

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

June 28, 2004

MINUTES

- Location:** Heinz Room
United Way Building
Pittsburgh, PA
- Members Present:** John Tague, Chairperson, Paul O'Hanlon, Co-chair, Aurelia Carter, Al Condeluci, Milton Henderson, Jeff Parker
- Members Absent:** Ruth Walter Brenyo, Bill Chrisner, Liz Healey, Linda Dickerson, Rich McGann, Penny Perlman, Katherine D. Seelman
- Others Present:** Laurie Anderson, Amy Andrews, Judy Barricella, Jennifer L. Behun, Adolphine Birescik, Karen Boros, Tom Broderick, Diane Collins, Ms. Mallory Crawford, Brenda Dare, Holly Dick, Jeff Ehrenriech, Joe Elliot, Carla Falkenstein, Cloerinda Ford, Shawn Fox, Rachael Freund, Lisa B. Georgiana, Marian Gremba, Verna Hart, Stan Holbrook, Karen Sampson Johnson, Tom Kearney, Bob Kennedy, Jerry Laychak, D. Lewison, Jennifer Lowe, Art Lubetz, Kevin J. Matschner, Brian Matts, Kathy McCracken, Richard Meritzer, Yancy Miles, Sharon Miller, Lisa Moses, Sue Murdock, Anne Nalepa, James C. Noschese, Magda Orkin, Elaine Joyce Plunkett, Theodore E. Pugh, Mae Ramaechint, Joyce Redonerski, Eileen Rilly, Gil Selders, Amy Shannon, Holly A. Sheilds, Bill Skellie, Teekie Smith, Lucy C. Spruill, Joan Stein, Evelyn Stypula, Michelle Sullivan, Stan Sullivan, Jason Tigano, Kristy Trautmann, Carolyn D. Vidt, Jeannie Wagner, Sandi Weber, Ben Weiss

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Tague at 1:183 PM.

Introductions:

Mr. Tague introduced Paul O'Hanlon, Aurelia Carter, Al Condeluci, Milton Henderson, and Jeff Parker who are members of the Task Force. Sandi Weber from the Statewide Independent Living Council, Shawn Fox representing Allegheny County Chief Executive Dan Onaroto and Bob Kennedy, City of Pittsburgh Directors of Operation, were also introduced.

State of the Task Force:

Mr. Tague spoke. The Task Force started on July 26, 1994, the fourth anniversary of the Americans for Disability Act. The first chair was Judy Barricella, now Director of Disability Connection, the County office helping people with disabilities. The primary role of the Task Force is to advise the Allegheny County Chief Executive and the Mayor of the City of Pittsburgh on issues facing people with disabilities.

The Task Force is currently working on a strategic plan. A public hearing has been held. The list of comments was pared down to a manageable size. The strategic plan will include more community outreach, particularly outreach to the deaf and hard of hearing communities. There is a community leaders meeting scheduled for next month. That will complete the process.

The Task Force started with 7 members. Now there are 13. Bill Chrisner has left town. Paul O'Hanlon will speak later on Help America Vote Act.

The Task Force is currently working on developing policy and advising the elected officials. We have been working on visitability. City Council set up a committee composed of 15 people, four of whom are Task Force members. They have developed an incentive ordinance. The next step is to propose this to the County. The Task Force met with Mark Wolesek to discuss barriers to voting. We have discussed safety issues with the Mayor. We communicate issues to Port Authority of Allegheny County. And the Task Force worked very hard to get a County office working on disability issues.

View From the City:

Bob Kennedy, City of Pittsburgh Directors of Operation told everyone that the Administration was busy with Act 47. But the Mayor remains committed that the City must meet the needs of people with disabilities. Safety will not be adversely affected by any plans. The proposed Fire Department cuts meet national standards. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is at full strength. 900 Police are currently on the street. And the Act 47 report requires that some positions currently filled by police officers be filled with civilians, putting more police on the street. In response to a question, he said that he would check on problems with the "T".

View From the County:

Mr. Tague informed the meeting that Dan Onaroto had just had back surgery. He introduced Shawn Fox. Mr. Fox said that Mr. Onaroto was recovering. Jim Flynn was to be here today, but he is dealing with layoffs in the County. The County is working on keeping US Air in Pittsburgh, with the City on Act 47, and on slot machines. The County created Disability Connections, which will increase accessibility throughout the County. They are also working on creating a State office for accessibility.

Help America Vote Act:

Mr. Tague pointed out there were tee shirts on sale. He introduced Paul O'Hanlon who then went through the list of items for sale to encourage voting. The group working on this project meets the fourth Thursday of every month in the United Way Building. People with disabilities vote in even lower percentages than the nation as a whole.

Keynote Speaker:

Gil Selders, former Director of OVA and the Statewide Independent Living Council and Assistant Director of the Pennsylvania Statewide Coalition on Disabilities and currently Director for the Chicago Mayoral Task Force on Employment of People with Disabilities, spoke on the program in Chicago.

Why a Task Force?

- **High Percentage of people with disabilities not in the workforce**
- **President Clinton's Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities (1998-2002)**
 - **Challenge to the States**

Task Force Vision

“The City of Chicago, with the cooperation of other governmental units, and representatives of Chicago's business, economic development, civic, and disability communities have committed to increase the employment of people with disabilities to a rate that is as close as possible to the employment rate of the general adult population.” - Executive Order 2002-3

Task Force Mission

“The purpose of the Task Force is to formulate and recommend to the Mayor policies and programs designed to improve and increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities in both the public and private sectors. Policy recommendations will address issues such as accessible educational and vocational opportunities, discrimination, reasonable accommodations, health care, accessible transportation, accessible and integrated housing, telecommunications, assistive technology, community supports, and economic incentives to work.” -Executive Order 2002-3

Task Force Operating Values

- **‘Careers’ and ‘jobs with the potential for growth and advancement’**
- **Full personal and financial independence requires employment that offers a living wage.**
 - **People with disabilities from all cultural backgrounds have equal access to the options and choices made available to people without disabilities.**
 - **Independence, empowerment and inclusion**
- **While seeking to increase employment for all Chicagoans with disabilities, we will focus our energies on enhancing and improving employment outcomes for people with significant disabilities.**

Task Force Structure

- **Mayor Richard M. Daley created the Task Force by Executive Order.**
 - **Mayoral commitment critical to success**
 - **Three year mission**
- **Three Co-Chairs; Commissioners of Mayor's Offices for People with Disabilities, Workforce Development and President & CEO Northern Trust Bank**

Task Force Structure

- **Five Work Groups established to address 5 broad issue-areas; Chicago as a Model Employer, Procurement, Supply Side, Demand Side and Youth.**
- **Over 100 members from the disability, government, economic development, academic, business, and civic communities**

Task Force Operations

- **Work Groups meet monthly; assignments completed between meetings.**
 - **Work Group Leaders meet with Co-Chairs quarterly.**
- **All meetings supported by professional facilitators and minute takers.**
 - **Annual report to the Mayor, available at www.cityofchicago.org/disabilities**

Task Force Operations

- **Annual meeting of Full Task Force, Co-Chairs and Mayor Daley**
- **Task Force resources (City) at over \$350K annually, augmented by corporate gifts/in-kind services and grants valued at over \$750K.**

Phase I: Organization & Planning

- **Establish Work Groups, identify and recruit members and Work Group Leaders**
 - **Develop charges**
 - **Gather information and identify issue-areas**
 - **Develop strategic plan for each Work Group**

Phase II: Get It Done

The five Work Groups make a difference.

Chicago as a Model City Work Group

Charge:

- Examine City policies and practices to identify and remove barriers to work for people with disabilities.
- Establish City government as a national model employer of people with disabilities.

Model City Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments:

(1) Revised and expanded the City's Reasonable Accommodation in Hiring and Employment Practices Policy.

- a. The Policy includes creating a position of Disability Liaison in each City Department to assist employees with disabilities who are requesting a reasonable accommodation

Model City Work Group

- b. The Policy also includes creating a position of Citywide Disability Liaison to coordinate disability related training, reporting, technical assistance and general oversight and implementation of the revised Policy.**
- c. The Policy establishes an appeals process and companion procedures for employees whose requests for a reasonable accommodation have been denied or unacceptably modified.**

Model City Work Group

- d. The Policy establishes an Accommodation Review Board to evaluate and reverse initial decisions to deny reasonable accommodation requests.**
- e. A centralized Reasonable Accommodation Account has been established and funded to provide for the costs of accommodations for applicants and employees with disabilities.**

Model City Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments:

(2) Mandatory training program, *The Intersection of Diversity and Disability*

- a. The revised and updated Policy
- b. ADA Employment requirements
- c. Disability Awareness
- d. Cabinet level managerial staff trained first then all other city staff receives training subsequently.

Model City Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments:

- (3) Chicago Disability Equity Hiring Program
 - a. Facilitate City employment for people with disabilities
 - b. Similar to New York City and San Francisco programs
- (4) Voluntary Disclosure Initiative
 - a. Voluntarily inform Hiring Managers of disability status

Model City Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments:

- (5) Illinois Web Accessibility Standards adopted by the City of Chicago.
 - a. Clear guidance on web access requirements
 - b. Also adopted by other City agencies

Procurement & Entrepreneurial Opportunities Work Group

Charge:

- **Develop opportunities for businesses and non-profit agencies that are owned and operated by people with disabilities in the City of Chicago procurement process.**
- **Increase the number of businesses that are owned or operated by people with disabilities that may become certified to participate in procurement programs offered by the City, its sister agencies, and other public and private sector entities.**

Procurement Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments:

- (1) Implemented, by City Ordinance, the Business Enterprises (owned and operated by) People with Disabilities certification program (BEPD).
- (2) Nearly 100 companies have requested and received the application package and an Application Workshop was conducted.
- (3) Held a successful Entrepreneurial Resource Fair attended by nearly 200 people with disabilities.

Procurement Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments:

- (4) Other City agencies have agreed to adopt the City's BEPD certifications.

Partnerships for Economic Opportunities Work Group

Charge:

- Promote public-private sector partnerships that foster collaboration and teamwork among and between demand-side and supply-side stakeholders.
- Identify business tax/economic incentives proposals to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Partnerships Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments:

- (1) Played a key role in developing the Chicagoland Business Leadership Network (CBLN).
- (2) Identified several business tax/economic incentives proposals for further development.

Partnerships Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments:

- (3) For the first time, formally include people with disabilities as a focus of City Redevelopment Agreements.
- (4) Developed final criteria and a proposal to complete a study of the economic impact of employing people with disabilities.

Supply Side Development & Coordination Work Group

Charge:

- Organize a coordinated approach to identifying qualified job applicants with disabilities and matching their skills, interests and abilities to the workforce requirements of Chicagoland employers.
- Establish a mechanism to increase the participation of Employment Networks in the Ticket-to-Work program.
- Obtain consumer recommendations/perspective regarding the Public Education Campaign.

Supply Side Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments:

- (1) Established the Chicagoland Provider Leadership Network (CPLN).
- (2) Developed and secured funding for a Ticket-to-Work Demonstration Project.
- (3) Conducted focus groups comprised of people with all types of disabilities to inform the Public Education Campaign.

Opportunities for Youth Work Group

Charge:

- Establish Chicago as the national leader in providing effective transition support services to young people with disabilities.
- Recommend youth with disabilities for appointment to the Youth Council of the Chicago Workforce Board.
- Increase the number of children with disabilities enrolled in the Head Start Program.
- Appoint a Senior Assistant for Disability Policy within the CPS.

Youth Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments:

- (1) Chicago Public Schools has improved its transition practices & services by:
 - a. Using transition monitors to review the quality of transition plans
 - b. Providing professional development to CPS staff.
 - c. Expanding community-based instruction to include work-based learning experiences.

Youth Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments:

- d. Identified 16 high schools to implement a model transition program that promotes self-advocacy and employment readiness.
- (2) Two youth with disabilities have been recommended for consideration by the Task Force Co-Chairs for appointment to the Youth Council of the Chicago Workforce Board.

Youth Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments:

- (3) One hundred additional children with disabilities have been enrolled in the Head Start Program.
- (4) A Senior Assistant for Disability Policy position has been established within the Chicago Public Schools.
 - First round of applications reviewed
 - Interviews scheduled summer 2004
 - An appointment expected for 2004-2005 academic year

Public Education Work Group

Charge:

- Develop and implement effective ways to inform employers about the value of employing people with disabilities, and resources available to employers and people with disabilities to facilitate their employment.

Public Education Work Group

Phase II Accomplishments

- (1) Formed strategic alliances with valuable resources.
- (2) Obtained essential information from Work Group subject matter experts and people with disabilities.
- (3) Completed a Strategic Communications Plan.

Phase III: Consolidation and Sustainability

- **Finalize Phase II Initiatives.**
- **Determine structure and resources to ensure continued operation and continuous improvement.**

Contact Information

**For further information contact:
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Mr. Selders then answered questions.

Recognition

Mr. Parker recognized several Task Force members. Two members were leaving the Task Force. Bill Chrisner has moved to California. His recognition gift was accepted by the current Director of the Three Rivers Council for Independent Living, Theodore E. Pugh. It was pointed out that while on the Task Force, Mr. Chrisner was the guardian of independent living. Al Condeluci is also leaving the Task Force. He was recognized as the guardian of keeping the Task Force operating.

Judy Barricella, a former Task Force member, was recognized as the first chairperson of the Task Force. Under her leadership the movie "Small Differences" was created. Ms. Barricella kept alive the disability agenda.

It was also noted that even though they have not been Task Force members, Brenda Dare and Jerry Laychak have been very active with the Task Force.

Strategic Plan:

Mr. O'Hanlon informed those in attendance that there had been a public hearing two months ago. And there would be a meeting of selected leaders next month. This process looks at the unique role of the Task Force in these activities. The committee will then come up with a shared plan of action and achievable goals. This plan should be completed by September.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:16 PM.

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING:

DATE: September 20, 2004
TIME: 1:00 P.M.
LOCATION: First Floor Conference Room
Civic Building, 200 Ross Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219