

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

March 24, 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, Milton Henderson, Executive Member At-Large, Aurelia Carter, Al Condeluci, Liz Healey, Kate Seelman
- Members Absent:** Ruth Walter Brenyo, Bill Chrisner, Linda Dickerson, Rich McGann, Penny Perlman
- Others Present:** Judy Barricella, Lisa Moses, Janine Brinkley, Chuck Keenan, Raymond Mercalde

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.

Strategic Planning Process

Ms. Healey explained the process that the Task Force agreed to at last month’s meeting concerning the development of a strategic plan. She noted that the Task Force established a subcommittee to work on this issue comprised of herself, Mr. Tague, and Mr. O’Hanlon (staffed by Mr. Keenan) and that at last month’s meeting the entire Task Force had agreed to hire Ms. Janine Brinkley to facilitate the process.

Ms. Brinkley introduced herself and recapped the process that the Task Force had adopted last month. She outlined the process over the next few months, noting that the Task Force would devote an hour at today’s meeting to begin this discussion, would solicit input from community leaders in the coming month, then turn that input into a plan of action with priorities on which the Task Force would work. She reviewed the Task Force’s Mission and Principles in detail to begin the process.

Next, Ms. Brinkley focussed the discussion on the Task Force’s unique role in the community and asked members to list their ideas on this role. Dr. Condeluci felt that the Task Force filled a unique role through its access to government officials. Ms. Healey stated that the Task Force was “sanctioned” by those officials and that it should, through this sanctioning, have a relationship with elected officials. Mr. O’Hanlon noted that the Task Force crosses disability groups and that, when selecting members, was conscious of being as inclusive of as many groups and interests as possible. Dr. Seelman noted that the diversity of the Task Force contributes to its mission, but

that it sometimes is not representative of younger and aging constituencies. Mr. Henderson felt that the Task Force has knowledgeable members and has access to people who can impact policy.

Ms. Brinkley asked where the Task Force members felt that they had been successful in its work. Dr. Condeluci noted that the Small Differences video was one success that the Task Force has had, primarily because it was relevant to the schools, included a training guide, and was widely available. Mr. O'Hanlon added that the Task Force solicited requests for proposals and interviewed applicants prior to the selecting of a vendor to make the video and worked with the vendor throughout the process to ensure that its message was consistent with the Task Force's vision. Dr. Condeluci also felt that the Housing Conference that the Task Force sponsored at the University of Pittsburgh in 1996 was also successful. Over 250 people attended the conference because it appealed to a variety of interest groups. Mr. O'Hanlon added that it was held at a time when political figures were making negative comments about housing elderly residents with people with disabilities in the press. Further, it helped to change the paradigm about segregated (disabled only) housing in the City and led to the revision of the City's Zoning Code to foster more housing choices.

Other successes mentioned by Task Force members were the Hospitality Conference, the Task Force's successful transition from three different county administrations (including a change in form of government), and Disability Agenda 2000. On the latter, Ms. Healey noted that Disability Agenda helped to expand the circle of people interested in issues affecting people with disabilities and it developed a concrete list of priorities that can be achieved.

Ms. Brinkley asked where the Task Force has not found success. Dr. Condeluci mentioned that the Task Force has not been able to impact the vocational/employment arena as it had hoped. Mr. O'Hanlon mentioned that the Task Force has been asking the City of Pittsburgh's Urban Redevelopment Authority for six years to build houses differently by incorporating universal design features, but has yet to see success. Ms. Barricella noted that the Task Force has asked for a role in the construction of Heinz Field, but was not able to do so. She did note, however, that the Task Force was able to aid in the construction of accessible features in PNC Park through its sponsorship of community meetings.

Ms. Brinkley asked what the next steps in the strategic plan should be, noting that the Task Force had originally wanted to hold a public hearing next month to solicit input on its plan. She felt that there was still some discussion that needed to take place before holding a public hearing and asked if it could be postponed until that could take place. Members agreed to wait for at least one month to hold the hearing. Ms. Healey noted that the Task Force still needs to work on making the general public aware of its existence. Ms. Barricella further noted that many government officials do not know that the Task Force exists. Dr. Seelman recommended that the Task Force meet again next month and devote an hour to continue this process. All agreed and invited Ms. Brinkley back at the next meeting on April 21, 2003 at 2:00 PM.

Approval of Amended Minutes from February 24, 2003 Meeting:

Mr. Keenan noted that the Minutes from last month's meeting were included in the packet and that he had received no corrections to them to date. Mr. O'Hanlon moved that THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 24, 2003 MEETING BE APPROVED AS PRESENTED. Dr. Condeluci seconded the motion. The motion to APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED WAS APPROVED unanimously.

Financial Report:

Mr. Parker handed out and reviewed the Fiscal Report, Work Statement, and HSDF Budget Summary. The Fiscal Report indicated that the Task Force has approximately \$5256 remaining for future projects, with some of that amount needed for the Visitability Conference held on February 10, 2003, since some invoices for the event have yet to be submitted. Mr. Parker also explained that the new Work Statement and projected HSDF Budget were submitted to the county earlier in the month. He noted that it was much more specific this year than in years past and that it outlines what the Task Force hopes to accomplish in the next fiscal year.

Dr. Condeluci moved that the TASK FORCE APPROVE THE FISCAL REPORT, WORK STATEMENT, AND HSDF BUDGET AS PRESENTED. Mr. O'Hanlon seconded the motion. All voted in favor to APPROVE THE FISCAL REPORT, WORK STATEMENT, AND HSDF BUDGET AS PRESENTED.

Dr. Condeluci announced that in the Governor's newly approved budget, HSDF Funds were effectively eliminated as a source of funds for local governments. He noted that since this is the Task Force's only source of funds, the Task Force should prepare to address this. Ms. Healey asked Mr. Keenan to write letters to Chief Executive Roddey and Mayor Murphy about the elimination of these funds and its impact on the Task Force.

Sub-Committees Report (Design):

Mr. Tague reported on the meeting with the Steelers concerning the construction of the North Shore Amphitheater. He noted that the meeting went well and that the architect for the amphitheater seemed willing to incorporate the committee's recommendations on the venue's design so that it better serves people with disabilities. Mr. Keenan noted that the notes from the meeting were included in the agenda packet.

Disability Agenda Report:

No report was given.

Coalition to Establish the Governor's Office of Disability:

Ms. Carolyn Vidt gave a presentation on her and others' efforts to try to establish an Office of Disability at the state level to be housed in the Governor's Office. She gave a brief history of the coalition that was formed several months ago to tackle this issue that began with suggestions offered at last year's Governor's Forum on the Employment of People with Disabilities Conference. Ms. Vidt explained that the role of the Office would be to coordinate the efforts of all of the agencies that serve people with disabilities in the Commonwealth. Specifically, she felt that the Office would examine policies to ensure that people with disabilities are offered chances to participate actively in community life. She mentioned that the Coalition, with the support of the Task Force, wrote letters to Governor Rendell, state legislators, and local officials asking them to support the creation of the Office.

Ms. Vidt then went on to the main part of her presentation—asking the Task Force to offer financial assistance to the Coalition to Establish the Governor's Office of Disability. Ms. Vidt felt that she would need assistance to travel and for their outreach efforts. Ms. Carter asked Ms. Vidt who the current members of the Coalition were and how one could join. Ms. Vidt stated that in addition to herself, members included Ms. Healey, Mr. Tague, Dr. Condeluci, Mr. Keenan, Ms. Evelyn Stypula, and Mr. Ty Alexander. Mr. Parker noted that money might not be available

given the uncertainty of next year's funding and the expenses from the Visitability effort to date. In light of the Task Force's fiscal situation, Ms. Healey moved that THE TASK FORCE ACTIVELY LOBBY THE COMMONWEALTH TO CREATE AN OFFICE OF DISABILITY AND TO SUPPORT THE COALITION. Dr. Seelman seconded the motion. All voted in favor to approve the motion.

Announcements:

Dr. Seelman announced that the University of Pittsburgh will be sponsoring a series of workshops in the coming year that may interest members of the Task Force. The first will be held at Pitt on May 2, 2003 to discuss policy issues affecting people with disabilities.

Mr. Tague announced that the Consumer Health Coalition's Annual Meeting will be held at the Sheraton Inn Station Square on April 16, 2003 at 1:00 P.M.

Mr. Tague also announced that Yvonne Cook is no longer working in her position at Allegheny County and that Will Thompkins has replaced her. He asked Mr. Keenan to ensure that he receives all correspondence.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20.

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING:	DATE:	April 21, 2003
	TIME:	1:00 P.M.
	LOCATION:	First Floor Conference Room 200 Ross Street Pittsburgh, PA 15219

FUTURE MEETING DATES:

May 19, 2003
June 16, 2003