



Meeting Minutes  
Workshop  
Benton County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee (ACAC)  
Thursday, May 20, 2021

The meeting of the Benton County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee was held in-person at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 20, 2021, at the Benton County Justice Center. Present at the meeting were committee members Matt Nash-Chair, Shyanne Palmus (Commissioner’s Office), Corp. Dallas Murry (Corrections), Matt West, Judith Davis, Gretchen Hormel, Teresa Payne, and Deidra Beck (Committee Coordinator). Amanda Hatfield-Vice-Chair (County Elections Manager) joined the meeting by Skype.

Matt Nash opened the meeting at 2:06 p.m. and asked each committee member to introduce themselves since they had not been able to meet in-person for over a year due to the COVID-19 public meetings closure.

Because the committee had agreed that this month’s meeting would be devoted to “whiteboarding” ideas for the new Short-Term Goals for 2021, Matt began the discussion of ideas for projects and focus plans for our goals. Deidra had provided each of the members a printed copy of the Long/Short Term Goals that were established in December of 2019 as well as a synopsis of notes from our guest speakers from 2020 as a reference point. She reminded the committee that the intention was that we coordinate this year’s short-term goals with those of our 5-year Long-Term goals.

It was decided that because our hour was short for this whiteboarding meeting, Deidra would list the suggestions given, and the committee would organize goals from them at our next meeting in June. The suggestions were as follows:

- Matt would like us to update our 211 list and provide hard copies at frequently visited facilities throughout the county as well as on Ben-Franklin busses.
  - A sub-committee to work on this was requested; Judith Davis, Matt West, and Matt Nash were appointed.

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- Matt Nash suggested that he'd like the committee to take a survey of people with disabilities throughout our community to ascertain from them what they believed were their most challenging issues.
- Judith would like us to request from other ACAC's in the state as to whether they had a list of community resources and other organizations that serviced the disabled.
  - Deidra shared a contact list that she developed prior to this committee forming that included such organizations.
- Judith would like to create a list similar to one she discovered from Vancouver, WA that presented the "Top 5 Wheelchair Excursions" or a list of the 20 Most Accessible Apartments.
  - Gretchen expressed hopes that we could connect with Visit Tri-Cities for a speaker to learn how we could partner in the development of these ideas and more.
- Amanda would like our committee to work with Ben-Franklin Transit to coordinate shuttling Benton County voters to the new Voting Center during Elections.
- Amanda suggested that we provide organizations that service the blind in our community information about voting accessibility.
- Shyanne discussed upgrading our webpage this year and explained that the County already has plans to do so with their whole web site. One of the biggest upgrades will be making it more ADA compliant and user friendly. She hopes to add an "emergency" banner for quick reference to closures or delays and for a simpler URL (Uniform Resource Locator) for our ACAC web-address.
- Shyanne will look into the possibility of our own Facebook page and whether we could partner with other community sites to post events and Site-Evaluation availability.
- Gretchen suggested that, with respect to our Prosecuting Attorney, Reid Hays, warning that we should not post our Site-Evaluation results on our web page because it might be construed as promoting a business, perhaps we could issue an inspection certificate to the businesses we evaluate.
- Matt West suggested that businesses or organizations could choose to post a tag to our Site-Evaluation Certificates on their websites.
- Gretchen stated that she would like the committee to begin using the Site-Evaluation Check List for the following locations this year:

- The new Benton County Public Services Building
  - The new Benton County Administration Building (once completed)
- Deidra briefly read the letter from Donna Tracy, Arc of the Tri-Cities, requesting that the ACAC partner with them to facilitate a community round-table meeting addressing services currently available for individuals with Autism or other neurological disorders and their families. The timeline for this roundtable is slated for late September to early November of 2021.
    - Deidra pointed out that this co-sponsor project would involve the need for funding to coordinate the meeting involving many organizations throughout the community. The committee’s next opportunity for applying for funding would be in August of 2021. She will work with Donna to put together projected costs and details once the committee decides to accept this project.
    - Deidra will send a copy of Donna’s request letter to all ACAC members for their review.

Prior to adjourning the meeting, Deidra briefly informed the committee about a couple of items on the agenda. First, regarding Ed Carter’s article, “Advice for the Disabled Running for Office” that was being considered for posting on our webpage, Ed had sent an email notice that he has already posted this article with another site and prefers it that it not be posted alternatively. Secondly, the invitation to members of Benton County’s ACAC to attend the Governor’s Committee on Disability Issues and Employment’s All-County Accessible Communities Advisory Committee Virtual Zoom Meeting was re-scheduled for Wednesday, July 21, 2021. The committee agreed that in order to avoid over-whelming the meeting with too many attendees, only Matt Nash, Amanda Hatfield, and Deidra Beck would attend this meeting as its representatives. Matt invited any other members that wished to join the meeting with them to contact him for consideration.

Matt adjourned the meeting at 3:05 p.m. The in-person location of the next meeting on June 17, 2021, is yet to be determined and will be announced via email to the committee.

