

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBILITY
MINUTES for Monday, January 23, 2023 at 3:00 PM
VIA ZOOM:

Attendance

Nate Besio, Chair	Ethan Fellows, CEDO	Allie Fuddy
Scot Barker	Vanessa Santos Eugenio	Katherine Schad
Amber Fulcher	Karen Downey	Sophie Sauvé

- I. COME TO ORDER
 - a. 3:05 pm.

- II. INTRODUCTIONS
 - a. Scot Barker
 - i. CIO of Burlington. Been with the city since last March
 - b. Vanessa Santos Eugenio
 - i. Talent, Development, and Diversity Manager for Human Resources at the City of Burlington
 - c. Katherine Schad
 - i. Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Burlington
 - d. Allie Fuddy
 - i. Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Primary role is the Statewide administrative technology consultant and children services
 - e. Karen Downey
 - i. Recently retired Occupation Therapist
 - f. Amber Fulcher
 - i. ADA Coordinator for the University of Vermont
 - g. Ethan Fellows
 - i. Community Outreach Coordinator, CEDO, administrative support for this committee
 - h. Nate Besio

- i. Vermont Center for Independent Living, Chair of this committee.

III. NEWS & UPDATES

- a. The future of committee recordings.
 - i. Scot: The city is replacing Boarddocs with Civic Clerk. City made a call, all Boards and Commissions, regardless of what they are, will need to center out of Civic Clerk. One central place for citizens to access all materials from boards and commissions. Expecting 2-3 months for implementation to be complete and everything to be up and running. It will provide a lot more consistency across very commissions.
- b. Allie: Implications of accessibility in redistricting process. Accounting for voters with disabilities. What is the committee's role?
 - i. Katherine: Part of responsibilities include elections. Work with Sarah Montgomery and sit in at City Council. Have not heard a lot of conversation about redistricting and have not heard anyone come at it from this lens. If you have time tonight for public forum, if not, a letter would also be impactful. Not a lot of people who use the accessible voting machines. Work hard to have staff who are trained, but probably not great (because volunteers). Possibility of City Charter change allowing voters to access any polling place, regardless of ward, in order to meet accessibility needs.
 - ii. Karen: Also a poll worker for Poll 5. Have looked at accessible aspects of voting. Have looked at physical accessibility, this is definitely something all wards need to look at in order to provide accessibility. Could bring this up to City Council but also the City Clerk who oversees this process. Thank you Allie for bringing this up.
 - iii. Katherine: Ward 5 is an experienced group. However, for example, Ward 8 has a lot of turnover. This is something that can be brought up to Sarah as a point to watch out for.
 - iv. Allie: For example, if this current map passes, will swap polling places due to changing Wards, will have to learn new location and process. Long and significant planning process.

Important to understand process when things like this happen and what is the role and impact of the ADA coordinator, etc. Parking is important too.

- v. Nate: Something this committee should work on. What is the role and responsibilities of this committee as a whole? Noted that often times accessibility seems like an afterthought for many projects (for example, was invited to the renovation of BHS late in the process).
- vi. Katherine: This input from Allie was very important. Could build this into the agenda of this committee
 - 1. Nate: Agree, will try and build this process into the agenda in the future
 - 2. Amber: Noted that the opportunity to hear upcoming projects and being able to weigh in is very impactful
- vii. Karen: Where a part of the four planning groups for the upcoming BHS, accessibility was considered for each group. The most recent architectural firm has not been a part prior, many cooks in the kitchen. Do not want people walking away thinking ADA is not on the front burner.
- viii. Nate: Agree with all before. Noted the importance of ADA, it is the law. Will work to find this committee's voice and reach.

IV. OUTREACH AND PROMOTION

- a. Scot: Recently talked to VABVI about new sign going up on waterfront.
 - i. Sophie: Will be a Parks project (not a grant, managed by BPR&W).
 - ii. Scot: Plan is to have a tactile sign as well as a QR code that will take them to a site for more information and other accessibility needs.
 - iii. Sophie: Working on the sign, still have to get approval from the parks commission. Wondering if anyone would like to meet down at the site to give more feedback. Signage will also try to provide translation for more accessibility.
- b. Karen and Allie: Both noted that they might be available for meeting at the sign.

- c. Scot: Also, have a plan to talk about Oakledge Park and accessibility.

V. REVIEW PROPOSED MEMO TO MAYOR'S OFFICE

- a. Nate: Last month discussed creation of a memo for the Mayor's office to notify progress of the committee, proposals, and what funding might be needed.
- b. Ethan brought up the memo to edit.
- c. Katherine: Understand the purpose of the first part of the memo to update the mayor, what is the purpose of the later part? Are we asking for permission to do things? Is this a request?
 - i. Nate: Idea is to figure out specific use of budget etc.
 - ii. Katherine: Suggestion is to keep the memo informational. Do not need special permission. Would instead word memo to inform the Mayor of decisions and upcoming projects instead of asking for permission ('we are doing this with the budget', instead of 'can we do this?') Do not want the memo to need a response. Can work together with Nate and Ethan to iron out, fine-tune this memo.
 - iii. Nate: Thank you for the suggestion. Concern is that we do not want to go rogue on spending. Just want to clarify what we can make more accessible.
 - iv. Katherine: Noted. Can go forward and discuss with Mayor in upcoming meeting, with the letter, to clarify what the budget can be used for, etc.
- d. Amber: Have concerns about saying we are going to use some of the funding for website changes. Probably will take more resources than this and a strategic plan to make sure the website resources align with federal guidelines. (small amount of money for a big project)
 - i. Scot: just as an update, Civic Clerk will be much more ADA compliant. Also looking at city website backend to be more ADA compliant and WKEG compliant. This is something the city is obligated to provide and not lean on a commission to hopefully fund it.

- e. Nate: What are the best ways we can use this fund? We should think of some of the things we can do. Can we do anything that can physically change structures? Minor accessibility changes into certain facilities?
- f. Nate: Suggestion is to look at the memo, will enable everyone to be able to make changes and add, and will reexamine a finalized version of this.
 - i. Sophie: Potential of department collaboration/supplementing budget?
 - ii. Allie: What was the original purpose stated for this budget from the Mayor?
 - 1. Nate: can send some of the documents. Pretty vague, initially discussed administrative assistance (and with that we got CEDO support from Ethan), etc. Will look at initial memos, review, and send those out.
- g. Katherine: Having discussed this with Miro before, he seemed flexible with the spending of the budget. Really looking at the committee to make the best of it. Last year there was little to no spending, want to make sure we spend it. Do not think there is any restriction. Thinks that part of the reason we were not originally highlighting projects is because 15k will not be able to buy us many projects. However, encourage us to use it for projects if we can.
 - i. Sophie: Using the previously discussed sign as an example, the sign costs \$6k. 6k could go a long way for things like that.
- h. Nate: Noted everything here, will open document for editing for those with the link. Final version will be distributed.

VI. FINALIZE 2023 MEETING SCHEDULE

- a. Nate: A couple scheduling conflicts this year (next meeting coincides with Presidents' Day and eventually will coincide with Juneteenth). Here is the proposed meeting schedule considering this. Does this work for everyone?
 - i. Monday Jan 23 (adjusted for MLK Day)
 - ii. Feb 27 (adjusted for Presidents' Day)
 - iii. Mar 20

- iv. Apr 17
 - v. May 15
 - vi. June 12 (adjusted for Juneteenth)
- b. No objections from the rest of the committee

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

VIII. ADJOURN

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