

MAYOR'S ROUNDTABLE ON DISABILITY ISSUES

Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2017

Present: Mayor Joseph Sinnott, Mayor-Elect Joseph Schember, Mas Sala, Alan Dunfee, Krissy Dimitrovski, Paige Huggins, Kim Brown, Charlotte Scalise, Chris Cowan, Chris Gerhart, LeAnn Parmenter, Katherine Reim, Freda Tepfer, Renee Lamis, Abby Skinner, Debra Smith, Vance Duncan, Diana Ames

1). **Welcome**

Meeting was opened by Mas Sala welcoming everyone in attendance.

Mayor Sinnott introduced Mayor-elect Joseph Schember who will assume office January 2018. Mayor Sinnott also thanked Roundtable members for their commitment and involvement in the Mayor's Roundtable.

After Mayor Sinnott's comments – everyone was given an opportunity to introduce themselves as well as provide what agency they represented, if applicable.

The Sign-in sheet was circulated for signature by those present.

2). **Old Business**

LeAnn Parmenter (City of Erie Traffic Engineer) provided clarification of the process to be implemented when submitting a concern regarding obstructed paths of travel in Construction areas – specifically for the visually impaired. Ms. Parmenter stated that, moving forward, all concerns of this nature should be directed to the City Traffic Engineer (LeAnn Parmenter) and she will address the concern.

Freda Tepfer provided a brief demonstration with a walking stick identical to the type used by the visually impaired. Freda stressed that the walking sticking is the only means by which a visually impaired individual can navigate the streets – if there is not some type of barricade – that can be detected – in far enough advance of the construction site – the visually impaired individual runs a greater risk of becoming injured. Ms. Parmenter will follow through with Fred Tepfer regarding her specific concerns.

3). **New Business**

(SafeTown)

A question had been raised during the Mayor's Roundtable regarding the existence of a central registry of individuals that would be maintained so that Emergency personnel had access to where individuals with disabilities reside in the event of a crisis such as a weather event, or any other potentially catastrophic event requiring evacuation and where assistance with that evacuation would be needed for individuals with disabilities.

After discussion with Bruce Eicher (Erie County Emergency Mgmt.) - it was learned that SafeTown - a link on the County's website - allows for individuals to register their name, address, location of residence, specification of floor number (1st, 2nd, floor for example), etc. The information is strictly confidential, and it provides information to Emergency Personnel as to the location of individuals with disabilities.

The SafeTown link is now available on the City of Erie website where individuals may register.

3). **Subcommittee Reports**

Emergency Services Subcommittee
(Tracy Witherspoon)

No new information reported/provided.

Education/Diversity Training/Employment
(Diana Ames/Jessica Molczan)

Diana Ames reports that the subcommittee continues to review housing options for those individuals who are in the range of low to very low income. Diana asserts that barriers to employment and other opportunities (housing, etc.) continue to exist for individuals who have criminal backgrounds, a history of Mental Illness, etc. Diana states that the biggest challenge to overcome is that of stigma. The subcommittee continues to discuss ways to eliminate some of those barriers, and hopes to continue to educate the community - more specifically landlords and employers whom she believes seem to share the same belief, contributing to the ongoing existence of barriers.

Accessibility/Mobility/Transportation
(Passle Helminski/Kim Brown)

Passle discussed the new billing system that is mandated by PennDOT's new Eco-system, and is implemented by the LIFT. Passle also comments that there is a driver shortage for the LIFT, which has brought on other challenges. Passle voices optimism that the new billing system will eventually be fully understood by various agencies, and less issues will arise as a result.

Housing/Homelessness
(Mas Sala)

There was no new information to report for this sub-committee. It was explained, however, that this subcommittee has experienced low attendance for some time. It was mutually agreed at the last Housing/Homelessness meeting, that we would meet on a quarterly basis, unless it became necessary to meet more frequently.

With that said – the next Housing/Homelessness subcommittee meeting will be Friday, February 9, 2018 @ 11:00 am in RM 500 – here in City Hall.

5). **Meeting Schedule for 2017**

- February 15, 2018
- May 17, 2018
- August 23, 2018
- November 15, 2018

All meetings begin at 2:00 pm and are held in the Conference Room (2nd Floor) at the Intermodal.