

CITY- COUNTY

Task Force on Disabilities

May 16, 2022

Task Force Members In Attendance

City

Paul O'Hanlon
Joe Wassermann

County

James "Chris" Noschese, Chair
Georgia Petropoulos, Cochair
John Tague, Treasurer

13th Member

Paul "Rich" McGann

Task Force Members Absent

City

Leah Northrop, Member at Large
Janet Evans
Mark Schmeler
Michelle Walker

County

Cori Frazer
Karen Warman
Sarah Goldstein

Staff Present

Hillary Roman, City of Pittsburgh ADA Coordinator
Audrey Wells, Dept of City Planning Communications Specialist
Caylin Snyder, Allegheny County ADA Coordinator

Welcome & Introductions

Chris Noschese called the meeting to order at 2:09 p.m. and welcomed all attendees. Task Force members introduced themselves.

A. Regular business

- Task Force failed to meet quorum and is unable to vote on agenda items.
- Minutes approval
 - Approval for March 2022 minutes will be added to the next meeting's agenda.
- Treasurer's report
 - No report this month.

B. Community updates

a. Pittsburgh Disability Pride

- Event is being held July 23 on Ft. Duquesne Blvd. by the Clemente Bridge.
- Tina Calabro added that they are currently looking for sponsors. Sponsorship starts at \$250 for an ad, \$500 for a table and a larger ad.
 - Deadline for sponsorship is near the beginning of July.
 - Rich McGann requested access for Deaf and hard of hearing folks closer to the stage.
 - John Tague added that organizers are still looking for volunteers.

C. Intergovernmental agreement and CCTFD guidelines discussion

- John brought up the intergovernmental agreement between the City and County establishing the Task Force. The original agreement involved the now defunct County Commission and lapsed long ago, but the CCTFD continues its work. John asks whether there are guidelines and criteria that might be improved upon.
- Chris wondered what might be improved upon through this process.
- Paul cautioned against changing the guidelines.
- Chris thinks it would be helpful to have more clarity around the history and mission of the CCTFD.
- Paul thinks the members should review the original agreement and discuss further at an upcoming meeting.
- John agreed to forward the Agreement to the Task Force.
- He also asked about updating CCTFD guidelines. Items, including term length and attendance requirements, are vague.

D. Sunflower Lanyard Program at Pittsburgh International Airport discussion

- Rich introduced the Sunflower Lanyard Program to the group. The program involves having people with invisible disabilities self-identify by wearing a sunflower lanyard.
- Rich added that some people want the program but many do not. The program should not force people to self-identify disability status.
- Caylin said there are a few airports that have used this optional program to help identify those with invisible disabilities. She suggested that the Task Force send a letter to the airport about their concerns.
 - The airport has an ADA Compliance Officer that the group can reach out to.
- Chris suggests that Rich bring the issue up again at the next meeting.

E. Other Issues/Updates

a. Townhall with Mayor Gainey and Transition Report

- John and Georgia Petropoulos talked about inviting Mayor Gainey to an upcoming CCTFD meeting in lieu of a townhall meeting. John extended this invitation to the Mayor via Rebekkah Renallo, the Neighborhood Services Manager for the City.
- John asked Tina to draft a response letter on the Transition Report to the Mayor's Office.

- Tina added that she was glad to see disability highlighted in the Transition Report. She thinks it is important that the Task Force respond to it positively and also make specific requests around areas of impact for people with disabilities.
 - Tina suggested that the CCTFD request an expansion of the ADA Coordinator's Office and enforcement power. She added that the Office needs more funding.
 - She would also like to see more disability support in housing initiatives.
 - Rich thinks the group should also draw attention to the disproportionately high number of seniors who live in the area as well.
 - Paul added that his suggestion to do a pilot study on nighttime employment transportation was reflected in the Report.
 - He was disappointed not to see concerns around the BRT incorporated into the report.
 - John suggests that the CCTFD and Ad-Hoc Committee send a response letter to the administration within two weeks.
 - Tina and other advocates have met with Michelle Gainey about including disability as a theme in the Pittsburgh Paints event series.
- b. Miscellaneous
- Rich brought up issues he's been experiencing with Comcast and Peacock streaming services.
 - Paul reiterated his desire to continue discussions about SPIN e-scooters.
 - Paul also brought up issues having to do with expanding sidewalk dining into the cartway.
 - John would like to add both issues to the upcoming letter to the Gainey Administration.
- c. Events
- Reel Abilities/Richard Mertizer Award
 - Ceremony will be September 7-11th at the Pittsburgh Playhouse Theater.
 - The committee is still accepting nominations for the award.
 - Oakland Ramp Crawl: August 19th, 4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:38 p.m.

Relevant links and information:

- YouTube link with closed captioning: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxBSyqXLYY8>