

Minutes
Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee
July 11, 2018

Members in Attendance:

Karen Herr, Mason County Auditor
Randy Neatherlin, Mason County Commissioner
Amy Davis, League of Women Voters
Sarah Nutt, E.F.I. (Exceptional Foresters Inc.)
Becky Frankeberger, Committee Member
Chuck Orthmann, Committee Member

Guest:

Kevin Frankeberger

Auditor Staff:

Fina Ormond, Election Superintendent
Susan Blankenship, Assistant Election Administrator

Karen Herr called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Karen announced the purchase of Clear Ballot, a new ballot tabulation system, that will replace their aging system.

Karen shared that Clear Ballot is the leader in election innovation and will improve the transparency and integrity of our elections.

Clear Access is their Accessible Voting Unit designed to assist voters with disabilities. Voters are able to mark their ballots on a touchscreen that also features audio headphones and accessible tactile devices.

Fina demonstrated the new Clear Access system to all the members.

Fina also spoke about the new Elections Modernization Project that began this week which will replace the statewide voter data base system by July 2019.

Kevin asked whether the new statewide system will allow voters the opportunity to vote on-line. Not yet. Perhaps with future upgrades.

Sharing of Ideas:

An open discussion ensued from all attendees on ways to improve the voting experience for those with disabilities in our community.

Sarah was so impress with the Clear Access system she suggested scheduling times for their clients at E.F.I. to come to the Auditor's office to cast their ballots.

Amy with the League of Women Voters have been conducting many voter registration drives at the local high schools and Shelton Timberland Library. They are planning to

register students at the North Mason High School next week. They are also planning to host a candidate's forum prior to the General Election.

Kevin shared that people with disabilities offer unique insights into improving the community environment. In Washington State more than nine hundred thousand continue to face barriers to full participation that can easily be eliminated.

Kevin suggested forming a countywide disability advocacy group to improve disability access to employment, education, transit, and other areas of public accommodation. He stated there are state grants available to improve and support disability awareness.

Randy and Kevin will meet and talk about how to apply for this grant funding for Mason County. Kevin remarked that grant funding could assist the county with installing audio directions to the elevator when entering Building 1 and other tools needed in the other departments to assist those with disabilities.

Fina asked what our committee can do to help. Kevin suggested the use of local media, specifically radio, to inform the disabled community of election events, upcoming election news, and the online candidate's voter guide. .

Karen mentioned there is no postage required when returning your ballot by mail for the Primary and General Election in 2018. Another free option to return ballots is by using a ballot drop box located thru-out the county.

Get out the Disability Vote Week / National Disability Voter Registration Week is July 16-20, 2018

Karen closed by saying thank you to everyone for coming.

The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Susan Blankenship