

October 8, 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Accessible Communities Advisory Committee (ACAC) Meeting Notes

The Accessible Communities Advisory Committee (ACAC) met on Tuesday, October 8, 2019, 10:30 – 11:45am at the Cowlitz County Administration Building, 3rd floor meeting room. Time was available before and after the meeting for networking and testing the new accessible voting unit.

Meeting participants were:

Tiffany Ames, Life Works/The ARC of Cowlitz County
Linda Brigham, Highlands Neighborhood Association
Allen Earl, Cowlitz Tribe
Rachel Facer-Stone, Cowlitz County Elections
Carolyn Fundingsland, Cowlitz County Auditor
Star Garcia, South Kelso Neighborhood Association
Kay Gunter, Cowlitz Community Network
Tabitha Hayden, City of Longview
Haley Johnson, Cowlitz County Elections
Tim Krueger, GRBHO Ombudsman MH
Daniel Ledgett, Governor's Committee for Disabilities and Employment
Brian Loos, City of Longview/Longview Accessibility Advisory Committee
Maggie Lund, HSC
Susan Marion, Housing Opportunities of SW Washington
Evelynn Marquez, Cowlitz County Health and Human Services
Mary Kate Morgan, Lower Columbia College
Nikki Palm, Community Member
Allan Rudberg, Housing Opportunities of SW Washington
Susan Schwartz, Community Member
Jennifer Shaffer, DDA
Sheila Sharp, Goodwill
MaryAlice Wallis, City of Longview
Benton Waterous, Workforce SW Washington
Sharon Weinhold, Cowlitz County Elections
Carla Jo Whitson, Brain Injury Alliance of Washington
Chelsea Williams, The ARC
Linda Wilson, DAV Van Transit

At the meeting, participants:

- Heard a brief summary of the Governor's Committee Report
- Received an update from the three committees on their project and status
- Met the Governor's Committee representative and learned more about the Committee
- Heard an Elections Update, 2019 and 2020

Meeting participants were welcomed to the second meeting of the ACAC in 2019 and thanked for their attendance. Introductions were made around the room.

The Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment visited Cowlitz County on November 15 and 16, 2018. Committees were formed to address three recommendations from the report:

- 1- Build a community education and resource system
- 2- Create a volunteer program to reduce service gaps
- 3- Improve access and the safety of pedestrians and people with disabilities

Evelynn Marquez presented information about the resource system. After reviewing other resource lists, the committee decided to pursue including Cowlitz County organizations into 211info. Many organizations were already included and others are now working to get included. Evelynn (and Laura Du Plooy) created a spreadsheet of all organizations included in 211info and those they are aware of that may or may not be included. Evelynn will email the list of organizations they are still reviewing to ACAC members and ask for information about them, e.g., do they still exist, has their name changed, etc. Once organizations are included in 211info, the burden to keep the information current will be on 211info that connects with each organization once a year to verify their information, and the organizations to notify 211info of any needed changes. 211info provides free marketing materials and the capability to provide various reports on the use of the system. Star indicated there seemed to be inconsistency in terminology, e.g., Food Bank vs Food Pantry, and it was having an impact on finding resources. She said she would prefer to update information via APP vs website.

MaryAlice Wallis and Carla Jo Whitson provided an update on the volunteer program to close gaps in services. Many organizations were contacted that had or might have had a volunteer program that could be expanded. Some of the programs that had existed were gone and others were not adequate for this purpose. The committee linked with Evelynn and learned about 211info. It was determined that 211info has the capability to add a link or app that could include volunteer opportunities. The committee is working with 211info to get this feature added.

Tabitha Hayden and Brian Loos gave an update on the work that is being done in Longview to improve access for people with disabilities. RiverCities Transit released a PSA in November to increase driver awareness of pedestrians, issued reflective lanyards to pedestrians, purchased solar lights and enhanced pathways to transit. The Longview Accessible Advisory Committee (AAC) has gained approval for new ADA ramps, accessible ADA doors in City Hall, bathroom access improvements, new enhancements at Archie Anderson Park, and better signage, striping and parking at various locations. Focus is to serve the most people at the least cost. The Longview City Council is discussing "complete streets" which includes safe and accessible pedestrian walkways and has recently hired a new engineer that will work on these issues.

All three committees have made remarkable progress and have improved access to information and made many other improvements.

Daniel Ledgett, born and raised in Cowlitz County is a new member of the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment. He reported that the role and mission of the Committee is changing to Governor's Committee on Disability and Accessibility. He was impressed with the work the three committees have done, said funding is still available through the Committee and he is willing to help in any way he can.

Rachel Facer-Stone said the next election is the General Election on November 5. Ballots will be mailed on October 18; Voters' Pamphlets should be arriving at every house a week before

the ballots. Postage is not required to return a ballot. Ballot boxes have been enhanced for security. People can register to vote electronically up to 8 days before an election; people can register in-person up until 8pm on Election Day. The Elections Department is hosting an Open House on October 29 and people can get a tour of the entire election process. Call for an appointment if interested.

Around the Room/Upcoming Events/Changes:

Cowlitz Tribe Pow Wow is October 19 at the Clark County Events Center (Flyer Attached).

Goodwill has a new director, Victoria Skinner. Goodwill is revamping their computer skills training.

LCC is hosting a motivational speaker, Steve Ferreira, on Wednesday, October 16, 11:30 – 1:30pm at the Rose Center. The event is open to the public. (Flyer Attached)

RiverCities is completing the new transit center. It may open in 2019, ahead of schedule. They are contemplating free youth bus passes.

Workforce SW WA has a summer work program for people with disabilities that has been successful. Also hosted student DVR training for credit.

Cowlitz County Health and Human Services, Homeless Connect will be on January 24, 2020.

Brain Injury Alliance of WA meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 11:30 at Pietros.

The Cowlitz County Expo/Stand-down will be November 18, 10-2 at Elks Lodge in the chapel.

WorkSource/ESD, veteran's service representative is planning outreach in TriCities.

Housing Opportunities for SWWA, wait list closed, lot of people looking for housing. Issuing vouchers, looking for another case manager.

New Cowlitz County Blind Group, for low vision and blind, meets the last Saturday of every month at the Library, 1-2:30pm.

Highlands Neighborhood, trunk or treat, Saturday October 26, 4-6pm, Archie Anderson Park.

ARC, Friday night game night for families, 4-6pm; People First every other Friday. New Holland group starting in November.

South Kelso Neighborhood, signed year lease at Mall, food and clothing bank needs donations, gearing up for adopt a family program at Christmas.

Several people looked at the accessible voting unit. Linda Brigham invited Elections officials to visit the Highlands for voter registration and other voting information.

Sharon Weinhold
Cowlitz County Elections
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