

CITY OF PITTSBURGH/ALLEGHENY COUNTY
TASK FORCE ON DISABILITIES

July 18, 2005

MINUTES

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

Members Present: Paul O'Hanlon Chairperson, Eugene Barton, Aurelia Carter, Liz Healey,
Rich McGann, Jeff Parker, Penny Perlman, Katherine D. Seelman

Members Absent: John Tague, Chairperson, Ruth Walter Brenyo, Linda Dickerson, Milton
Henderson, Viswa P. Mohanty

Others Present: Chuck Keenan, Jerry Laychak, Richard Meritzer, Amanda Monroy-
Lapina

The meeting was called to order by Mr. O'Hanlon at 1:09 PM.

Approval of the agenda:

The agenda was amended to add a discussion about the Housing Authority hiring a new staff person to new business and that the discussion on County Council Bill 180-05 would be tabled because the Report Card Legislation had been withdrawn.

Approval of May 16, 2005 Minutes:

Dr. Seelman moved that THE MINUTES BE APPROVED AS SUBMITTED. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Financial Report:

Mr. Parker reported that Jan Mather at County HSD stated the possibility of a 20% cut in HSDF funds still existed and the status of the Task Force budget for FY 05-06 was still unknown. Members inquired about the ramifications of a potential budget reduction to which Mr. Parker responded from his conversation with Ms. Mather, the Task Force was permitted to continue submitting ongoing expenses or costs for future meetings in the interim. Dr. Seelman moved that the FINAL ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COUNTY BE ACCOMPANIED WITH A COVER LETTER CLARIFYING THE PROJECTS TASK FORCE BUDGET FUNDS WERE NEEDED TO SUPPORT which was seconded by Ms. Healy. Mr. O'Hanlon then requested that Task Force members take responsibility for sections of the Annual Report being compiled by Mr. Parker and that the Co-chairs would take responsibility for the cover letter.

Nominating Committee:

Ms. Healy reported that the Nominating Committee had met twice and polled committee members for a resolution to the fact that three years have passed since elections were held and the guidelines for the City/County Task Force call for 2-year terms. The Nominating committee

recommended extending the term of the current officers for one more year. Mr. O'Hanlon called for a vote on the recommendation. Ms Healy moved THAT WE EXTEND THE TERM OF THE CURRENT OFFICERS FOR AN ADDITIONAL YEAR. Mr. Parker amended the motion TO EXTEND THE TERM OF THE CURRENT OFFICERS FOR TWO YEARS BEGINNING JULY OF 2004 because the officers already had completed a one-year extension.

During the discussion period of this motion, Task Force members emphasized the importance of activities that would generate interest and prepare other Task Force members to assume the role of officers for next year's elections. Suggestions included a mentoring plan for new members, adding essential documents like the guidelines and the strategic plan to the web site, a retreat and encouraging Task Force members to chair sub-committees. Mr. Meritzer agreed to facilitate adding the guidelines and strategic plan to the web page. At the conclusion of the discussion the motion to extend the current officers' terms was unanimously approved.

Medicaid Funding:

Ms. Healy summarized the federal and State Medicaid Funding cuts and reported on the limits to hospital and outpatient visits, prescriptions, co-payments, and premiums. She pointed out that a post agenda item was hosted by City Council Member Doug Shields on this problem which was covered by both the Post Gazette and the Tribune Review and that City Council passed a resolution recommending there be no cuts. In response to Mr. O'Hanlon's request about what the Task Force's next steps should be on this issue, Ms Healy responded that the Federal Budget is not finalized and the Task Force could work with the Consumer Health Coalition against Medicaid funding cuts. Ms. Carter, Ms. Healey Ms. Perlman and Dr. Seelman agreed to work on advocacy efforts in latter August.

Annual Meeting:

Mr. Parker reported the meeting on September 19, 2005 has been scheduled in the Heinz Room of the United Way Building. The theme of the meeting as determined previously by the Task Force would be voting accessibility. Notices should be sent out by Mid-August. Mr. Sean Fox agreed to confirm County executive Dan Onorato's availability as a speaker

During a discussion on what to include at the meeting, many recommendations were made. These included obtaining Andrew Imperato, President of the American Association of People with Disabilities as a guest speaker and involving Eric Marchbein, Democratic Party Chair of the 14th Ward who worked to make polling places in that ward more accessible as well as the other local party chairs. The Task Force emphasized activities were need to address the whole range of barriers restricting voting accessibility, piggy backing on the Help America Vote deadline, the use of panel discussions and attendees sharing their concerns and solutions.

Employment Committee:

Mr. Parker reported that the committee consisting of representatives from the City and County Personnel Departments, Working Order, OVR as well as Mr. Tague and Mr. Parker last met on June 30, 2005 and would complete their draft proposal for the hiring of persons with disabilities by the City and the County at their next meeting scheduled for August 4, 2005. At that time, the

City and County representatives will take the proposal to their supervisors and then the Task Force will review the draft.

During discussion, the Task Force recommended the use of internships, reviewing the Self Help for Hand of Literacy report, and working with Career Links to the Employment Committee. Mr. Parker stated that these issues could be tackled in the next phase of activities that would also address employment initiatives in the private sector.

New Issues:

Chuck Keenan announced that the Housing Authority was launching a recruitment search for a Compliance Administrator. This position was mandated in the agreement with HUD for section #504, has a high level of responsibility, and will last four to five years. Mr. O’Hanlon added that this very important position will assist in implementing massive increases in accessible housing.

Mr. O’Hanlon requested that we schedule a retreat for the Task Force as an organizing tool to integrate new members and review and continue to develop our vision. Mr. Barton, Ms. Perlman, Mr. Mohanty and Ms. Carter agreed to serve on a committee chaired by Mr. O’Hanlon to plan a retreat before the end of January.

Announcements:

Ms. Perlman announced a Workshop on Advocacy Strategies for Families of Children and Teens Receiving Behavioral Health Services.

She also pointed out that a publication, the Liberator, has information for the disability community.

Public Comments:

Mr. Laychak asked for information about the Enable America Town Meeting held in May and also the Task Force’s budget related business plan. Dr. Seelman and Mr. Parker responded respectively to these inquiries.

Adjournment:

It was moved by Dr. Seelman to ADJOURN THE MEETING. The meeting was adjourned at 3:01 PM

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING:	DATE:	September 19, 2005
	TIME:	1:00 P.M.
	LOCATION:	Heinz Room United Way Building 1 Smithfield Street Pittsburgh, PA 15219