

Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee Minutes March 31, 2011

Members in Attendance:

Karen Herr, Mason County Auditor
Libby Avery, Mason County Transit Community Center
Susan Blankenship, Secretary

Karen called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

Karen briefed the committee members on the success of the two additional ballot drop boxes that were installed last year at the Port of Allyn and at the Shelton Timberland Library.

Libby reminded all members that she still would like a ballot box installed at the Mason Transit Community Center once the building is remodeled. Karen explained the challenge of adding more ballot boxes at this time with their reduced staffing levels, but promised to revisit Libby's request after the remodel.

Karen asked the committee members to consider another proposal to improve the administration of elections for voters with disabilities.

She recommended that the Elections Division submit a grant application for federal funds in the amount of \$19,758.02 to purchase two sets of accessible voting equipment to be used at the North Mason County Resource Center and other locations throughout Mason County.

Currently the only accessible voting unit is located in the Auditor's office. Last week, Karen and Amber Cervantes, Elections Superintendent, met with the Director of the North Mason County Resource Center, and they agreed to provide space in their center, and a volunteer from their organization, to work with a county elections staff person in providing accessible voting on specific dates prior to each election. Because this Center is located in the north end of the County, and is committed to identifying and serving the needs of economically and/or physically challenged citizens, it is the ideal location.

All committee members present, including Lynda Ring Erickson and Mike Rutter in absentee, enthusiastically approved of this proposal. Libby was especially excited about the prospect of offering this service to voters at her place of business, the Transit Community Center. Committee members also discussed other possible locations for the second accessible voting unit, such as: Lake Cushman, Matlock Church, Union Fire Station, the Senior Center, and on the Squaxin and Skokomish Indian Reservation.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.