

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

**September 26, 2002**

**MINUTES**

- Location:**                    **United Cerebral Palsy  
4638 Centre Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA**
- Members Present:**        **John Tague, Chairperson, Paul O’Hanlon, Co-Chair, Jeff Parker,  
Treasurer/Secretary, Aurelia Carter, Liz Healey, Ruth Brenyo,  
Penny Perlman, Al Condeluci, Bill Chrisner**
- Members Absent:**        **Linda Dickerson, Rich McGann, Milton Henderson**
- Others Present:**         **Judy Baricella, Jan Mather, Chuck Keenan, Jorgene Selelyo**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Tague at 10:15.

**Introductions:**

Each member present introduced himself/herself and those guests who had not attended meetings previously explained their responsibilities and interests.

**Approval of Minutes from August 27, 2002 Meeting**

Ms. Barricella requested that changes be made to her report in the minutes concerning the Work Plan and Budget. Mr. Keenan agreed to make the changes and submit the revised minutes to the members.

Mr. O’Hanlon moved that THE AMENDED MINUTES BE APPROVED. Mr. Condeluci seconded the motion. The motion to accept the minutes as amended was approved unanimously.

**Financial Report:**

Mr. Parker handed out a Budget Summary and a spreadsheet of monies spent to date under the City-County Task Force for fiscal year 2002-03. He explained the general budget and went over in detail expenditures month by month since July 2002, including a breakdown of United Cerebral Palsy administrative expenses, travel, food, and interpreters. Mr. Parker also noted that an outstanding item totaling about \$300 remains from a Housing Committee activity held in 2000.

Mr. Tague noted that an additional expense for an interpreter at the Candidate Forum held at the University of Pittsburgh and sponsored by the Task Force is outstanding as well. Mr. Tague highlighted a need for a policy to approve expenses of this type, as he went ahead and called for an interpreter for the event, even though he was not authorized to do so by the committee as a

whole since it was organized very quickly. Mr. Condeluci suggested that the Task Force form a subcommittee to research a policy to handle expense requests. The Executive Committee agreed to develop a policy on expenditures and necessary prior approvals.

Mr. Chrisner asked if the Task Force has a formal budget that has been approved. Mr. Condeluci noted that the Budget Summary handed out by Mr. Parker is what had been approved by the County Department of Human Services in the spring. Mr. O'Hanlon stated that this budget is "placeholder budget" and it needs to be further defined in subsequent submissions. He noted that the inactivity of the Task Force due to a number of factors necessitated a general budget submission, but that in the future, a more detailed budget would be preferable. Mr. Chrisner suggested that the new budget be based on priorities that the Task Force identify in the coming months.

### **City-County Task Force History**

Mr. Keenan pointed out that information was included in the agenda describing the legislative history, mission, intergovernmental cooperative agreement, and original membership of the Task Force. He briefly explained these items in order to give new members an idea of what the Task Force is designed to do and where it should focus its attention. Mr. Condeluci explained some more of the history, noting that funding had moved from the County Commissioners Office to the Department of Human Services at the County. Mr. O'Hanlon also noted some of the Task Force's initial activities, including the video "Small Differences," hosting a housing conference, advising the city and county on zoning and housing issues surrounding group homes, and the Disability Agenda 2000 initiative. He further noted that Disability Agenda 2000 attempted to reach a broad audience through the creation of subcommittees and sectors that were chaired by community leaders. Ms. Healy remarked that over 800 people attended the event where the Disability Agenda 2000 Report was released. After the start of Disability Agenda 2000, Mr. O'Hanlon noted that many members of the Task Force rotated off and that it took over a year to get new members approved and others added to create the current Task Force membership.

Mr. O'Hanlon explained that Disability Agenda has taken off and now has a life of its own outside of the Task Force. Ms. Salelyo asked if the Task Force still intends to fund the implementation of Disability Agenda, now that it has broken off from the Task Force. Mr. O'Hanlon stated that based on the timing of the approved budget for this fiscal year, he feels that the Task Force has agreed to fund Disability Agenda at least for this year. Ms. Carter suggested that we reach a consensus on the budget issues as soon as possible so that the Task Force can move on to determine its future activities and priorities.

### **Disability Agenda Report:**

Ms. Barricella delivered the Disability Agenda Report. She noted that the Accessibility Group has been trying to get *Pittsburgh* magazine to include access symbols in its restaurant guide and has been working with the Hospital Council to promote the accessibility of health care facilities. The Hospital Council has received a FISA grant to work on this project. Mr. O'Hanlon noted that the Hospital Council is looking at more than just accessibility into the medical office, including the accessibility of x-ray and exam tables and training of office personnel.

Ms. Barricella reported that the Employment Committee is seeking commitments from fifty employers to recruit and hire employees with disabilities through Disability Agenda's Employer Pledge. She said that employers who sign the pledge would receive a resource guide to help them through the process and a certificate that will be suitable for framing. The Employment

Committee will also host bi-monthly Employer Breakfasts to identify best practices in the recruiting, hiring, and accommodating of employees with disabilities. Ms. Barricella will be speaking at the Governor's Conference on Employing People with Disabilities on November 1, 2002 as well. Mr. Condeluci also suggested that the Employment Committee try to work with the Urban League to get on the agenda at their Diversity Training Workshops.

Ms. Barricella reported that Support Systems Group is working to make the Family Support Centers more welcoming to people with disabilities. She noted that many of these centers are not physically accessible and many times the staff is not properly trained to serve people with disabilities. Ms. Carter said that she serves on the Board for this group and had many of the same concerns, but that they are committed to addressing and solving those problems. Ms. Barricella also reported that the Support Systems Group would continue to work with the Arts Festival next year and hopefully into the future.

Ms. Barricella reported that the Housing Committee was notified that the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) has agreed to fund their Ombudsman position. The Housing Committee has also been commenting on the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County Consolidated Plans to promote the creation of more affordable, accessible housing and has been working with Pittsburgh City Councilman Jim Ferlo on a Visitability Ordinance for all new and substantially rehabilitated housing in the City built with public funds.

Ms. Barricella reported that the Public Awareness Committee has developed a logo for Disability Agenda and has developed a resource guide for advertising agencies designed to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in hiring and marketing.

Ms. Barricella noted that many policy issues have been identified through Disability Agenda, including the promotion of visitability and universal design in housing as well as policies that promote the hiring of people with disabilities at the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.

In terms of budgetary needs, Ms. Barricella noted that Disability Agenda needs approximately \$12,000 in order to continue its activities through the next fiscal year. Included in that allocation is \$1000 for the Family Center Support work, \$1000 for the Arts Festival, and \$10,000 for the Public Awareness Committee to print the resource guides and host the employer breakfasts.

### **Sub-Committees Report:**

Ms. Carter chairs the By-laws Subcommittee and she reported on the work of the committee to date. She noted that a draft of the Task Force Guidelines (By-laws) was included in the agenda packet and pointed to Article IV and Article VI as areas to which members should pay close attention. Ms. Healey also noted that members should look closely at the sections covering terms, removal of members, and conflict of interest, as the subcommittee had found difficulty in reaching a consensus on what these should say. As the meeting was scheduled to end in a few minutes, Mr. Keenan suggested that the Task Force review the guidelines and be prepared to comment on them at the next meeting. He also stressed that the guidelines define a quorum differently than most by-laws and that the sub-committee recommended that Task Force meetings be held in accordance with the State of Pennsylvania's Sunshine Act.

Ms. Brenyo reported on her meeting with the Housing Authority City of Pittsburgh (HACP) on September 5, 2002. She noted that HACP has asked her committee to assist them in reviewing plans for new and rehabilitated accessible units for conformance with applicable codes. Mr. Keenan stated that the Housing Authority had requested a letter from the Task Force assuring that

Mr. O'Hanlon would not be involved in the process, citing the continuing lawsuit between the Disability Law Project and HACP. The Housing Authority would begin working with the Housing Committee after receipt of the letter. Mr. O'Hanlon made a motion TO AUTHORIZE MR. TAGUE TO WRITE A LETTER TO HACP REQUESTING THAT THEY BEGIN TO MEET WITH A COMMITTEE ON HOUSING DESIGN TO BE CHAIRED BY RUTH BRENYO. Mr. Condeluci seconded the motion. Mr. Chrisner added that the letter should state that Ms. Brenyo and other members of the committee are not architects or lawyers and that the committee is advisory in nature only. Mr. O'Hanlon accepted the amendment and the motion was APPROVED unanimously.

### **Open Discussion:**

Ms. Healy requested that the Executive Committee begin to look at ways to develop priorities on which the Task Force should begin to work. Mr. O'Hanlon suggested that the Task Force create a Planning Subcommittee to develop a planning process to determine the advocacy issues that seem most important and pressing. Mr. Condeluci and Ms. Carter volunteered to serve on the subcommittee along with the members of the Executive Committee. Mr. Tague clarified that, after the Planning Subcommittee develops an appropriate process and identifies key issues, the entire Task Force should begin to develop priorities from those issues. Mr. Chrisner held that the Task Force should begin to develop a strategic plan, perhaps with the help of a consultant, to direct the overall movement of the Task Force.

Mr. O'Hanlon reported that the Realtors Association of Metropolitan Pittsburgh (RAMP) is conducting a training for realtors to advise them on how to manage real estate transactions involving at-risk and special needs populations. He noted that they were seeking sponsors, at \$400 each, to offset some of the costs. Mr. Condeluci moved that THE TASK FORCE SPONSOR THE RAMP TRAINING ON TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE AT-RISK OR WHO HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS. Ms. Healey seconded the motion. Mr. Chrisner asked how the \$400 would be used. Mr. O'Hanlon said that the money would be used to offset the administrative costs of the training and would not be used to allow a realtor to attend the training. The motion was APPROVED with 5 members voting yes, 1 member voting no, and 2 members abstaining.

Mr. Condeluci suggested that the Task Force start to develop a policy on the Living Wage Bill that was recently defeated at County Council. Mr. O'Hanlon agreed, stating that the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) is undergoing a policy shift so that it now backs the deinstitutionalization of people who are not appropriately housed in nursing homes. He further added that many direct care workers are living in poverty because of the low wages that they earn and offered that SEIU may become a good partner for the Task Force, as they are beginning to develop similar goals. Ms. Healey also noted that the Task Force could provide comments to CMS as they try to develop priorities on evaluating the quality of service that they provide. She noted that these comments might lead to a higher quality workforce serving people with disabilities.

Mr. Keenan reported that he is in the process of updating the ADA Coordinator web page on the City of Pittsburgh's official site. He would like to host a page dedicated to the Task Force on that site, including the names of members, upcoming and past agendas, minutes, activities, and position statements on various issues from the Task Force. As there was no opposition, Mr. Keenan stated that he would include these items on the web site.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35. Mr. Tague reminded all members to bring names and background information on the 13<sup>th</sup> member nominees for next meeting and to begin to think about policy issues on which to work in the future.

THE NEXT TASK FORCE MEETING:           DATE:           October 29, 2002  
  TIME:           10:00 A.M.  
  LOCATION:       First Floor Conference Room  
  200 Ross Street  
  Pittsburgh, PA

Subsequent meetings are scheduled at 10:00 A.M. on the following dates and will be located at 200 Ross Street unless the Task Force is notified otherwise.

Tuesday, November 26, 2002

Tuesday, December 31, 2002