

Disability Advisory Committee Minutes

6/20/2017

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

The Disability Advisory Committee met at 9:00 am on June 20, 2017 at the Lewis County Historic Courthouse. The Meeting Agenda is attached.

Committee Attendees:

County Employee's:

Larry Grove, Lewis County Auditor
Tom Stanton, Chief Deputy Auditor
Heather Boyer, Elections Supervisor
Kalessa Markham, Election Specialist
Doug Carey, Lewis County Facilities Manager
Josh Heck, IT Developer

Community Members:

James (Jim) Casutt
Jack Harris
Diana Haug
Lynn McCord

Welcome/Introductions:

The Auditor welcomed everyone and introduced any new members.

Previous Improvements

Larry spoke about last year's drop box installations. The Chehalis Avenue box located in the old Star Tavern's parking lot that is now owned by the county was truly the "star" box in the last General Election. 57% of all ballots received were dropped in a drop box and of the 6 boxes the Chehalis Ave received the most at 34%. The Centralia College box is also receiving a large volume of ballots. Eventually the Centralia College box will be relocated from the Kemp Hall Parking Lot to the new TransAlta Building. Diana stated that the seniors are loving the drop box in Toledo located at the Toledo Senior Center.

Recent Improvements

Tom spoke about the Disability Rights Washington report that was released last summer. Disability Rights Washington had reviewed all county websites and suggested how and where there could be improvement. The Lewis County IT Department was contacted by our office to see if there could be changes made to the existing site. Ultimately, IT built a new website from the ground up that would be easier for all members of our community to use. After the new site was developed Disability Rights Washington reviewed the new site upon our request. There were a few adjustments made to the site per Disability Rights Washington's suggestions and the site was then made live to the public. Jim had also viewed and tested the website prior to the live release and he thought the site could use more soothing colors but the lettering was great. Tom stated the new site is much easier to use and update as needed.

Josh presented the new ADA compliant website to the committee members. Josh stated that the old site was very heavy with contrast errors and also very difficult to navigate with a screen reader. Josh explained that a screen reader is a software program that allows blind or visually impaired users to read the text that is displayed on the computer screen with a speech synthesizer or braille display. That is now all resolved and there are captions with all images. A special thanks was given to Josh for his excellent work on the website design.

Doug spoke about the elevator problems that were experienced last year and was happy to report that the elevator has finally been fixed. The county had been struggling to get the main elevator up and running and was working with an outside contractor who specialized in elevators. The main elevator had been down during every election last year. The temporary accessible voting route to the alternate elevator seems to have worked without any additional problems. So far this year everything with the elevator seems to be working good after a few adjustments to the software. They did find out that there is an elevator life of about 15 years on the new computerized programs.

Planned Improvements:

Larry spoke about a new bill that passed through legislation requiring us to install 8 additional ballot drop boxes. The determination by the state was there must be a ballot drop box in each city, town and Census Designated Place (CDP) with a post office. Larry indicated we were previously ahead of the curve with having 6 boxes within the county which was well below the one drop box per 15,000 registered voters, putting us at one box per 7,500 registered voters. Larry stated he went to the County Commissioners and they have approved funding for the new drop boxes. Our county was the first in the queue to get our new boxes ordered. We are hoping to have a box in Packwood and Winlock installed prior to the August 1st Primary Election but will be operating on a very tight deadline. The two boxes are not scheduled to arrive until the last week in June, the decals must be added which takes about two days and cannot be done until the second week in July. Lewis County Facilities will then have only a couple days to get the boxes fully installed prior to when they will need to be opened to the public July 13th. The two sites we are working on getting open prior to the primary election will be located on property already owned by the county. The remaining sites will be in Mineral, Mossyrock, Napavine, Onalaska, Pe Ell and Vader. Larry and Doug are in the process of trying to find and secure sites for the new boxes that are easily accessible to the public, however, this will most likely involve leases or easements since there is not county owned property within these cities or towns. Larry and Doug did a countywide field trip, excluding Vader and Pe Ell, to scout locations for the new boxes. They determined it will be 254 miles roundtrip each time the boxes are emptied.

Lewis County DAC Plan

An updated plan was reviewed and approved by the committee.

Good of the Order

Jack asked Doug about the threshold plates in the courthouse and if there had been any tripping issues. Doug indicated they are covering transitions and there have not been any reports. They would definitely research other options if there were ever any reports.

The meeting was then adjourned.

6/20/2017 Disability Advisory Committee Agenda

- Welcome/Introductions
- Previous Improvements:
 - Accessible, drive-up and walk-up ballot drop was installed near the courthouse in the old Star building parking log (corner of Chehalis Ave & Center St).
 - Accessible, drive-up ballot drop box was installed at Centralia College (Kemp Hall Parking Log, access on Rock St).
 - Accessible, drive-up ballot drop box was installed at the Toledo Senior Center (150 Coal St, Toledo).
- Recent Improvements:
 - New ADA compliant website was developed for the Elections Department based on a 2016 report from Disability Rights Washington.
 - Main elevator has been fixed.
- Planned Improvements:
 - Accessible, drive-up ballot drop boxes to be installed in Winlock and Packwood.
 - New ballot drop box bill passed through legislation requiring Lewis County to install 8 additional drop boxes. The determination is there must be a ballot drop box in each city, each town and each Census Designated Place (CDP) with a post office.
- Updating Annual Plan
- Good Of The Order