitude is that they're accessible, so they don't have to respond. It's a bigger issue, but for them it's settled.

Mr. Henderson: Stephanie did agree to a meeting at some point, if you want to set up a meeting.

Mr. O'Hanlon: Is the lift is in, but it's not approved by Labor and Industry. Is this a self-functioning lift?

Ms. Baricella: It's in, and it's working, but it can't be used until Labor and Industry okays it.

Mr. Parker: Is it self-functioning though? Do I get into and operate it, or will I have to find someone to get me up and down?

Ms. Baricella: My understanding is that there is a guard at the top, and when you need the guard will come and operate it.

Mr. Parker: Is that accessible? If you have to rely on the assistance of somebody, is that accessible?

Dr. Seelman: Does it meet the standard of the criteria of accessibility in the ADA? It's a legal question.

Mr. Parker: I'm suggesting it's not acceptable. I'm also asking, is it really accessible? I'm neither happy with it, nor sure we should be satisfied.

Ms. Dore: I was in that building as recently as this morning. The lift still isn't working. And the accessibility issue goes beyond wheelchairs. I asked the receptionist about accessibility for hearing loss; she said she didn't know. Unfortunately, in terms of the guard, she's at the top of the steps by the elevator, but you have to be able to walk up the steps. Also, she gets very busy. That building has multiple programs. She's always busy with questions and not always available to help a person in a wheelchair. Further, when Richard noted about video phones, digital signals often don't work in old buildings like that. Signals for texting don't come through, video phones don't work, wifi doesn't work. There are very few ways to use alternative technology. It's more than just the wheelchair accessibility. It's hearing, it's for the blind. There's no braille on the front telling people where CareerLink is.

Mr. McGann: I believe that we need to inform them that this is not appropriate. There are people going to this building to get jobs, and if we don't have the appropriate support from staff members and for accessing the building, how are we going to get jobs? It's important to let them know that this building is a problem.

Mr. Noschese: That issue is not a new one. It's been almost 2 years now, and I know I made a proposal that we all sent. It was specifically that we send a letter to Gov. Corbett and the secretary of the literacy program there. I'm sure that they are unaware of that. We need to go above the heads of these programs and let the governor know that this is an issue. We need to put some recommendations in there and send that letter. A letter would lead to better outcomes. It seems that we're asking them to do some things and not getting anywhere. It's been two years; it's time to go to a higher authority and let them know what's happening in Pittsburgh.

Dr. Seelman: What is the employment rate for people without disabilities? 73%. What is the employment rate of people with disabilities? 33%. So it's even doubled. We could go on with other data, but that's quite a difference. People without disabilities are employed at the rate of 73% in our society; people with disabilities are employed at a rate of 33%.

Mr. Matthews: If it's that big of a problem, I would get a bunch of advocates together, schedule a date to go update your resumes at CareerLink, and call the media. Let the public see the problem. We at the Disability Options Network are willing to help organize.

Ms. Warman: There have been advocates that have gone to Harrisburg on several occasions, as well as to Washington D.C. on everything from buses, to housing, even to personal care abilities as well. I'm an advocate myself. If we keep advocating, government will change, eventually.

Mr. Parker: Just to think about where we are in this: what I know is that Milton wrote to Mark Churna and expressed the problems with CareerLinks and the building. Mark Churna forwarded that to the executive director of the Workforce Investment Board, Stephanie. Then Stephanie wrote back to Milton saying they were working on becoming accessible, and they are willing to come and talk to us. Because she's extended the invitation to talk to us, before we write to Corbett or have a demonstration there, we should be taking her up on her offer. It's been two months now. We bring everyone else here, we should bring Stephanie here and voice our concerns. At least the executive director of the Workforce Investment Board will be educated on what the problems are and will not make the same errors again. Then after that, if there is no reaction from that, then it's writing to the governor and having protests. But we've left Stephanie dangling now for two months with no response.

Mr. Wasserman: In essence if that's a motion, I'll second it.

Mr. Parker: A motion that now we extend the invitation to bring Stephanie, the Workforce Investment Board chair, here to talk about the issue.

Mr. McGann: I also second it.

**(51: 40) Audience Member:** I do agree with Jeff. With reference to writing a letter in following up with her to invite her to a meeting, I would also suggest that we put in what the issues are. If there is a long list of issues with accessibility in the letter, she'll be fully prepared. I would not want her to come to a meeting and feel as if she were being attacked. If there are issues, we need to be hearing from other folks. It's one thing for a couple of people to list issues, but we are not hearing from others. We need to

do a call-out to the disability community at large to ask if there are other folks having issues with accessibility into that building and its services?

Mr. O'Hanlon: The only thing I would say in terms of Jeff's proposal is that we don't have a meeting for two months. So leverage is a two month wait. I'm wondering if we should convene a meeting between now and then. Who would want to take the lead on this?

Mr. Henderson: I have no problem taking the lead. I wrote the letter to Mark and actually stirred the pot upon hearing Judy's concerns. I have no problem getting back in touch with Stephanie.

Mr. O'Hanlon: Should we set up a meeting and put it out to Task Force members who want to come? Or do we want to set up a subcommittee?

Mr. McGann: I like the idea of a subcommittee.

Mr. O'Hanlon: We could have a subcommittee meet with her, then follow up with the whole Task Force at the next September meeting. The other question I have is that Joy has a fairly encyclopedic knowledge of what goes on in that building. I realize that I don't have a clue of all the different players. It does seem at some level, the building raises accessibility levels beyond CareerLinks. I don't know what we do about that, because I don't know who's making the decisions for all of those entities for getting into a problematic building. But, it does seem to be happening. Do we want to keep our focus only on CareerLinks, or look at the bigger issue of the building?

Dr. Seelman: I would like to understand about Stephanie—whether she consulted a member of the disability community, and also what is the process they went through to make this choice? I think there is a focus. Work is key to the economic health of people with disabilities. It doesn't mean that other projects are not, but I certainly think we should focus on her so that it doesn't happen again. We need to understand the process of their decision, whether or not they looked at other building and considered accessibility.

Mr. McGann: I agree with Kate. I want to know where Stephanie got the money to get that building, because CareerLink gets federal and state money. It feels like they're pushing us under the carpet by choosing this building. I would like to encourage CareerLinks to focus on our needs, not just picking the easiest building.

Mr. O'Hanlon: (to Mr. Henderson) Do you want to put together a subcommittee?

Mr. Henderson: Anyone that's willing to come is welcome.

Mr. O'Hanlon: Who wants to be part of the subcommittee?

Mr. Tague: I'll be part of it.

Mr. Henderson: Joy, I'd be glad to have you.

Mr. O'Hanlon: Joy knows that building better than most of us.

Mr. McGann: I will as well.

Mr. Henderson: Can you give Richard your names of everyone who wants to be on the subcommittee?

Mr. McGann: I need the specific address so I can check it out today. Where is the problem?

Mr. O’Hanlon: Wood Street Commons. 301 Wood Street. The old YWCA.

Mr. Meritzer: The names I have for the committee are: Milt, Joy, Rich McGann, John, Chris, and Karen.

Mr. Noschese: I don’t use a wheelchair, so I didn’t think I needed to be on that subcommittee.

Mr. McGann: We’ll need an interpreter if I’m going to be on the subcommittee.

Mr. Noschese: I will be on the subcommittee.

Mr. Meritzer: I’ll make the arrangements for the interpreting.

Ms. Carter-Scott: Based on the discussion we’ve had, and it has started with CareerLinks being not as accessible, I think this is going to be an ongoing issue. I agree with Judy that this should not happen again. When it comes to Allegheny County or city of Pittsburgh residents that have disabilities, they should have equal access to all buildings. So we need to continue to keep this issue on the table; it does not just stop at CareerLinks.

### **UPMC Training**

Mr. O’Hanlon postponed this discussion to the next meeting.

### **Boards and Commissions**

Ms. Evans: How many of you would like to be on a board of directors or commission, for anything? There are plenty of boards for many agencies, for disabilities or not, and there are commissioners for the city of Pittsburgh. I happen to be a commissioner for the Pittsburgh Housing Authority. I serve as vice president. To me that is a huge opening for people with disabilities. John Tague thought it would be good to tell all of you this, because it’s not just a resume or just showing up and saying you want to be on the board. You really have to work on it. Back in 2006, I happened to go to a housing board meeting to support the tenants. I saw there were only 7 members. At the end, I said, “Someday, I’ll be at that table.” I asked the executive director what I needed to do. He told me the first thing was to get a resume together listing all the organizations I belong to and what I do for them. Also, list my skills. So I did that, and I was told it was to go to the mayor’s office. The mayor sends it to city council, and they ask for interviews. If they think you’re good, they’ll recommend you. I waited from 2007 – 2012. I had to wait; I almost gave up in 2011. They said, “Keep at it.” When 2007 came around, I didn’t notice that there was only one set of people mostly, and there were only two residents on the board. One happened to be

disabled. There was one white person on there. As the years went by, the board started changing. I could not be on it, but I did go to most meetings. They had a spot for public comment. I spoke for every public comment I could, to tell them what my area was doing and to thank them when they did pass stuff. The board of directors liked what I had to say. Finally in 2012, I was pushing it because I was getting tired of waiting. I went back to the executive director, I asked for the resume back, and updated it. Then I went to the chairman of the board and asked when I would be appointed to the board of directors. There was free space, and I really wanted to be on the board. The day came and I got interviewed by one of the councilmen. Next thing I knew, I had an interview with most of the council people. They asked what I see in the next five years. I wanted to see a diverse, mixed-income meeting, and to change communities to be more diverse. After some time, I was appointed vice commissioner. My point is, if you really want to get onto a commission, you yourself have to really want it. You have to show up to the meetings, ask questions, participate. If they see that you want to be on it, it's your efforts that will be rewarded. Your disability does count, but I often don't mention my disability. I just show them what I can do.

### **Crowdfunding Video**

Mr. Meritzer: This is a project that we're working on in the office. A couple of years ago, the Golden Triangle Association for the Blind informed us that there is an issue with the traffic signals. We have been pursuing an aggressive campaign to make all the traffic signals accessible. This includes not only making them audible, but also using a vibrating arrow so people who are blind-deaf know when to cross the street. Unfortunately, the city is under limited resources, and there are a lot of priorities. Last year we started a project to see if we can get crowdfunding to get accessible signals along Liberty Avenue. We chose Liberty Avenue because the Business Association really wanted it and were supportive of it. Also, three hospitals are on or near Liberty Avenue. That makes this a prime area, as people who have disabilities are likely to be going to hospitals and need that service. To clarify what crowdfunding is: there are webpages where people make small contributions in large numbers to do big projects. There are a number of platforms, one of which is specifically for municipal projects. They have a very good success rate. The crowdfunding event is a video and an "ask." The video is what you'll see, and the "ask" is asking people to please contribute by clicking a button that leads you to the contribution page. The crowdfunding platform members then hold that money until the goal is reached. If the goal isn't reached, everyone gets their money back. The video we're showing has no dialogue, so there is no interpreting or captioning.

**(1:17)Audience Member:** Since you're asking about funding for the traffic signals, are you trying to coordinate where there is funding in the city coming for some of the automated traffic control activity that has started in the East Liberty area?

Mr. Meritzer: We're working with Amanda Broadwater, the city traffic engineer. She's making sure that all of the city's signals that are going in, all the upgrades and major developments, are accessible traffic signals. The signals that were selected were ones that she selected, so we're working very closely with

her. Unfortunately Liberty Avenue isn't planning to have any major upgrades or developments coming in soon. That was why it was a very good location to focus this project.

(Due to technological difficulties, the Task Force proceeded with Staff Reports)

## **Staff Reports**

### ***Business Directory***

Ms. DeLuca: For the business directory, we've been going out with a team of interns and personally checking neighborhood business districts. We're surveying them all for accessible entrances. With that information, we've created a self-established database in which we have entered all the information. We've compiled phone numbers, addresses, and business types into what will be the business directory. So far we've surveyed Oakland, the Bluff, the Strip District, Bloomfield, and Squirrel Hill. This is about 400+ businesses in the two months that we've been doing this. To give you an idea, about 96 businesses are inaccessible, so that's 25% of the businesses we've surveyed. Next, I sent letters addressing each issue to each business, and sent out one-steps when appropriate. We hope to have a draft copy of this business directory for the ADA celebration this Friday.

Mr. Meritzer: We've been having this request now for a number of years, so I'm really glad to have had Laura to start working on it.

### ***Airline Checklist***

Mr. Caruso: This checklist lists all the responsibilities that the airlines, not the authority, are responsible for. A few choice items are: disassembly and reassembling of wheelchairs. As a carrier, you must permit passengers with a disability to provide written directions of disassembling and assembling a wheelchair. They have to return it in the condition in which they received it. This seems to be an issue that comes up a lot, but they are actually mandated under law to do so. As for communication with airline staff, the employees are supposed to be trained to recognize requests for communication accommodations for individuals with hearing or vision impairments. They are supposed to use the most common methods for communicating with these individuals. There is thorough training that airline employees are supposed to undergo, they have to receive refresher training, and they have to document that this training has occurred. Part of the training is awareness and appropriate responses to passengers with a disability, how to recognize requests for communication accommodations, the proper and safe operation of any equipment—

Mr. O'Hanlon: Is "common methods of communication" defined? What's a "common method?"

Mr. Caruso: A "common method" would be something like sign language when it's appropriate. What would be intuitive. It isn't defined in this list, but I can get you the exact definition.

Mr. O'Hanlon: It's a funny term.

Mr. Caruso: Yes, that's the exact language that they use. In fact, all of this is basically pulled off the official registry of these codes. The website is provided on the back if you want to investigate further. Other important points include: individuals in grounded wheelchairs, boarding wheelchairs, or other devices, should not be left or unattended for more than thirty minutes. This even applies when another person is accompanying the individual in the wheelchair. Also, assistance is provided when requested by or on behalf of qualified individuals with a disability or offered by air carrier personnel in implanting and deplanting. Further, passengers with a disability who identify themselves as persons needing hearing or visual assistance should have prompt access to information provided to other passengers at each gate. This information includes flight safety, ticketing, flight delays and cancellations. Lastly, captioning must be enabled at all times on all audio-visual displays. So, those are just a few of the requirements. We had a few questions regarding some of these requirements and whether we can actually make more strict requirements. We decided to stay purely with what the Air Carrier Access Act says, so if we want to later request more accommodations, we'll have to sit down and talk to them about that.

Mr. Meritzer: Next we'll post and distribute this checklist for a specific period time for comment. After, we'll start getting this to the airlines and asking if they'd like a meeting.

Mr. Tague: Was this something that Joe designed himself, or pulled off the website?

Mr. Caruso: I put it into checklist form. On the link on the back, it has it as questions such as what are the responsibilities under certain circumstances. It lists and cites where in the Air Carrier Access Act you can find these.

Mr. McGann: Can you please say the website out loud since I can't read it?

Mr. Meritzer: I believe we sent this out with the notification of the meeting, but we can send it out again.

Mr. McGann: I didn't get that one.

Mr. Meritzer: We'll send it out again.

Mr. O'Hanlon: It's ecf.gov.

### ***Crowdfunding Video***

The video was shown without sound due to a technical difficulty

### ***Social Media***

Ms. Mitchell: Since our last Task Force meeting, we have gained 500 followers on Twitter, which is a lot, including 60 today since about 9:30 this morning. I've been spreading information about the ongoings of the Pittsburgh ADA, and also any type of disability news I see. If you've received an invitation on the Facebook for today's meeting, that was from me. If you didn't get it, be sure to friend us on Facebook at ADAPGH.

Ms. Dore: At last month's meeting, you mentioned outreach to other social media platforms. You mentioned Instagram, Pinterest, and some others I can't remember. Can you remind us?

Ms. Mitchell: Both the Instagram and Pinterest are ADAPGH. Everything is ADAPGH. I've been pretty active on the Instagram lately as well, so if you're on those social networks, remember to follow us and we'll follow back.

Ms. Warman: There's a new one called MocoSpace.

Ms. Mitchell: Thank you, we'll check it out.

### **Vox Pop**

Ms. Dore: I would like to remind anyone who wasn't here last month of the ADA celebration happening this Friday at the County Courthouse courtyard. It's from 10:30 – 2 pm.

Mr. Henderson: There are some flyers on the back table regarding the ADA celebration. Also, the Task Force is asking Paul to speak on behalf of the City County Task Force at the ADA celebration on Friday, the 25<sup>th</sup> between 11:30 and 12. If you can, that would be great.

Mr. O'Hanlon: Sure, I can do that.

Mr. Henderson: Richard, you'll do the city proclamation, right?

Mr. Meritzer: I'm going to speak for sure, I don't know if the mayor's going to be there or not.

Mr. Henderson: The mayor is going to come. He did confirm that he's coming.

Mr. Meritzer: Then he should do the proclamation.

Mr. O'Hanlon: Any other issues people want to bring up?

Ms. Warman: It may be too soon for this, but it was brought to my attention that people are feeling reluctant to vote in November partly because of accessibility.

Mr. O'Hanlon: It just happens to be that tomorrow at 11, the Disability Voting Coalition of PA will be having a statewide conference call on the issue of polling place accessibility advocacy. Our friends from the Disability Options Network in New Castle will be on the call, as well as someone from the Scranton Center for Independent Living. If you're interested, tomorrow between 11 and 12 will be the conference call. If you want to go to the Disability Voting Coalition's Facebook page, there is an announcement with the call-in information. We're trying to make our polling places all accessible.

Ms. Warman: How can one get onto that? I don't have access to a computer except when I'm down at the clubhouse.

**(1:36:45)Member:** Can you get onto Facebook on your phone? It's the same as seeing it on a computer.

Ms. Dore: I wanted to add some information about how people can get information about accessibility and voting. There's an agency in town called UCP CLASS. They have an outreach where people can call, and they accept TTY calls if you're deaf, and you need help with accessibility to your polling place.

Audience Member: The phone number is 1-866-270-7427 and the participant code is \*3568655\*.

A motion to adjourn the Task Force Meeting was passed by a unanimous vote.

The next meeting will occur September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014.