

City of Pittsburgh/Allegheny County Task Force on Disability

March 2013

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

Task Force Members in Attendance: Paul O'Hanlan, John Tague, Richard McGann, Janet Evans, Joe Wasserman,

Task Force Members Absent: Linda Dickerson, Jeff Parker, Aurelia Carter-Scott, Dr. Katherine Seelman, James C. Nochese, Sarah Goldstein, Liz Healy, Milton Henderson

Also in Attendance: Lester Bennett, Marty Stahl, Charles Morrison, Randy Whitehair, Joe Elliot, Mary-Esther Ventura, Ali Abdullah, Shelby Weber, Steve Fowler, Sara Fernandez, Richard Meritzer, Amaris Whittaker

1. Approval of January 2013 Taskforce Minutes

The approval of the January 2013 City County Taskforce on Disability was tabled until the April 2013 Taskforce meeting

2. Financial Report

There was no financial report for this month. The next financial report will be presented at the April 2013 Taskforce meeting.

3. Presentation: Volunteers of America

a. Marty Stahl from Volunteers of America—an educational, faith-based non-profit organization dedicated to the improvement of the lives of outlined the programs of the Pennsylvania Affiliate:

- i. *Action Teams*; these groups are working to help high school teens understand community service working in partnership with the Baseball Players Foundation and the Pittsburgh Pirates.
- ii. *All of Us Care*: an after school support program for at-risk teens in the lower Allegheny Valley area. A total of 500 kids currently work with tutors and mentors. Year round
- iii. *Working Order*: Ms. Stahl, citing statistics and benefit of self-employment of persons with disabilities, gave an overview of services offered by *Working Order*, a small Business Incubator that supports self-employment processes and practices

Services include:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| iv. Business plans | viii. Referrals to experts |
| v. Marketing plans | ix. Business bookkeeping |
| vi. Graphic Design | x. Business writing |
| vii. Networking | |

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b. Questions

A question about availability and access to *Working Order* resources was directed to Richard Meritzer, he referred attendees to the ADA e-mail lists, which regularly transmit news and information. Mr. Meritzer added that current recipients and clients of *Working Order* should provide narratives or additional information on how their businesses developed within *Working Order*.

Rich McGann asked about cooperative efforts with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and what opportunities are available for the deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing. Ms. Stahl responded that *Working Order* is currently collaborating with O.V.R. and is utilizing web resources to better connect and provide services within the deaf community.

Joe Wasserman asked if there were any networking events, informational meetings, or conferences available to the public or anyone interested in *Working Order*. Ms. Stahl responded, saying there are two meetings a month held in the Sharpsburg office, located at 1650 Main St. The first meeting is on the second Wednesday of each month at noon: this topic-centered 'brown-bag lunch' presents topics relevant to small business. A second meeting is held on the third Thursday at 8:30 in the morning: this Disability Resource Breakfast offers perspective from organizations and members about the challenges facing those in the disability community. Mr. Wasserman called attention to the fact that the timing of the meeting that specifically addresses disability resources is being held at one of the most difficult times available to secure para-transit.

Mr. Wasserman asked if there was a list of resources available for those seeking assistance. Ms. Stahl referred attendees to the *Working Order* website:

Mr. Meritzer called attention to the fact that the office of the ADA Coordinator frequently issues RFP's for services and contracts related to persons with disabilities but there have been little to no response from businesses owned and operated by the disability community, and that there funding and monies available. Future announcements and opportunities will be directed to *Working Order*.

A question about cost was fielded from Mr. Wasserman: Ms. Stahl explained that rates are based on prior years' income or W2, and typically range from \$10-\$50 an hour.

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4. Update on the One-Step Project:

Amaris Whittaker

- a. Ms. Whittaker reported that the informational packet for prospective applicants is complete and has been submitted for internal review prior to distribution. Five architectural firms have been recruited to provide services at reduced cost (including one pro bono). Contact information for these firms is included in the packet. The biggest challenge in the project was ensuring that the application process is as streamlined. Attention was called to certain fees that were not previously legislated during the preparation of the packet, there is currently work being done to waive these fees for applicants. Submission of rough draft design was negotiated in order to save time for the architectural firms.
- b. Ms. Whittaker's hard work was commended by the Taskforce, as was the cooperation of City Departments during the project.

5. New Taskforce Member Recruitment:

Richard Meritzer

- a. Mr. Meritzer announced that a draft announcement for new Members of the Taskforce has been submitted for review by the Taskforce twice, and that there have been no further comments. The next step will be to implement a timeframe for the announcement for and review of applications to fill the vacancies on the Taskforce. Special attention was called to vacancies in County seats.

6. Update on AccessiblePGH:

Richard Meritzer

- a. Mr. Meritzer reported that three videos on disability issues have been produced by the Office of the ADA Coordinator. These a new video will be distributed monthly before being posted to the City's ADA website. The first was on the NAVPAL system and will be posted on the website shortly, the second video on ADA Compliance and Fair Housing is set for distribution in April. The two available videos were shown to the Taskforce.

7. Staff Reports:

a. Facility Survey:

Shelby Weber

- i. Ms. Weber gave a status report on facility surveys of Public City Buildings for ADA compliance and accessibility: she noted that four have been completed, with an additional two scheduled for the following week. Ms. Weber reported that she is on track for a total of eight complete surveys by the end of the term. Summer term high school interns will assist in the completion of additional surveys.

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b. Review of EMS Training Materials for Epilepsy and Seizure Management: Steve Fowler

- i. Mr. Fowler gave a status update on the review of seizure management training materials for City Police, Fire, and EMS. Mr. Fowler reported that attempts have been made to procure materials from the training contact: Lt. Jennifer Ford. To date, there have been no responses to requests for materials.

Meeting Adjourned