

October 23, 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Disability Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, October 23, 2013

The Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) met on October 23, 2013 at the Cowlitz County Administration Building, General Meeting Room. The meeting agenda is attached.

Attendees were:

Amy Hair, Cowlitz County Chief Deputy Auditor  
Carolyn Myers, Cowlitz County Elections Supervisor  
Bernie Altman, AARP and NAMI  
Regina Beer, Cowlitz County Elections  
Karla Black, Community  
Ardell Burns, Services for the Blind  
Steve Chapman, LCC  
Kathleen Chilson, Goodwill  
Lisa Garcia, Blind Community  
Cindy Helms Jarrell, Goodwill  
Chris Hulings, Southwest Agency on Aging and Disabilities  
Suzanne Isaacson, Catholic Community Services/Volunteer Chore Services  
Carol King, Cowlitz County Elections  
Tina McCully, Catholic Community Services/Volunteer Chore Services  
Marjorie Pitcher, Community  
Susan Schwartz, Community  
Sunnie Smith, Parent Child Assistance Program/previously Disability Resources  
Terry Sutter, Lifeworks  
Linda Wilson, Disabled American Veterans  
Sharon Weinhold, Disability Outreach Coordinator

Welcome and Introductions. The Committee members welcomed our speaker, Chris Hulings, Southwest Agency on Aging and Disabilities. Everyone introduced themselves and identified the organization or group they were representing.

Presentation/Discussion.

Wellness is important and has an impact on voting. When a person is stressed or worried about their health or resources, it may pose a barrier to voting. The person may be overwhelmed with trying to take care of themselves and/or family and not have the energy, time or desire to research candidates and issues. It may impact their decision to vote. Chris Hulings, Information & Assistance Specialist, Southwest Agency of Aging and Disabilities (SWAAD), was invited to discuss the wellness resources available to seniors and others in the community and how to access them. She also is an insurance

navigator, and is involved in helping people enroll for insurance in conjunction with the Affordable Care Act. She was asked to provide information and respond to questions regarding that role.

The SWAAD serves five Southwest Washington counties – Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, Klickitat, Skamania and Clark. The SWAAD mission is to promote Independence, Choice, Well-Being, and Dignity for persons aged 60 and over and adults with disabilities and their families through a comprehensive system of home and community-based services. The services include: Senior information & assistance, Case management, FCSP services, In home care services, Nursing services, Senior nutrition, Senior transportation, Legal referral services and caregiver support, and Advocacy for older persons, adults with disabilities, and family caregivers. Funding for these services are provided by various Federal and State funding sources. As a result, most of the services are free to the clients, on a voluntary donation basis, or available on a sliding fee schedule.

SWAAD provides information and assistance, and links or refers people to the resources they need. They also serve as advocates for these folks. SWAAD also is responsible for the Gatekeeper Program, and trains community members, organizations who serve elderly clients and persons with disabilities, and local businesses to identify at-risk older adults and people with disabilities living in the community. SWAAD is available to train volunteer gatekeepers to identify vulnerable adults. .

Chris talked briefly about the insurance enrollment process and answered questions on who should enroll and the advantages or disadvantages of enrolling if a person is on Medicare or Medicaid. She offered to meet with anyone interested in reviewing the details for their individual situation.

The attendees expressed their appreciation for a very informative and interesting presentation.

#### Elections Update

Carolyn provided an update of the General Election. Ballots (58,657) were mailed on October 18. As of October 23, 1,964 ballots had been returned. The ballot contains 2 state initiatives, 5 state advisory votes and local, nonpartisan races. Carolyn showed General Election Voter Turnout Statistics from 2009 through 2012. It showed that turnout in odd year elections is light, around 50%. This is because there are generally no partisan or statewide races on the odd year election ballot and many of the local races are uncontested.

Carolyn encouraged attendees to check out the eSlate, our accessible voting equipment, located just outside the Elections Department and vote on the eSlate if they choose. The eSlate assists voters who have visual, physical and intellectual disabilities navigate and vote their ballot. The eSlate will be available during normal working hours and through 8pm on Election Day.

Navigating the Elections Website.

Carolyn displayed the information available on the Cowlitz County Elections website. During an Election, the website shows the sample ballot, and contains an electronic and audio version of the Local Voters' Pamphlet and Online Voter's Guide (State Voters' Pamphlet). As a new addition, there is up-to-date information on the ballot return rate. In addition, there is information about the election deadlines, ballot drop box locations, and other materials

Carolyn demonstrated other aspects of the website. For example, voters can go to Register to Vote and then My Vote to check their voter registration information; update their voter registration information online, e.g., residential and mailing address; track their ballot to see if it has been received in the Elections Department; see their voting history; and review the districts and elected officials (federal, state, local, and judicial) for their jurisdiction. In addition, there is candidate information, political party information, and precinct information.

Carolyn invited anyone to stop by the Elections Department at any time to view the elections process. She said it is important that the process be transparent. Susan Schwartz mentioned that there are video screens available in the deli area and Auditor's Office so people can watch and hear the Opening Board and Canvass Board in action.

Attendees thanked Carolyn for an interesting presentation.

Sharon Weinhold  
Cowlitz County Elections  
360-577-3005