



**SKAMANIA COUNTY AUDITOR
TIMOTHY O. TODD**

Skamania County Courthouse
240 NW Vancouver Ave | PO Box 790
Stevenson, WA 98648
www.skamaniacounty.org/auditor

(509) 427-3730
Fax (509) 427-3740

May 11, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Skamania County Disability Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

The Skamania County Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) held its first meeting at the Rock Creek Center Conference Facility on May 9, 2012. The meeting agenda is attached.

Attendees were:

Mary Davis, Stevenson High School
Frank Cox, Stevenson Mayor and Lions Club Member
Todd Murray, WSU Extension
Casey Roeder, Chamber of Commerce
Marissa Anderson, Rock Cove Assisted Living Community
Patrick Crane, Community Volunteer
Clara Lamb, Senior Citizen and Volunteer
Marilyn Butler, Skamania County Senior Services Director
Sandra Bacus, Advisory Council for the Southwest Washington Agency for Aging and Disabilities (SWAADAC)
Linda Schneider, Director WA Gorge Action Program
Timothy Todd, Skamania County Auditor
David O'Brien, Skamania County Elections Supervisor
Sharon Weinhold, Skamania County Accessibility Coordinator

Welcome. Skamania County Auditor Tim Todd welcomed the committee members and thanked them for their willingness to participate in this important effort to give all voters the opportunity to vote privately and independently. He encouraged the committee members to share their ideas and recommendations to improve voter accessibility in Skamania County.

Introductions. The committee members introduced themselves and stated what they hoped to gain by participating on the committee for themselves or for their organization.

Goals and Objectives.

Sharon presented the goals and objectives for the advisory committee. The overall goal is to give all citizens who are registered to vote the opportunity to exercise their right to vote privately and independently. The senior population is growing and elderly voters may have visual impairments or mobility issues that preclude them from marking their



ballot in the usual way. We want to give these people the opportunity to vote on their own if they choose.

Another goal is to comply with Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 29A.04.223, which states that each county shall establish and maintain an advisory committee that includes

persons with diverse disabilities and persons with expertise in providing accommodations for persons with disabilities. The committee shall assist Election Officials in developing a plan to identify and implement changes to improve the accessibility of elections for voters with disabilities. The plan, which must be updated at least annually, shall include the following:

- The number of voting centers that will be maintained in order to ensure that people with disabilities have reasonable access to accessible voting devices.
- The locations of ballot drop-off facilities, voting centers, and other election-related functions necessary to maximize accessibility to persons with disabilities.
- Outreach to voters with disabilities on the availability of disability accommodation.
- Transportation of voting devices to locations convenient for voters with disabilities.

Funding for certain purposes is available if a DAC has been established. For example, funding is available for the purchase and installation of additional accessible ballot boxes.

The goals and objectives for today's meeting are to: demonstrate the equipment that is available to help voters with disabilities; select ballot box locations for three more ballot boxes; and develop a plan for Skamania County.

Accessibility Equipment – the eSlate.

David showed the members the accessible voting unit, the eSlate, described how it works and reviewed the voting process. The eSlate is equipped with audio and visual technology that allows voters with vision, hearing and mobility issues to vote a secret ballot independently. The eSlate is user friendly and has built in opportunities for voters to verify and/or change a vote up until their final vote is submitted.

When the voter enters the Elections Office, the voter will be asked to complete a Voter's Signature Form. The Election Official will confirm the voter is registered and has not already returned a ballot. Then the Elections Official will use the Judge's Booth Controller (JBC) to randomly generate a four digit Access Code. The code does not tie to the voter's identity, but ties to the voter's precinct so the proper ballot appears on the eSlate. The voter will proceed to the eSlate and enter the Access Code. The voter will make his/her selections using the buttons and Select Wheel on the bottom of the eSlate. The Select Wheel allows the voter to navigate through the ballot. When the voter is finished, he/she will press the "Cast Ballot" button. All eSlate votes are stored on the JBC until Election Day, when they are tabulated and counted with the other ballots.

David gave the members the opportunity to test and vote a ballot on a Demo eSlate.

Skamania County has two eSlates, both located at the Elections Office. One is for backup. Members were encouraged to vote their Primary and General Election ballots on the eSlate so they can see how easy it is to use and can explain to others how it works.



Proposed New Ballot Box Locations.

Skamania County currently has three ballot boxes – in Underwood, Stabler and Washougal. Ballot boxes are opened 18 days before each election and remain open until 8PM on Election Day. With the establishment of the DAC, there is an opportunity for Skamania County to receive funding from the Secretary of State's Office for three more ballot boxes.

The proposed locations for the three new ballot boxes are:

- Skamania County Courthouse, at the door next to the accessible parking.
- Carson, at the transit shelter.
- North Bonneville, near the post office box.

There was discussion about the cost of adding these ballot boxes, particularly the cost of two Elections Officials picking up the ballots during Elections. Frank Cox asked if it would be more cost effective to include postage paid envelopes with the ballots when they are mailed so the voters can return their ballots by mail. David responded by saying cost is definitely a consideration. He commented that ballot postage is expensive. He said since ballots are already being picked up in the outlying areas, these new locations would be on the same route. Stopping at these new ballot boxes would add 20 – 30 minutes to the ballot pickup time.

After the members reviewed the pictures of the proposed ballot box locations, Mary Davis made a motion that Skamania County add ballot boxes at the three proposed ballot box locations. Marissa Anderson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Plan for 2012.

A plan outline was presented to the members as a start point for the discussion. The plan focuses on two areas: Education and Outreach and Access to Voting.

The members suggested the following:

- Add the Underwood Community Council, Republican and Democratic Committees, Human Services Advisory Board, American Legion, Kitchen Volunteers, and Community Health to the list of local groups that may help get the word out. Also seek representation from these groups.
- Include on the list of locations to demonstrate the eSlate the Rock Cove Assisted Living Community, County Fair, Senior Centers, High School Seniors, Candidate Night, and Church Seniors Groups.
- Consider the following media sources: newspaper article with pictures of eSlate, Channel 7, Chamber newsletter, and Senior Services newsletter.
- Prepare an information card about the eSlate for organizations to distribute at events.
- Consider hosting a Seniors Fair, where organizations have the opportunity to distribute information to seniors and answer questions.



Next Steps.

As a result of the discussions, the following actions will be taken:

- Prepare and distribute the meeting minutes to committee members for their review and any additions or changes. (Sharon)
- Gain final approval for the ballot box locations agreed upon by the members; procure the ballot boxes. (David)
- Update the Plan for 2012 to reflect the members' suggestions. (Sharon)
- Contact the local groups suggested by the members that may help with outreach. (Sharon)
- Schedule times to demonstrate the eSlate at the Senior Centers. (Sharon)
- Create an information card for review by the members. (Sharon)
- Explore the possibility of having a table at the County Fair and hosting a Senior Fair. (Sharon)
- Schedule the next DAC meeting for the week of July 23 – 27, 2012. At the meeting, give the committee members the opportunity to vote their Primary ballot on the eSlate. (Sharon / David)

Sharon Weinhold
Cowlitz County Elections
360-577-3005

