

COLUMBUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ISSUES

Minutes of the Meeting: February 27, 2013

Members present: Kathy Blair, David Cameron—acting secretary, Kay Grier, Enjie Hall, Mary Hiland (and her new guide dog, Dora)—chair, Karen Kostelac, Tricia Kovacs, Rajai Saleh, Elizabeth Sammons

Members absent, excused: Ann Christopher*, Wayne Cocchi*, Jennifer Flynn*, Scott Lissner*

Members absent: Cynthia Macintosh, Tiffany McClain, Brent Simonds, Marlene Stewart, Sue Willis

Provisional members present: Ann Gazelle

Staff:

Ex officio: Jim Christian, Carrie Fortman (both City); Justin Henderson, Bill Stepp (both COTA)

Guests: Ryan Younge, Drew Downing (both Columbus Public Health); Ruth & Don Carlock (w/Kathy); Deb Wood

CALL TO ORDER. Chair Mary Hiland called the meeting to order at 1:04.

GUEST PRESENTERS. Ryan Younge and Drew Downing, from Columbus Public Health, Office of Emergency Preparedness: Ryan and Drew spoke with us about their office's mission, which is to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from health emergencies. We were shown a chart illustrating that since 1980 world-wide disasters, both natural and human-made, have increased. Locally, Franklin County Emergency Management and Homeland Security (FCMEHS) has assessed our risks and determined that our greatest threat is from tornados.

Columbus Public Health's job is one of coordination. In an emergency, CPH does not physically perform an evacuation but instead implements coordinated plans that are already in place through the Red Cross, hospitals, safety forces, and

other agencies. An example occurred last summer after the derecho storm, which left a retirement community without power. CPH was involved in that rescue effort.

Ryan then provided us with several very practical resources that we can connect with on our own. He gave us the brochure for individuals and families at home titled “Ready in Three: Three Steps to Prepare for an Emergency.” 1. Make a plan; 2. Make a kit; 3. Listen for information. An example for step two, making the emergency survival kit, is to have three gallons of bottled water available per person for three days. More specific guidance is at <http://fcmhs.org>. Next, he urged each of us to sign up for Code Red alerts through FCEMHS to receive notice of an emergency by telephone. He informed us that we can provide Next-of-Kin emergency contact info that is attached to an individual’s driving record; registration instructions are online at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles Web site and can be accomplished online or by mail. Further, he reminded us that 2-1-1 is the emergency phone number for HandsOn Central Ohio where one can get information about many community helping agencies and services.

Deb Wood’s question about how she can get help in an emergency and/or an evacuation again brought up the festering issue about some local fire stations that don’t keep track of citizens with disabilities within their jurisdiction but, as usual, didn’t really provide a solution.

We voiced our very strong wish to participate in future planning. The presenters acknowledged that information about serving people with disabilities is seriously lacking and asked us to serve as subject matter experts. We will send CACDI contact info to them and, at their suggestion, to Mark Pennell (FCEMHS), and to Brad Schwartz (Ohio Dept. Public Safety EMS).

MISCELLANEOUS. Very late in the meeting Mary learned that Rick Isbell had gotten stuck in a Mayor’s task force meeting and would not be able to join us. Also, Marsha Moore

from Deaf Services Center had received the wrong address for our meeting and couldn't find us; thus the two interpreters on hand were dismissed.

OLD BUSINESS. Kay Grier reported that Representative Michael Stinziano is redrafting his HB 333 that would require advance notice before an individual can file a lawsuit alleging failure to provide access. He has received a good deal of feedback, including from us, much of it negative.

NEW BUSINESS

- Karen Kostelac and Kay reported on a conference both attended recently at Ohio State on the subject of safety forces and how they assist citizens with disabilities. The Chief of Columbus Division of Police, Kim Jacobs, had a prominent role and was, in Karen's words, "very impressive." The information available was quite preliminary and necessarily inconclusive, nevertheless both members were extremely enthused and hopeful. For example, police departments are developing a notice system for people with disabilities that is in early developmental stages. There will be follow-up meetings.
- Jim Christian discussed his recent emails about crosswalk cross-slopes. Where a crosswalk crosses a street that is sloping perpendicularly to the crosswalk—a fairly common circumstance—the previous standard was that the cross-slope could not exceed 2%. Now the Access Board is proposing a maximum of 5%, which has him concerned and he asked for comments. Despite a recent study suggesting that the difference doesn't make much difference, he remains unpersuaded. Clearly the tendency is for a wheelchair to drift down toward the side that is lower but, lacking site-specific experiences with measurements, most of us could only comment that the change doesn't sound good. Jim's personal commitment is to stay as close to the old standard as possible.
- On another matter, he reported that the stick-on detectable warnings at curb ramps are failing—coming loose—in

significant numbers. He asked us to report any we come across by calling 311.

FUTURE PRESENTERS

- Enjie Hall said that the technical director at her office, OSU's Office for Disability Services, can do a technology demonstration for us.
- Tricia Kovacs suggested inviting someone from Mental Health America of Franklin County.
- Rajai Saleh noted that a person from her agency, Ohio HOME Choice, could present.
- Jim recommended Tracie Davies, director of the City's Dept. of Public Service.

ADJOURNMENT. Mary accepted David C's motion to adjourn at 2:58. *APPROVED*