

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

**November 15, 2004**

**MINUTES**

- Location:** First Floor Conference Room  
Civic Building, 200 Ross Street  
Pittsburgh, PA
- Members Present:** John Tague, Chairperson, Paul O'Hanlon, Co-chair, Ruth Walter Brenyo, Liz Healey, Milton Henderson, Jeff Parker, Penny Perlman
- Members Absent:** Aurelia Carter, Linda Dickerson, Rich McGann, Katherine D. Seelman
- Others Present:** Jennifer Behun, Joe Camillius, Brenda Dare, Janet Evans, Richard Meritzer, Lisa Moses, Evelyn Stypula, Rima Wolfe

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Tague at 1:00 PM.

**Introductions:**

All members and guests introduced themselves.

**Approval of October 2004 Minutes:**

Ms. Perlman pointed out that Bill Chrisner and Al Condeluci had resigned from the Task Force and should no longer be listed as members in the minutes. It was moved by Mr. O'Hanlon to APPROVE THE JUNE 2004 MINUTES AS AMENDED. All members voted in favor of the motion.

**Financial Report:**

Mr. Parker presented the Financial Report. Working Order updated our mailing list at a cost of \$134.37. The balance remaining from last year is about \$32,000. The balance remaining from this year is \$9,559.72. A FISA grant is being written to do the follow-up video. The anticipated cost is \$2,000.

**Strategic Plan Committee Structure:**

Ms. Healy presented the report. The Strategic Plan was adopted in concept at the September meeting. The plan establishes a number of committees with both Task Force members and the general public on these committees. They include Housing, Employment and Voting Accessibility. The Employment Committee would work with both the City and the County to increase employment of the disabled. They will also showcase employers who hire the disabled. They will follow up with Judy Barricella. The Housing Committee will continue to work on the Visitability Ordinance and with the Pittsburgh Housing Authority to improve accessibility. They will also work with the Housing Ombudsman at Action Housing. It was recommended that each committee be chaired by a member of the Task Force.

Mr. Tague pointed out that Ruth Brenyo chairs the Design Committee. They review plans for accessibility. She could chair the housing committee and Mr. Henderson could chair the Design Committee. Ms. Brenyo reported she received a survey from Maureen Hogan. Mr. O'Hanlon said he had a copy of the survey. Mr. Meritzer could make copies for all the Task Force members. He said he could chair the Voting Accessibility Committee. He asked if Ms. Brenyo should be changed from chairing the Design Committee to the Housing Committee. She said she would think about it.

Ms. Healy proposed sending out Emails and getting Task Force members to volunteer. She said she would draft the email. She said she would identify members and individuals who have been involved in the past. They will identify issues and strategies to address those issues. She will then report back.

**Nominating Process:**

Mr. Tague reported the committee was Ms. Healy, Ms. Carter, Dr. Seelman and him. The letters are ready to go out.

Mr. Parker questioned whether we should send out a mass distribution. How many of these people can be reach by email? We need someone with a visual disability. Targeting our letters is a way of getting these people. Six of the current Task Force members use Wheel chairs. We should add someone who is blind and someone who is deaf. He asked if this could be done internally.

Mr. O'Hanlon said deaf individuals came to the strategic planning meeting. We should build on that. Ms. Healy said we can do both. We could identify the needs and send to the larger group. This is a way to develop emerging leaders. We could adjust the letter. Mr. Tague said he would change the response date to January 14, 2005.

**Integrated Children's Plan:**

Joe Camillius, Special Assistant to the Director of Allegheny County Department of Human Services, presented the attached report. They coordinate services for children with multiple problems. For the first time this year they are required to have a consolidated plan. A number of counties fought this change, but it was implemented. The County had five community meetings. They submitted the plan on August 15<sup>th</sup>. 65,000 children in Allegheny County, 30% of the children with disabilities, are in families in poverty. That is twice the level for children without disabilities. The County now has a pilot program on integrated case management. This includes a single point of contact. They are starting with 30 to 60 children. They are also looking at the UCP Kids initiative and building on it. This will match children with community programs. They are looking for foundation funding for this program. Another program they are looking at is the Birth to Five Prevention Program. This is a program which identifies children at risk before they need a mental health program. This pilot project is in Duquesne. The Secretary of Health wants this program eventually expanded into the budget process.

Ms. Healy explained that there are coordination models where supervisors work across program lines and have teams of workers from different programs. Is additional funding necessary to do this? Mr. Camillius said that they would like additional funding. If no additional funding is available they would still need to make it work. Secretary Richardson would like to shift more of their budget to Federal Funds. They are still waiting for feedback from the state. They expect information for next year in April or May. Ms. Healy suggested that the Task Force and work with the community on the planning process. We need some lead time. This is dependent on the State. Mr. Camillius said they will use a similar process as this year. He asked if he can come back to the Task Force with the process. Ms. Healy said we would be ready in April.

**Design Committee:**

Ms. Brenyo reported that she was working on getting a meeting with Keith Kinard, Deputy Executive Director of Operations for the Pittsburgh Housing Authority. She said she would get the information about the meeting to Richard Meritzer to distribute to the Task Force.

Mr. Tague said there was a meeting with a Developer about new shopping facilities in Frazier. The picture board was an interesting idea to them. The also talked about transportation.

**Transportation:**

Mr. Tague reported that a public hearing was held on the proposed changes. The proposal is a significant fare increase and the elimination of service 9:00 p.m. and on weekends. The Senate is expected to adjourn on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Senate Bill 1162 and House Bill 2792 would provide for Sales Tax to be used to fund Transit. They would need \$100 million to take care of some of the problem. We need a dedicated funding source. This could be a meter of life or death.

Ms. Healy said we should do more than talk. We could send a letter. Mr. Tague said he would draft a letter and an Email. Mr. Parker said he has the letter format. Ms. Healy said she had letterhead. Mr. Tague said he would send the letter to the leadership of the Pennsylvania House and Senate and the Chairs of the Budget and Transportation Committees. Brenda Dare added that 60% - 70% of caregivers depend on public transportation.

**Housing Forum:**

Mr. O'Hanlon reported that there was going to be a Housing Forum and Public Hearing on Wednesday November 17<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 until 4:00 in the Heinz Room at 1 Smithfield Street. They are trying to get this into the Allegheny County Consolidated Plan. They will be holding their hearing first. Both the City of Pittsburgh and the City of McKeesport have been invited. He asked if the Task Force can pay the interpreters fees. It was moved by Ms. Brenyo to HAVE THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH / ALLEGHENY COUNTY TASK FORCE ON DISABILITIES PROVIDE FUNDS TO PAY THE FEES FOR INTERPRETERS FOR THE NOVEMBER 17, 2004, HOUSING FORUM AND PUBLIC HEARING. All members voted in favor of the motion.

Mr. O'Hanlon went on to say 26 people have signed up to testify. More people can testify. Everything ends up being about housing. There is no real advocacy around housing issues. Ms. Healy asked if the housing ombudsman was speaking. Mr. O'Hanlon responded not yet.

Ms. Perlman reported that Mayview has a waiting list. It has been downsized. Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic (WPIC) have people on a waiting list for months. We need housing for these people. Ms. Healy asked if people are housed in WPIC until they get outside housing. Ms. Perlman responded yes. If they don't qualify for insurance, WPIC eats the cost. Ms. Healy suggested we have someone testify on the real cost of people remaining in Mayview or WPIC. Ms. Perlman said she would get the information. Ms. Healy asked if anyone was testifying from the Task Force. Mr. Henderson said he would.

**Public Comment:**

Evelyn Stypula said she went to Harrisburg and lobbied the Senate Transportation Committee. Senator LeValle is a good ally. She is going back this week to lobby the House Transportation Committee. She had petitions on the back table for everyone to sign. She said she would do legislation for us; she has developed a good rapport with Harrisburg.

**Announcements:**

There were no announcements.

**Adjournment:**

It was moved by Ms. Perlman to ADJOURN THE MEETING. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM

**THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING:**

DATE: January 12, 2005  
TIME: 1:00 P.M.  
LOCATION: First Floor Conference Room  
Civic Building, 200 Ross Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219