

ACAC Meeting Minutes

5.3.23

In Attendance:

Carolyn Fundingsland

Hayley Johnson

Makenna Kuljis

Jill Page

Rachel Facer-Stone

Rashelle Douglas

Louise Brown

Mary Degraff-Gramelt

Chloe Wheeler

Sharon Weinhold

Jennifer Merry

Jacob Cole

Mary Alice Wallis

Introductions:

Carolyn Fundingsland began with introductions and history of the ACAC. ACAC's are different than a DAC (Disability Advisory Committee) and provides grant funding to local communities and allows collaboration for multiple organizations.

Jill Page presented the 2023 ACAC Plan to the committee. The ACAC must vote and approve the plan each year.

Louise Brown made a motion to accept the 2023 ACAC Plan. Carolyn Fundingsland seconded, and the motion was approved by committee members.

Makenna Kuljis introduced Jacob Cole, the presenter for this meeting.

Presentation:

Jacob Cole works at the Longview Public Library. The library has focused on providing accessibility to the community through various projects. One of their works in progress is the

mobile library service. It will cost approximately \$320,000, and they have raised \$180,000 so far. Donations can come from the community, non-profit organizations, and businesses. This service would allow the library to bring their services into the community from things like card sign-ups, book readings, events, and library assistance.

The library has increased their hours, their large print collection, magnification readers, large print keyboards, and reduced the number of tables in areas of the library to provide more accessibility to the community. There is also a library app with e-books and audiobooks. The e-books allow font adjustments, settings for dyslexic readers, and high-contrast color settings for better visibility.

The state provides the Talking Book & Braille Library at wtbbl.org. You can contact them with questions and assistance at 800-542-0866.

The library has also added a notary service for the public. There are 2 notaries available at the Longview Public Library. It's recommended to call ahead for an appointment to ensure someone is available to help.

Q & A:

Q – Do you have books for deaf, low vision, or blind community members? There are no books available with a video of ASL. Some people struggle with reading books or listening to audiobooks. These can be challenging for the deaf and blind community.

A – There are children's books and one adult book with deaf characters. The expansion of more accessible stories is a work in progress. Currently, there is 1 partially deaf librarian who speaks ASL who can help and provide referrals for those who request it. There are also books with simplified language, both for children and adults.

Q – Are those books easy to find?

A – No, but staff can help locate those books.

Q – Are your notary services limited?

A – No. This program began first in January and was advertised to the community. They saw approximately 27 customers in the first month. A lot of the people that used this service were those that couldn't afford the cost of notarizing so many documents, so it was a good experience to help the community. It has led to recognition of the burden that is placed on people who can't afford to go to a bank or other agency.

Q – How long will it take to get the Book Mobile?

A – It can take 14-18 months to get the Book Mobile. Longview Public Library is currently waiting in line.

Q – Project Read offered several services for the deaf and hearing impaired. Can you speak more to that?

A – There were about 100 volunteers in 2019, but 2020 reduced a lot of those numbers. They're finally in a position to get new service providers and are currently ordering supplies and finding volunteers. A training is being planned, and people are encouraged to contact the library to find more information about training and/or services.

Q – Can you speak to the Spanish books for both kids and adults?

A – The adult book section needs work. It tends to be that the Spanish books are translations from popular English novels, but the library wants input on what to order. Spanish readers may want things from their own community of authors and background.

- A recommendation was made to contact Spanish teachers in the community for recommendations.

Round Table:

Rachel discussed the upcoming Candidate Filing Week (May 15 – 19) as well as the Primary (August 1). Every primary or election, the assistive voting unit (AVU) is available for voters who are unable to vote their ballot in the standard way. It is available during the 18-day voting period until 8:00 PM on Election Night.

The library has an event May 5 at 6 PM for community members to learn how to grow dahlias. They also have an upcoming Author Festival on May 6 from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. The festival will celebrate local writers and their books. Authors from the surrounding areas are all invited to attend. Each author will have a table to promote and sell their book(s) and an opportunity to do a reading from their work. There will also be a ribbon cutting ceremony on May 13 at 10:00 AM for the Children's Mural, celebrating the City of Longview's centennial.

Louise Brown discussed the Cowlitz Community Network that works to improve and assist children, families, and friends. They have a \$30,000 grant to address issues with childcare needs. A lot of people rely on their friends or family members for childcare because there is not near enough childcare available within the community. They are going to use the grant to provide support.

Chloe Wheeler works for the Assessor's Office. There is a tax relief program available that provides exemptions for elderly and disabled people who qualify. Those that are 61 years old or older, or are disabled, who own and live on their property permanently and who makes \$40,000 or less in a year can have deductions applied to their taxes. This would exclude them from voter

approved levies and the state education levy. There is a bill that is waiting for the Governor's signature. By October, the office will know what the new exemptions are.

Contact:

360-577-3010

Mon – Thurs 7:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Rashelle Douglas and Jennifer Merry work with the City of Longview Accessibility Advisory Committee. They can make recommendations on improvements to the council. They assist with the Washington School for the Blind & Deaf and provide services. They have an upcoming meeting May 15 at 4:00 PM. A Teams Meeting link can be provided for those interested.

Mary DeGraaf-Gramelt is an ASL teacher for Longview School District for 6 years. She can connect with both the hearing and deaf community and can provide a different perspective.

Carolyn and Hayley wrapped up the meeting and thanked everyone in attendance.

Next meeting Oct. 4, 2023, at 11 AM.