

MINUTES

Advocacy & Abilities Committee Meeting

November 21, 2017

Attendees: Beth Marmolejos Chair, Cynthia Miller, Ruth Patterson, Dr. Lorenzo Puertas, Priscilla Wade, Marcia McNeel, Melody Bundy, Sandy LaCorte,

Welcome and Introductions

Beth Marmolejos, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

Minutes

Minutes were reviewed and accepted.

Nomination of Vice Chair

Beth noted the committee needs to nominate a Vice Chair because there is a need to help with follow through with some of the responsibilities. Ruth Patterson nominated Sandy LaCorte for Vice Chair. Priscilla Wade second the motion. All were in favor. The motion was carried. Beth noted the reason for a Vice Chair is because the Advocacy & Abilities Committee need to be more visible and/or active Sandy has the drive and will get the committee out there.

Beth noted the Advocacy & Abilities Committee needs to participate more in the events the Workforce Development Board is part of for example if there is an event at the Chambers of Commerce we could have a table to represent the committee. Beth noted Ruth does a great job representing the Advocacy & Abilities Committee at the Job Fairs. Ruth noted DVRS is also present at the fairs to represent the disabled. Beth noted the DVRS is an intricate part of the committee and needs to be at the table.

Disability Awareness Event & Other Initiatives

Beth asked the members to refer to the flyer in the packet and noted the Advocacy & Abilities Committee will be taking part in the Disability Awareness Day which is the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities sponsored by S&P Global in New York, New York. Sandy will be on the panel and anyone else who may be interested to let her know. Beth asked if any members who would like to attend to support our committee go on line and register. Beth will send the link to register via email. Beth asked Melody if NJTIP could attend because transportation is

important and needed. Possibly have transportation speak as well.

Sandy noted there will be a resource table and ask the committee to get some promotional materials that can be distributed and also get a banner or table cloth with the Workforce Development Board logo.

Dr. Lorenzo Puertas mentioned every time the committee meet there are a lot of needs and there is no solution. Is it possible when attending the event to find a representative maybe from Sweden who could come and present on the comprehensive needs because Sweden has a master plan for transportation and all of the needs for disabled individuals. Beth noted Harris who is on her committee for PROSPANICA the UN Chapters we could connect with her and bring someone to speak. Beth noted she is fully aware that United States may be one of the last countries who is not part of comprehensive needs of the disabled.

Beth asked the committee members to think about other initiatives the committee can do for example since the committee is tapping into the ABLE group because most corporations have employer resource group or social resource group focus on LGBT, ABLE, APEX they have a budget to help from a community stand point to get involved into initiatives that the community is doing.

Beth noted she is trying to find out if there is an opportunity for the Advocacy & Abilities Committee to attend and speak about the Workforce Development Board, what we are doing as a committee, the protocols and host an awareness training. Possibly get corporate dollars for our committee.

Beth asked Sandy to keep a list of action items and remind her to send out a letter to Manny Morales at UPS who is the chair. Beth will talk with Dr. Chris Irving for approval since the employers are not coming to us, we can go to them. Sandy noted that many of these organizations have community dollars but the committee would have to go through the Human Resource Department and do the training in order to tap into the corporate dollars. Beth noted this initiative could be a benefit and open doors for many of the committee members and is a two way street.

Ruth noted the committee should also invite Meadow Link to come and partner with the committee because their organization also provides transportation and the committee could tap into the disability aspect of their

organization. Beth noted the committee could offer Meadow Link to attend the meeting and have a training on how to work with people with disabilities. Beth asked Melody if she could be the contact person and report back to the committee. Beth noted she could ask Gary from POAC who does much of the Passaic County Police Officers Trainings for transportation.

Beth noted that she will follow-up with Dr. Chris Irving about the New Jersey Convention for Autism NJ which is a huge conference and would like to know if there is funding for our committee to attend to have representation to observe and listen to what is happening. Also ask Dr. Irving if there is a statewide disability committee event or meeting that our committee needs to be part of to please inform the committee.

Sandy noted there is a committee in Bergen County and maybe we could piggy back on their model because they have success in what they are doing not to re-invent the wheel. Beth mentioned there was a meeting with Bergen County Director of the Workforce Development Board, Freeholder Director, Freeholder Bruce James & Sandi Lazzara, and Dr. Chris Irving in reference to the Project Search Program but nothing has come from that meeting yet. Beth noted Sandy could ask if members from the committee can come to the Bergen County meetings and Beth will send an email to Sandi Lazzara asking if Cecelia Feeley who participated in the meeting as a reminder to find out what is next. Freeholder Bruce James is engaged in the advocacy for the disabled and may be the point person to contact.

Melody noted Bergen County did a road show where they went to rotary clubs and talked about the importance of hiring individuals with disabilities. Beth stated that would be good because Wayne has a rotary club and she could ask if the committee could have a presentation. Sandy noted she has presented for a rotary club in Clifton and created a packet. Beth asked Sandy to send the information to Cynthia to make copies.

Beth noted for the next meeting gather all of the materials for the presentation and we will have a dry run to approve the content. The committee will try to do some of the activities in the first quarter and second quarter of 2018. The committee will try to compile a calendar for the year which Beth and Sandy will work on.

Wrap-Up

The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 a.m.
The Schedule for the next meeting: TBD
