

CITY OF PITTSBURGH
ADA Strategic Planning Team
June 30, 2010
MINUTES

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

Members Present: Lauren Beck, Anthony Boule, Roy E. Cox, Ron Deutsch, Ryszard Janik, Dawn Jakomas, Richard Meritzer, Eric Miazga, Connie Zatek representing Charles Morrison

Members Absent: Barbara Curry, Darnell Griffin-Benton, Sherilyn Mannion, Regina McDonald, Sandra Stewart, Jason Zollett, representative from Emergency Operations Center, representative from Magistrate Court, representative from Department of Personnel, and representative from Sports and Exhibition Authorities

Others Present: Justin Lamorella, Giuseppe Scalamogna

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

INTRODUCTIONS/MEETING AGENDA

FOLLOW-UP FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Last meeting the Team discussed the inaccessibility of the Beechview Senior Center, which the City rents. The Law Department could provide more information about the site. Citiparks reported that there has been no movement to relocate the site but they do appreciate receiving the reports right away. EMS reported that whenever they will be happy to receive the reports at any time.

ADA INTERNS' REPORTS

Justin Lamorella reported about the City Facilities assessments. The ADA office has teamed with the Department of Public Works to evaluate City Facilities to see what changes need to be made to them and how cost effective they are. Mr. Meritzer and his assistants do the ADA Compliance portion of that evaluation. The project is called Facilities Analysis and Management Project (FAMP). A report of the facilities assessed so far was provided at the meeting including a schedule of the other facilities to be evaluated.

Giuseppe Scalamogna works with grant writing and reported on the Wheelchair Transport Project. The Wheelchair transport project has been in the works for a year. The Project was developed to transport those in wheelchairs for Police and EMS. Right now they have acquired two sponsors for the proposal. They will be applying to six foundations. Half of those will be with the Bloomfield/Garfield Corporation and the

other half will be filed on behalf of the Pennsylvania Community Resource Group (PCRG). They will have a decision by December 2010 or January 2011.

Mr. Cox reported that they receive at least two EMS calls a week where they would need a vehicle to transport a wheelchair. It is a liability with the Police as well when a prisoner in a wheelchair is under arrest. For EMS it is for the convenience of the patient. They do not want to leave their conveyance there. In addition, several times a week, a person in a wheelchair breaks down. Mr. Cox suggested that 911 should have the numbers to call the company to assist broken down wheelchairs.

Ms. Jakomas said that they could put out a bid to contract a company to provide service to broken conveyances.

Mr. Miazga reported that he was not sure if any of those companies were 24 hour services.

Mr. Cox reported that the need of one is not every day and every night but it is definitely every week.

Mr. Deutsch said that it not only for the person in a wheelchair, but for a partner who is in conveyance.

Mr. Meritzer said that Evelyn Stypula is working on a proposal for that project for when a partner is in distress.

He said that they would on getting the numbers to 911/31, would obtain concerns from the Law Department about working with a private company, would look into putting out a contract to companies.

Mr. Miazga said that some companies may only work on certain kinds of chairs.

Mr. Meritzer asked who pays if we put out a bid.

Mr. Cox replied that once the bid is obtained, whoever uses the service is billed.

Ms. Jakomas said to check with Chuck Maletski to see if we have money for a 24 hour service.

Mr. Meritzer will follow up on that.

Mr. Cox said that is could be a grant proposal saying that we anticipate one repair a week, or an average a week, and we need so much money for an x period.

Ms. Jakomas: We can take away some of the burden from EMS and the Police. We can save money on those calls if we have a small grant or bid for this sort of circumstance.

Mr. Cox asked what the purpose of the proposal is.

Mr. Meritzer replied that the proposal for the van is for both Police and EMS. In theory, if 911 got a call requiring the transport, they could send it out.

Mr. Cox said that the Police will be manning it and staffing it. It is not a people transport for EMS, it is a prisoner transport for Police and a wheelchair transport only for EMS. He then stated that evacuation needs to be addressed.

Mr. Deutsch stated that the City has one wheelchair accessible van, which holds three.

Ms. Jakomas said that if we have a disaster, we could use a bid.

Mr. Miazga asked if school buses are accessible.

Mr. Meritzer said that all school districts have accessible vehicles. Perhaps we can talk to Ray Demichiei on what the plans are for transporting wheelchairs in emergency situations at the next meeting.

Mr. Cox said that the transport is not just for the EMS or Police but it is to help everyone, even City employees in an event of an emergency.

Mr. Scalamogna said that the ADA Office is in the process of acquiring a 25,000 dollar sum. The money is to be used as special events/ ASL interpretation and captioning for events such as parades, speeches, gatherings, and meetings. If you have a meeting that needs captioning and interpreting, there are funds for that.

Mr. Cox asked if that money could be used if the Mayor makes an announcement.

Mr. Meritzer: replied that yes, it will include captioning and interpreting of video. They plan on using it for AccessiblePGH television spots.

Mr. Scalamogna said that there is legislation involved in a document with City Planning budget requests overall. It is currently in conflict with funds at Council and is to be submitted to council. They are looking to have funds by the first week of August but could be possibly September.

Mr. Meritzer said that they will then be looking for contracts.

Mr. Scalamogna is doing the Request for Proposal. He will wait for Council. Hopefully they do that before their recess. If everything goes well, the funds could be in place by August.

Mr. Meritzer said that the money is to be used for a contract with an interpreting company. Currently, the City is using a State contract for interpreting. There is no contract for captioning. This will provide a contract for captioning. If something is going on City-wide, that City Planning is somewhat involved with, it can be used primarily for captioning. It is only 25,000 dollars which can go rather quickly.

ADA COORDINATOR

Mr. Meritzer reported that Market Square's Phase I is completed. He had recently evaluated it with a Task Force member who is deaf-blind. He had serious issues with its accessibility. If any of you have issues Mr. Meritzer will get them to the Director. If there is a technical thing with Public Works, or something concerning seniors, please let Mr. Meritzer know.

He thanked Mr. Deutsch for helping with the meeting with CitiParks. Everyone seemed to have learned a lot from each other. They are moving forward in putting accessible components in the Summer Parks magazine.

Mr. Cox reported that it helps EMS as well. If a facility or event is more accessible, it makes it easier for EMS to assist.

Mr. Meritzer also reported about the 2011 National Veteran's Wheelchair Games which will be hosted next year here in Pittsburgh. He is on the board and is helping to organize it. It will be five days of activities all around the County, but mostly in the City. Three-quarters of it will take place at the Convention Center. They will be utilizing the bowling green in Frick Park. They will be installing accessible viewers on Mount Washington.

Mr. Cox said that it would be nice to have a transport by then.

Mr. Meritzer said that they will need everyone's help from various departments. Parking spaces, EMS, Citiparks can get involved to stress not only that the City is accessible but that this administration supports it. They want various departments to be involved with the games. We want them to have a good experience that people from all over the country and Canada can enjoy and recognize. It will take place the first week of August 2011.

Mr. Cox said that this could be a stimulus for getting the EOC on board.

Mr. Janik said that the traffic division should be involved because maybe some signage around the City could help the event and show where parking and access is. Perhaps they should begin right now. If you will need forty van parking spaces, you will run out of spaces.

Mr. Meritzer said that curb ramps might need to be placed. Public Works is making good process with installing ramps.

Mr. Janik said that he appreciates this sort of communication. They complete ramps from comprehensive plans, but they appreciate information from the Department of City Planning.

Mr. Meritzer said that there has been great cooperation from everyone. Together we are making a big difference. The Department right now is in the process of developing the City Comprehensive Plan. They are bringing in consultants from outside, some with background in ADA issues. They wanted to know if the City had any Federal Government consent agreements. The City always gets the job done before the Federal Government needs to get involved.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Ms. Jakomas said that their office is not represented on the ADA website.

Mr. Meritzer replied that they will take care of that.

Mr. Deutsch reported about voucher day. All senior centers will be given 100,000 dollars worth of Farmer's market coupons. There were no issues with accessibility.

SUMMARY:

The ADA Office will continue to secure the Wheelchair Transport.

The ADA Office will look into giving the numbers of wheelchair service companies to 911 and 311, and look into putting out a bid to acquire a contract with a company to provide these services. They will check with the Law Department about this as well.

The ADA Office will see if Ray Demichiei will come to the next meeting to talk about emergency evacuation.

The ADA Office will add EORC to the website.

All departments will ready the City for the 2011 National Veteran's Wheelchair Games, especially the Traffic Division of Public Works to make sure parking and accessible signage is provided.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 PM

The City-County Task Force meets every third Monday of the month (except in January and February) from 1:00 – 3:00 in the First Floor Meeting Room of the Civic Building. Everyone is welcome to come. The Task Force deals with issues with what the City is doing and should be doing.