

August 12, 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Disability Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, August 12, 2010

The Disability Advisory Committee met on Thursday, August 12, 2010 at the Cowlitz County Administration Building. The meeting agenda is attached.

Attendees were:

Carolyn Myers, Elections Supervisor
Maurine Coon, LCOD/LCCB, AARP
Audrey Jolley, Disability Resources
Anita Hopkins, Lower Columbia CAP
Bernie Altman, Mental Health Ombudsman
Phyllis Martin, Martin Bookkeeping & Tax Service, Citizen
Sharon Weinhold, Voter Outreach Coordinator

Members who did not attend, but may have provided input for the meeting or voted on the eSlate were:

Kristina Swanson, Cowlitz County Auditor
Sunnie Smith, Emergency Shelter
Linda Wilson, DAV Transportation
Karla Black, Disability Resources
Pam Howe, Residential Resources
Linda Jaques, Longview Organization for the Blind
Linda Ross, VFW 3017
Judy Chamberlin, Disability Resources
Heather Ferguson, HOPE Project
Diane Tischer, Wahkiakum County Auditor

Because there was a new attendee, everyone introduced themselves and said a few words about the organization they were representing.

Disability Advisory Committee members briefly addressed for the new attendee the goals of the Disability Advisory Committee and the accessibility improvements Cowlitz County has made since our first meeting in July 2006. We also talked about our outreach efforts and results. Members were asked if they had other ideas for outreach opportunities. Audrey suggested we consider demonstrating the new voting equipment, the eSlate, at Commodities Day at the main Community Action Program (CAP) office. Commodities Day is held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month, and the next date is August 17. Anita said there is a lot of traffic and it would give people a good opportunity to view and test the eSlate. She suggested we contact Lois for details and to schedule a date for bringing the eSlate. Sharon will contact Lois and try to schedule a date before the General Election.

We reviewed the status of the 2010 Primary Election. The ballots were mailed on July 30. Almost 55,800 ballots were mailed. As of August 11, 11,116 ballots (20%) had been returned. Over 60% of the ballots were returned through the accessible ballot drop boxes located throughout the county. The eSlate is ready for use. The goal of the eSlate is to make voting easier for persons with disabilities so they can vote privately and independently. Several Disability Advisory Committee members who could not attend the meeting voted on the eSlate during their lunch period and other members voted before the meeting. We continue to identify potential eSlate users and actively market the eSlate.

We discussed recent activities undertaken to make voters aware of the eSlate.

Senior Connections Fair. On May 1, we participated in the Senior Connections Fair, and brought the demo eSlate. There was considerable interest in the eSlate and many attendees tested it. People were happy to learn equipment like this is available for voters with disabilities and the elderly.

Goodwill. On June 23, we gave a presentation to the Goodwill staff on our accessibility improvements and demonstrated the eSlate. There was good discussion and the presentation was well received. Information on the eSlate was provided for any Goodwill employees or clients that might be interested.

Cowlitz County Fair. We brought the demo eSlate to the Cowlitz County Fair, from August 5 – 8. Many fairgoers viewed and/or tested the eSlate and picked up information on the eSlate. We also had a senior essay contest at the fair, and the contest drew seniors to the fair booth. Many took the opportunity to check out the eSlate.

The Elections Office emails weekly mailers during elections and monthly mailers between elections. The mailers discuss current activities in the elections office, give the status of the elections, and invite people to vote on the eSlate. The mailers are sent to activity directors in retirement homes and nursing homes, organizations and agencies that serve the elderly and people with disabilities, and other people who expressed an interest in receiving the mailers.

Sharon discussed the grant funding received to prepare a Public Service Announcement (PSA) showing the eSlate and encouraging people who might benefit from using it to vote on the eSlate. KLTV filmed the PSA; Kris Swanson and Audrey Jolley were the stars. KLTV is airing the announcement on channels 9 (local), 28 (education), and 29 (government), and also showing it in conjunction with Local Matters. The PSA is generic, and can be used during every election to market the eSlate. The airing will begin 20 days before each election and will end on Election Day. The PSA also has been added to the Elections website. Disability Advisory Committee members viewed the PSA.

Carolyn and Audrey suggested we look at placing eSlate information on message boards in the county. Possible locations discussed were billboards at high traffic locations, the Expo Center, or LCC. Some funding remains from the grant, and using the funds to place

eSlate information on message boards would be within the grant parameters. Sharon will explore this further and report back to the members at the next meeting.

The Elections website is updated. Information included on the website includes: Pamphlet on Voter Accessibility Enhancements, Ballot Drop Box Locations, Disability Advisory Committee meeting minutes, and the Accessibility Video on the eSlate.

We discussed upcoming opportunities to market our accessibility improvements and the eSlate. Lower Columbia College's Back to School Week is during September 20-24. The Elections Office has been invited in the past to participate in the activities with a Voter Registration Table. We would like to participate again and also would like to demonstrate the eSlate. People to contact are the ASLCC Vice President of Student Affairs and the Special Populations Coordinator. Sharon will make contact in early September.

Everyone was thanked for their attendance and participation at the meeting. Members were encouraged to vote on the eSlate if they had not already voted.

Sharon Weinhold
Cowlitz County Elections
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