

October 13, 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Disability Advisory Committee

The Disability Advisory Committee met on October 12, 2006 at the Cowlitz County Administration Building. Attendees were:

Kristina Swanson, Cowlitz County Auditor
Sunnie Smith, Disability Resources
Maurine Coon, LCOD/LCCB
Judy Chamberlin, Disability Resources
Karla Black, Disability Resources
Carolyn Myers, Elections Deputy
Sharon Weinhold, Voter Outreach Coordinator

Absent were:

Mike Freeman, NFB (provided comments and suggestions)
David Lord, WPAS (provided comments and suggestions)
Geri Rister, ARC
Mary Putka, LWV

The meeting agenda follows:

Primary Election, What did we do? What were the results?
General Election, What have we done so far? How should we proceed?

Primary Election.

What we did. As a group, we ...

- Prepared an AutoMARK flyer
- Sent the flyer to Agencies, the Transit Authority, and County Libraries
- Demonstrated the AutoMARK at the County Fair
- Demonstrated the AutoMARK to the Daily News (resulted in nice article)
- Sunnie and Maurine submitted letters to the editor and they were published
- WA Protection & Advocacy System Newsletter included a positive news story on Cowlitz County's efforts to improve accessible voting for those with disabilities

What were the results?

- Cowlitz County: One person voted on the AutoMARK for the Primary.
- State-wide, results:
 - 46 AutoMARKS, 20 Votes
 - Thurston most productive,
 - o 16 AutoMARKS, 10 votes (3 from advisory cmte members)
 - o Marketed; prepared flyer; got newspaper coverage
 - o 4 mobile AutoMARKS, retirement homes (not successful) and transit center (pretty successful)
 - o 13 AutoMARKs staffed at drop sites on election day, none used
 - o Plan to continue for General Election; concluded one election is not enough to really test AutoMARK use
 - Other counties plan to continue their efforts into the General Election

General Election

What we have done so far.

- Updated AutoMARK flyer for the General Election
- Placed flyer on Cowlitz County Website
- Sent Press Release announcing availability of AutoMARKs to newspapers (Daily News, Columbian, Reflector), TV and radio (KLTV, KUKN/KLYK), Clark and Lewis Counties, and Office of Secretary of State
- Included notice in Local Voter's Pamphlet of availability of AutoMARKs
- Scheduled presentation to ARC students for 10/26

How do we want to proceed?

The group wanted to continue our efforts. They recognized that the primary has less interest and lower participation, which may have contributed to the lower turnout. The group suggested additional efforts that should be pursued for the General Election and beyond. They recognized that since we are less than 4 weeks from election day, some of the efforts may not be possible before the election.

Suggestions....

- Maurine Coon suggested we contact Patricia Joyce, 575-1931. Patricia is visually impaired and works for KLTV. She suggests we call KLTV, 636-3110, and say Patricia recommended we call. KLTV may be interested in doing a program on the AutoMARK. Carolyn recommended we invite KLTV to an already scheduled AutoMARK presentation, perhaps the presentation to ARC.
- The group thought we should contact radio stations and see if they would be willing to mention the AutoMARK. Kris Swanson thought they would in conjunction with their election programming.
- Sunnie thought we should place an AutoMARK machine for set days and times at the Transit Center in Longview. To get the word out, Maurine suggested we ask the drivers to announce periodically when the AutoMARK will be on location and for users to bring their ballots.
- Karla recommended that we contact the lady at the Longview Library that delivers books to homes. She could deliver an AutoMARK flyer with the books to market of the availability of the AutoMARKs.
- Maurine, Sunnie, and Karla suggested we send AutoMARK flyers to pharmacies, White Cross Orthopedic stores, and paramedical groups and ask them to post them.
- Kris thought TV would be a good source and suggested we contact channels 2, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 32. They could include AutoMARK information with their news.
- There was some discussion about taking AutoMARKs to retirement and assisted living homes. Maurine cautioned that it is important to work with an “interested” activity director.
- Judy suggested we send AutoMARK flyers to the housing authorities.
- The group said we should consider sending flyers to the Division of Vocational Resources, DSHS, and DDD.

- Mike Freeman suggested we get the Columbia Council for the Blind more involved. He also thought we should find a good List Serve source and use that to electronically send out flyers to potential interested parties.
- David Lord stated that he had in the last week met with the WA Secretary of State's Office and they are amenable to pursuing a state-wide campaign to market voting options and access to disabled voters. Sam Reed is planning to meet with disability advocates to get their input on how we could increase participation.
- David suggested we get in touch with OR county auditors to see what they are doing. He also recommended we get in touch with People First, Division of Developmental Disabilities. He agreed to provide contact information.

The advisory committee members concluded that we should pursue as many of the suggestions as possible for the General Election. Those that cannot be addressed before the election should be pursued in the future.

The committee would like to meet again after the General Election to review the results.

The minutes of this meeting will be sent to all attendees and members. Please pass the minutes on to others that may have an interest.

Sharon Weinhold
Cowlitz County Elections
Voter Outreach Coordinator
577-3005