

August 13, 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Disability Advisory Committee, Meeting Minutes, August 13, 2008

The Disability Advisory Committee met on August 13, 2008 at 10:00 am at the Cowlitz County Administration Building, Conference Room B.

Attendees were:

Kristina Swanson, Cowlitz County Auditor
Audrey Jolley, previously from disAbility Resources
Maurine Coon, LCOD/LCCB
Heather Ferguson, Disability Outreach Advocate
Sharon Weinhold, Voter Outreach Coordinator

The agenda for the meeting is attached.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Outreach Advocate. Heather Ferguson, the Disability Outreach Advocate, was introduced to the members. Heather is a recent college graduate with a sociology degree. Her focus is voter outreach to persons with disabilities and seniors. Her work includes voter education, voter registration, encouraging voter participation, improving voter accessibility, and giving all people an opportunity to vote privately and independently. She is working in the temporary grant funded position approved by the Secretary of State in March. The Disability Advisory Committee had a role in gaining approval of the grant.

Retirement Home/Senior Home Visits. Visits were made to various retirement and nursing homes in the area, including Crawford House, Delaware, Monticello Park, Somerset, etc. The purpose was to discuss the Top 2 Primary, demonstrate the AutoMARK and get resident interest in the upcoming Primary and General (Presidential) Election. The committee members made several suggestions on other places to visit, including Brook Hollow (Ruby Keating), Herons Point (Fred Handley, 423-5362), Robins Addition, Canterbury Inn, and the Village Retirement Home (Nora).

Contact List. At the suggestion of the Disability Advisory Committee, we prepared and continue to update a contact list that includes the points of contact for all organizations that support persons with disabilities. The contact list includes the name of the organization/facility, contact person, address, email address, and phone number.

Friday Mailers. Heather emails a mailer to all of the points of contact each Friday. The topic of the mailer is what is important for the week. Mailer topics have included the Top 2 Primary, the AutoMARK, election calendar, election events, etc.

Presentations to Groups. Presentations on the Top 2 Primary and demonstrations of the AutoMARK were given to Veterans groups, AARP, and CAP. Several other demonstrations are scheduled. The members expressed disappointment when they heard the senior centers were not willing to allow presentations. Maurine pointed out that the benefit was not only to the seniors attending, but also gives those seniors information so they can get the word out to others that could not attend. We agreed, and will contact the senior center again.

Hot Senior Tuesdays. Heather participated in Hot Senior Tuesdays, a KEDO radio program that addresses senior issues. The program airs once a month on Tuesdays at 11:00 am. The program Heather participated in was dedicated to the Primary and election process.

County Fair, AutoMARK. About a dozen people received a demonstration of the AutoMARK at the fair. Others took a look at it and asked how it worked. It was nice that the AARP fair booth was across the isle from ours, as they sent people over to see the AutoMARK.

Senior Essay Contest. In the past, we had a lot of kids activities at our fair booth. We had voting for the fair mascot, coloring contests, and essay contests. This year, we wanted to reach out to seniors as well. We had a senior essay contest, and seniors were invited to write on “Who was your favorite president during your lifetime? Why?” Fourteen essays were submitted. The essays were interesting and thoughtful. Because of the excellent submissions, the judges declared three winners rather than one. Maurine Coon, who was selected as one of the winners, read her essay to the group. It was well researched and addressed the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its importance to persons with disabilities.

Local Voters’ Pamphlet on CD. Central Washington University prepared local voters’ pamphlets on CD. These CDs are available for distribution free of charge. Audrey Jolley used the CD to prepare for her voting and thought they were a great idea. She asked for extra copies to give to her friends who had asked to borrow hers. The CDs are available at the same time that the hard copy voters’ pamphlets are distributed and can be mailed to interested voters at their request. The members suggested that the CDs could be offered to libraries, retirement/senior homes, and churches.

Coasters. A sample coaster design was discussed at the meeting. We ordered 10,000 colored coasters and expect to receive them in about 20 days. One side of the coaster has the “Are you Ready to Vote?” theme and encourages voters to keep their voter information up to date. The other side of the coaster addresses accessibility and encourages voters who want help in completing their ballot or know of someone who needs help to contact the elections office. There was a lot of discussion on where the coasters could be distributed. We believe local restaurants, such as Azteca or Masthead, will be interested. Other suggestions were Toppers, La Hacienda Real Grill, Panda Inn, and Omelettes & More.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES.

The members liked the actions that were ongoing, and agreed we should continue them.

The members thought we should continue to pursue senior lunches. It is an excellent forum to get our information out.

The members agreed we should contact senior groups at churches. Many were “on vacation” for the summer months and we agreed to contact them again in September. Calvary Community Church and Toutle Lake Christian Church were two that members mentioned.

VOTE ON THE AUTOMARK.

Members were given an opportunity to vote their Primary ballots on the AutoMARK.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

Sharon Weinhold
Cowlitz County Elections

DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA, 8/13/08

INTRODUCTIONS

RECENT ACTIVITIES

- OUTREACH ADVOCATE**
- RETIREMENT HOME/SENIOR HOME VISITS**
- CONTACT LIST**
- FRIDAY MAILERS**
- PRESENTATIONS TO GROUPS**
- HOT SENIOR TUESDAYS**
- COUNTY FAIR, AUTOMARK**
- SENIOR ESSAY CONTEST**
- LOCAL VOTER'S PAMPHLET ON CD**
- COASTERS**

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- CONTINUE ACTIVITIES ABOVE**
- SENIOR LUNCHESES**
- SENIOR GROUPS AT CHURCHES**

VOTE ON AUTOMARK