

# COLUMBUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ISSUES

Minutes of the Meeting—August 22, 2019  
State Library of Ohio, 274 East First Avenue

## ATTENDANCE

Tricia Kovacs, co-chair	member
Paul Walker	member
Bob Roehm	member
Karen Kostelac ( <i>by phone</i> )	member
David Cameron, co-secretary	member
Zane Jones, City ADA Coordinator	ex officio
Steve Spain, Greenleaf Job Training Services	guest
Nick Popa, City Engineer	guest
Nancy Pryor Sully, City Council	guest
Roy Wentzel ( <i>for brother Jack</i> )	guest

**CALL TO ORDER.** Chair Tricia Kovacs called the meeting to order at 1:05 and immediately introduced our guest presenter, Steve Spain.

**PRESENTATION.** Steve Spain is Client Engagement Specialist at Greenleaf Job Training Services in Columbus. Greenleaf assists people with disabilities to overcome barriers and perform well at work, and trains employers in managing employees with disabilities.

Individuals receive evaluation, job training, and job coaching, among various other services, often under the auspices of Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, Ohio's vocational rehabilitation agency. As important, because employers often report having not been trained in managing employees with disabilities, employers can receive wide-ranging consultation that might include uncovering hidden barriers, becoming aware of unconscious bias, and creating an inclusive work culture.

Our own Karen Kostelac gave testimony about her experience as a client of Greenleaf a few years ago. She is a very satisfied customer.

**ADA COORDINATOR'S REPORT.** Zane Jones gave us a brief taste of the kind of calls he's been receiving recently. One unique story was about the citizen with an orthopedic disability who needed to retrieve his car from the city impound lot. The nature of his disability made it necessary to take a

second person with him—but the impound lot’s rules forbid two people entering together. Zane’s intervention brought this to a successful conclusion.

He then gave a lengthy report on his attendance at the annual three-day National ADA Symposium, this year in Dallas in June. While he felt the time was worthwhile, it might be said that he was mildly underwhelmed.

Some of the material presented seemed fairly basic and he came away feeling somewhat confirmed that his grasp of ADA concepts is solid. Many of the answers to audience questions seemed to offer catharsis to the questioners. The issues facing ADA coordinators across the country are remarkably similar but the coordinators are often on their own. In fact, Zane’s favorite session by far was the one he described as being about “an office of one.” The presenter was very passionate about the job, suggesting that it’s not about compliance, it’s about people. In a large organization—such as a city—the ADA coordinator must get around to different departments and attend many meetings to build relationships.

Zane asked us to guess the hot topics, and the chorus of “e-scooters” almost nailed it. Believe it or not, even in 2019 the number one issue was service animals, followed closely by e-scooters.

He learned that the Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division, which is the enforcement body for the ADA, has roughly 100 employees for the entire nation. David pointed out that that number was unchanged from when he retired as ADA coordinator for a state government agency in 2005.

**CHAIR’S REPORT.** The following are projects Tricia has been involved with, including links to more information.

- Connect Columbus released their Multimodal Thoroughfare Plan which includes the Transportation Policy Framework. This is a policy for providing better transportation choices for walking, biking and transit. Here's a link with information:  
<https://www.columbus.gov/publicservice/Connect-Columbus/>
- MORPC Active Transportation working group is a group she has been attending to discuss efforts in the MORPC region to promote

walking/biking/transit. They are currently updating their Complete Streets Policy/toolkit, which is a guideline for accommodating all people on our streets, including people with disabilities. It was last updated in 2010. At our last meeting, Brooke Wilson, Columbus police officer who investigates all traffic fatalities, talked to us about pedestrian fatalities. Here's a link for MORPC ATP: <http://www.morpc.org/tool-resource/active-transportation-plan/>

- ODOT Walk/Bike Ohio is another effort to improve Ohio for walking and cycling. This group also had a working group which advised ODOT on ways to educate Ohio drivers and cyclists to improve safety for walking and cycling. I had emailed CACDI a survey which is currently closed. Here is the website with information on the program: <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/walkbike/Pages/default.aspx>
- ODOT Walk/Bike Ohio puts out a newsletter called Groundwork which covers topics related to active transportation, including new infrastructure like pedestrian signals and bikeway types. Folks can subscribe to Groundwork here: <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/ProgramManagement/HighwaySafety/ActiveTransportation/Pages/default.aspx>
- Smart Columbus Open Data Enthusiasts "is community driven group dedicated to improving lives in Columbus through open data, technology, and education." One of their projects is to provide a sidewalk map to help with wayfinding for pedestrians/transit users. They are interested in learning about issues for people with disabilities and we would like to attend to help. Paul Walker will be attending a future meeting to share information about the phone applications he uses for people who are blind. Karen will also share issues for people who use wheelchairs/scooters. Here's the link to SCODE: <https://www.scodemeetup.org/>

**MINUTES.** The motion to approve June's minutes was approved.

**ADJOURNMENT.** Tricia closed the meeting at 3:05.

**SUBMITTED BY:** David Cameron, co-secretary