



## Columbus Advisory Committee on Disability Issues

Minutes of Meeting August 25, 2016

**Attendees:** Karen Kostelac – Chair  
Tricia Kovacs – Vice Chair  
Marlene Stewart – member  
Kay Grier – OSILC  
Elizabeth Sammons – OOD  
Pam Makowski – guest  
Geri Cooper – guest  
David Cameron – guest  
Jay Favuzzi – Columbus State Community College  
April Williams - COTA

**Call to Order:** Karen Kostelac, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1 pm.

**Guest Speaker:**  
Emerald Hernandez, City of Columbus

Emerald presented an update on the Smart City grant which the City of Columbus received.

Emerald told us she was entrenched in paperwork, working with US DOT (providing \$40M grant) and Vulcan (providing \$10M grant) to develop an innovation clause on the project so they can go forward with new technology. Workshops are coming up and the implementation is projected to be in 2017-2018. There will be a community kick-off in September, Engage Consulting is coordinating community input. Smart City will partner with the new Department of Neighborhoods and community liaisons. Columbus is also working with CDM Smith for the electrification plan for electric vehicles and charging stations. Columbus is also working with HMTB Engineering on the intelligent transportation system for the autonomous vehicles.

Emerald shared that the reason we were selected for the grant was that our application stressed the health and human service impact. The program will focus on the Linden area. The Smart Pass program (used for transit, taxi, other transportation options such as uber, lyft, car2go and cogo bike) will have accessible kiosks. The program is also focusing on the infant mortality problem in Columbus and will provide services to WIC mothers.

Emerald thanked us for our participation and endorsement of the grant application.

Marlene asked if Smart City can help with issues with transit such as smoking in bus shelters? This is something that needs to be addressed by COTA. Someone asked if other cities will be involved, and Emerald answered that Columbus will be working with the other 7 cities that were finalists in the grant program. Emerald also asked that we let Smart City know if there are other companies or organizations which would want to collaborate with the program.

**Approval of June minutes:** Minutes were approved with minor corrections.

**Old Business:**

Some of the members were unaware of the passing of Jim O'Neil, who represented COTA on our committee. Jim passed away in his sleep in June due to a heart problem. He was 64 years old. He will be missed by us all.

We discussed the successful July ADA celebration. Several CACDI members attended. There were a few problems, such as the food vendors again being inaccessible. But Pam said that she has never felt un-accommodated and that the vendors deliver her food to her. The problem with the display tables being placed above a curb was resolved. The "statue guy" and the magician were very good. The "statue guy" used a walker and cane. The magician encouraged passers-by to visit the organization tables. The evening program was Stevie Wonder music and the dancers began practicing in the afternoon which was entertaining to attendees.

Marlene called 311 to ask that sprinklers be turned off by 5AM.

Pam met with Shannon Hardin regarding the traffic signal removals on Parsons. Her husband works for ODOT and he said that it was too late in the process to change the plans. Tricia said that she asked for pedestrian signals to replace two of the traffic signals at the open house in February. She also met with Reynaldo Stargell (Traffic Management Administrator) to share our concerns about traffic signal removals but he said that there are no plans to add pedestrian signals on Parsons.

Katie Fredrick had asked at previous meetings about new bus islands on Summit St. April recommended that Katie contact Melinda Vonstein at COTA: [emeryma@cota.com](mailto:emeryma@cota.com) (614) 308-4373.

**New Business:**

Our October 22 meeting cannot be held at the board of elections because of extra security. The meeting will be held at the Indoor Adventure Center. The speaker for the October meeting is Laura Akgerman from the Agrability program at OSU.

Kay is working with Kathleen Bailey of the Near East Area Commission to invite her to speak. One of the concerns of that neighborhood is a plan to reuse the old silos on East Main St to store lime and cement. Residents would prefer that the silos be removed.

<http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2016/08/23/Near-East-Side-silos.html>

Marlene expressed concern about the eviction of residents from Sawyer Tower on North High St. There was uncertainty whether the tower would be demolished or renovated. The residents were provided vouchers for new housing by CMHA. CMHA said that the money from the sale of the building will be used to better serve Columbus residents.

<http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/business/2016/06/18/1-bollinger-tower-to-be-turned-into-cambria-suites-hotel.html>

Pam is working with the Standing Room Only theatre group, formerly the Grandparents theatre. She is working with them to encourage that they include actors and staff with disabilities. The upcoming Dracula play will include a wheelchair user. In November, the Winesburg, Ohio play will have sign language interpreters. Pam asked about audio description and Elizabeth suggested that 1 or 2 performances have description. Elizabeth also suggested that they be accessible by transit. The Greater Columbus Arts Council or Columbus Foundation may provide grants for interpreters and description. Pam asked how to reach out to the community regarding auditions. Suggestions included: DSC, ACB Columbus, Columbus schools theater groups, Dancing Wheels, Autism Society, VSA Ohio. Pam asked if it would be inappropriate for non-disabled actors to play disabled parts. Kay answered that it would be considered that the theatre did not work hard enough to find someone with a disability.

<http://www.srotheatre.org/>

Tricia discussed her participation in the Active Transportation Team headed by Ohio Department of Transportation and Ohio Department of Health. The goals of the team are to improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians. Strategies include infrastructure and education programs.

Tricia also shared that there will be an open house regarding road improvements on High St between 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenues. The open house will be on September 13 at 5:30-7:30 pm at Schoenbaum Family Center, 175 E 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

Kay shared that the next biennium budget will be finalized in October 15. OSILC has had its budget decreased from \$450 to \$252K. She asked if CACDI could write a letter of support to maintain their funding. Tricia volunteered to draft a letter to be shared with CACDI.

### **General Discussion:**

Kay Grier shared news of the death of Rose Juriga. Rose was the Executive Director of the Tri-County Center for Independent Living in Akron since 1990.

They offer direct services to people with disabilities in 3 counties in northeast Ohio.

Karen is trying to contact Christy from Creative Housing to speak to our committee.

We need to find out about when applicants will be appointed as members of CACDI.

We need more visibility in Columbus. Kay is still planning to write a letter to city council.

Pam worked on locating an office for presidential candidate Clinton at 975 Parsons Ave (at the corner of Whittier).

**Next Meeting:**

September 22 at Indoor Adventure Center

Speaker: Shannon Hardin, Columbus city council

The meeting adjourned at 2:49pm.