



MEETING MINUTES  
Benton County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee (ACAC)  
April 16, 2020

In support of Governor Inslee’s directives on COVID19 and in the interest of members’ health and safety, the meeting of the Benton County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee was held by Skype at 2:00 pm on Thursday, April 16, 2020. Present at the meeting were committee members Brenda Chilton-Chair, Amanda Hatfield (County Elections Manager), Lorene Roe (Assistant to the County Auditor), Luz Rudd (sitting in for Chief Souza, Benton County Chief of Corrections), Shyanne Palmer (Communications Coordinator-Commissioners), and Deidra Beck-ACAC Coordinator. Due to lack of a quorum of members, no formal action could be taken.

As first order of the agenda, Brenda informed the committee that we had received resignation letters from Jason Erickson and Toni Ball. Since the time of our last meeting, January 16, 2020, two previously vacant positions as well as a currently vacant position have been filled. Our newest members approved by the Benton County Commissioners Resolution on March 31, 2020, are Chief Scott Souza-Chief of Benton County Corrections, Matthew West-citizen, and Judith Davis-citizen. As it stands now, we currently have one vacant position on the committee. Brenda stated that she hoped we could fill that position in the next month or so. She directed the committee that if anyone knew of any person that may be interested in applying, to please direct them to our website or encourage them to contact Deidra Beck. Deidra Beck stated that she was made aware of someone that had stated an interest but was unable to apply at that time. She will follow up on that person again. Shyanne shared that she had made a list of possible people that she thought may be interested so she would forward that information to Deidra Beck to contact them.

Brenda explained the reasons that it became necessary to cancel the two previous meetings. First, during the meeting in February, it was apparent that the new construction occurring in the parking lot of the Benton County’s Justice

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Center made it an accessible challenge, and secondly, the meeting in March had to be cancelled because of the COVID19 distancing directives, and there was not ample time to schedule a Skype meeting.

Our guest speaker, Bryan Bailey, was introduced. Bryan is the Athletic Director of the Prosser High School and is also currently the stand-in Principal of PHS. He was desirous of visiting our meeting as a member of Prosser’s Leadership Class to present their interest in a possible accessibility project. Shyanne explained that this is a group of professionals that focus on developing service projects among their local community. Bryan stated that, much like us, his committee shares the concern of accessibility for the disabled. In his capacity as the Athletic Director of PHS, he has become deeply aware of the lack of ADA compliance and some accessibility problems at the Prosser High School football stadium. The situation became acutely evident when a wheelchair bound student was unable to join in some special activities of her peers because of the inaccessible slope from the field to the top level of the stadium. He also pointed out that he was confident that the bathrooms did not have good accessible features and that the pathway from the field up to the bathrooms and the concession booth at the top level was much too steep with a surface area that is slippery and problematic. He explained that although a levy was passed to build a new Prosser High School, the stadium was not part of that bond. A decision, therefore, was made that the stadium would not be included in the remodel for the sake of fund sensitivity and any possible negative appearance to the community. Bryan reminded the committee that Prosser is a “big football town” but that this facility is used for more than just football games. All sports activities of the High School take place in it, as well as High School graduation, all the Grid Kid games, an annual activity that the High School hosts for children with special needs, and the Prosser Balloon Rally. Thus, this facility which often serves large crowds of people really needs to be updated to ADA compliance. The Leadership Committee began to investigate these concerns as a project of their own, but they quickly realized that it was a project too large for them to handle themselves. Shyanne, also a member of the Leadership Class, had recommended he contact our committee to find out whether we could help them. She shared that one concern she had about ACAC

partnering with them was that the Leadership Class only has a nine-month term per member which may not be long enough to take on a project of this scale. Brenda stated that this could serve as a perfect first opportunity to utilize our committee’s developing Site Evaluation List to determine the ADA compliance needs of the stadium. Bryan agreed to provide us with a written definition of what his committee feels needs to be done, and we would use his brief in conjunction with our site evaluation findings as a basis for a project funding proposal to the Governor’s disability committee, GCDE. Brenda recommended that we complete our design of a concise Site Evaluation Check List as soon as possible. Once completed, Deidra agreed to schedule a time with a few members to perform the site evaluation. Meanwhile, Deidra will seek clearer guidelines from the GCDE as to what the funding application process for this project would be. Brenda also encouraged Bryan to reach out to other service organizations in the Prosser community (i.e. the Rotary, Lions, or Kiwanis Clubs) to see if they would have an interest in partnering with the project in some way.

Shyanne, who is our lead on the development of our ACAC website, presented her ideas. She reminded us that the consensus of the committee after the December Workshop was that we would look at two options of developing a website; either we would design one of our own using a website developer, or we would link with the County’s existing website as our host. After looking closely at the content we would need to include in our website, she believes that for the consideration of the cost and convenience, it was most sensible to link with the County website. She stated that the disadvantage of using a website developer was that with an outside agency serving as our host, we would have little administrative access for changes or updates ourselves. On the other hand, because Shyanne has administrative access to the County website, she could perform these tasks easily and with no extra expense. Considering that we are established and associated with the county, and since the size complexity of our website would be small, she feels that the County option is the most ideal. Shyanne then demonstrated the ACAC portion of the County website that she had already created and has now embellished. All the information of what ACAC is, how it was established, what our goals are, its current members, and the meeting dates, agendas, and minutes

are all posted along with application information. Because our website is simple and concise, as the committee develops and grows in scale and projects, Shyanne can easily add to the site by making subpages that provide the option for the public to request site evaluations or suggest projects, etc.

Amanda noted that currently the Election Department is required to publish all ACAC (previously Disability Advisory Committee) agendas and meetings. She asked whether it was necessary that she do so now that the information is on the ACAC portion of the County website. Brenda stated she saw no need for duplication but requested that Amanda reach out to the Secretary of State's official that oversees Election Disability Advisory Committee requirements. With this direction, Shyanne requested that the meetings and agendas from the time of formulation be sent to her to post because she only has the most recent meeting information on the website. Deidra agreed to forward those to her.

We briefly covered the need to decide on a schedule of speakers. Deidra mentioned two persons who have stated an interest--Sheila Turner, with the Edith Bishel Center for the Blind, and Donna Tracy, with the Arc of the Tri-Cities (who prefers August or September as a speaking date). Matt Nash has recommended Paul, with Residential Services, and Deidra is in contact with Dave Reynolds, with Access 4All Spokane. Shyanne has a list of possible speakers that she will forward to Deidra to contact, and she recommended contacting the new Outreach Coordinator of Benton-Franklin Transit. She also reminded us that Matt Nash had brought up his concerns about the accessibility of the Toyota Center, and that perhaps their Director of Operations would be someone to contact, as well. Deidra will reach out to these that were suggested, and Brenda recommended we begin scheduling speakers starting with our June meeting.

Briefly before adjourning the meeting, Deidra presented some information she had about the funding availabilities. At an earlier meeting, it was stated that it was thought there was some funding available for speaker accommodations (travel expenses, etc.) for those we invited to our meetings. However, in speaking with Marilyn Crandall, the Chair of the Accessibility Communities Sub-Committee

of the GCDE, she learned that there is no funding for that purpose. Funding is provided for special accommodations for committee members to attend the meetings (such as sign language providers or special devices), but not for speaker expenses.

Our next meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2020. However, due to the unknown end date of the current 'stay in place' order for COVID19, no meeting place or method was established; all members will be notified once a decision is able to be made.

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.