

**Walla Walla/Columbia County  
Accessible Communities Advisory Committee  
In-Person/Zoom Meeting Minutes for  
4/20/2022**

**PLEASE NOTE: I have included links to documents. You will have to make a copy of them when you begin to open them so you can view them. If you have any issues, please let me know.**

**Welcome**

Call to order at 5:35

**Attendance**

**Present:** Timothy Barrett, Angie Peters, Connie Taylor-Randall, Betsy Hadden, Larry Hector, Cindy Wolski, Jeanne Walter, Joseph Huether, Joleen Ferguson (guest), Nikki Sharp (presenter)

**Excused Absence:** Anikó Kuschatka

**Unexcused Absence:** Kati Tureman, Aracelli Castro, Joshua Hepler-End

**Minutes**

Moved by Larry, seconded by Betsy. [March Minutes](#) were approved unanimously.

**Annual Report (insert link)- Connie-** Presentation to the County Commissioners about accessibility improvements in our community over the last 12 months, read the linked report for a detailed review. Please read and get back to Connie no later than Monday (4/25/22), so she can schedule her final presentation to the Commissioners.

**Guest Presentation - Nikki Sharp -** The Walla Walla County Health Department presentation included: The county has had a lot of changes with all of the COVID-19 restrictions, and they have seen a need for continued collaboration in the community. They have been able to partner with Blue Zones on several policy areas. They are currently seeking more involvement on the accessibility front, and are currently recruiting

**Walla Walla/Columbia County  
Accessible Communities Advisory Committee  
In-Person/Zoom Meeting Minutes for  
4/20/2022**

individuals that can help with employment. They are considering age, and alleviating any technology barriers to accessibility. COVID-19 has brought to the forefront that there may not have been as many conversations as necessary during the development of alfresco dining, and other short term solutions. The county has utilized mobile outreach, with in-home service for things like vaccination, which has helped alleviate some barriers. They are focused on re-aligning to their mission, and would like to answer any questions committee members might have. Joleen brought it to Nikki's attention, that the section of the website with graphs are not accessible when using a screen reader, and Nikki will work with Kylie (the communications rep) about correcting this issue as they continue to optimize the webpage. Joleen recommended they look to the weather website, and the health app, as examples of audio graphs that work well. They will continue the conversation offline.

**Sub-Committee Reports (update accordingly)**

**By-Laws Committee:** Connie

[Proposed By-Laws update](#)- Larry moved to approve, Betsy seconded. The By-Laws were approved unanimously.

**Membership Committee:** Connie - the [recruitment list](#) has been updated. Anikó was approved for a second term (4 years).

**Community Outreach Committee:** Kati - (unable to attend)- is currently working with the public schools to do accessibility tours for the local schools. She has Pioneer and Wa-Hi on her upcoming schedule.

**Grant Proposal Committee:** Connie - submitted a proposal for a mobile office again, and submitted for the rack cards. The grant committee did agree to pay for the zoom license to allow for remote

**Walla Walla/Columbia County  
Accessible Communities Advisory Committee  
In-Person/Zoom Meeting Minutes for  
4/20/2022**

attendance but did imply they would not pay for this in the future. We should hear about the proposals by the end of the month.

**Communications/Media Committee:** (Need chair) Connie and Larry- Provided a Letter of Support for The Accessible Walla Walla grant application. This particular grant was not successful, but Betsy will continue to look for grant opportunities going forward.

**Transportation Update:** Timothy Barrett - In infrastructure news, the City of Walla Walla's Park Street reconstruction project is back on track and set to be completed in May. This will include many ADA ramps and new sidewalks. The Poplar and Alder projects are moving some of the project phases around due to supply issues with water main pipes and fixtures. Expect closures on different segments of streets in that area throughout the summer. When completed, those roads will have just one travel lane in each direction, bike lanes, and RRFBs, improving access and safety for pedestrians. Speaking of RRFBs, the Citywide Pedestrian Improvements project is nearly complete now that they received the electrical components for those flashing beacons. I saw them installing the one on Rose Street by City Hall just yesterday. Construction on the 1st Avenue Plaza and Heritage Square Park projects will happen this winter and the Senior Center parking lot improvements project is targeting construction in late summer or early fall.

On the planning front, the MPO and our consultant have been working hard on the new Coordinated Public Transit Plan. We have been meeting with transit providers and emergency managers to help identify potential ways to improve regional transit service generally, but also needs during emergency events. Be on the watch for a transit user survey that will be coming out sometime in mid to late May!

**Walla Walla/Columbia County  
Accessible Communities Advisory Committee  
In-Person/Zoom Meeting Minutes for  
4/20/2022**

## **Goals**

- 1) **Employment** - Improve employment outcomes for people with disabilities
- 2) **Housing** - Increase affordable housing for individuals in the disability community, providing more choices in where they can live
- 3) **Accessibility** - Increase accessibility in Walla Walla Valley, making it more desirable for residents and tourism
- 4) **Care Options** - Increase care options for parents/guardians of children and adults with disabilities to provide respite alternatives, care options, and enrichment opportunities.

## **Goal Progress**

- 1) **Employment Update** - Cindy - The employment subcommittee did not meet last month.

DD Employment numbers: one working client moved to Milton-Freewater, so will be served by Oregon State services. Three new jobs in Walla Walla: Janitorial job at Marshalls, two hired at Chesed Farms (a local, year-round producer of gourmet mushrooms and microgreens in Walla Walla) mixing and filling substrate bags for sterilization.

Temporary (approximately 12% higher) reimbursement rates in the DD employment program were extended through September 2022. They were previously set to end on June 30, 2022.

Individuals in the DD program are happy to be able to participate in both Employment and Community Inclusion programs concurrently. This change will happen effective January 1, 2023.

**Walla Walla/Columbia County  
Accessible Communities Advisory Committee  
In-Person/Zoom Meeting Minutes for  
4/20/2022**

A Transition Expo was held on March 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at WWCC for special education students in middle and high school to learn about community services. There were 16 agencies represented: Parent to Parent, Walla Walla Valley Disability Network, WA State Endowment Trust Fund, Opportunity Services, Noble Hunt, Blue Mountain Industries, County DD Program, Developmental Disabilities Administration, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Walla Walla Community College, Blue Zones, Special Olympics, YMCA, Walla Walla Parks & Recreation, Valley Residential Services, and Valley Transit.

A Job Fair hosted by WorkSource, the Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce, and the Downtown Walla Walla Foundation was held in downtown Walla Walla (First and Main Streets) on April 6<sup>th</sup> from 11-2. There were 25 local businesses represented with open positions. Three of our employment providers took clients to the job fair.

**2) Housing Report Update** - Tim, (needs chair) - Tim is now on the council for housing, and could potentially take over as the chair for this. He will prepare a report for future meetings. Anikó, Betsy, and Jolene Ferguson had a scheduled meeting to discuss accessibility and affordability. Betsy was unable to attend; however, Jolene and Anikó discussed the following:

Our community needs more accessible traffic signals and better sidewalks. Jolene shared that she was hit by a car quite a long time ago. Anikó shared she has had a few near misses. Another important need is better sidewalks in Walla Walla. Having good sidewalks allow those with limitations to commute as well as to walk about for better mental health. Perhaps a study on the effects of poor sidewalks and

**Walla Walla/Columbia County  
Accessible Communities Advisory Committee  
In-Person/Zoom Meeting Minutes for  
4/20/2022**

the impact on mental and physical health is something we might want to study.

As for affordable housing for those with limitations, the sub-committee has not been successful in finding the general guideline list. They do suggest that accessible windows would be important to safety. These windows should be able to be opened and locked by someone in a wheelchair. Those with visual impairments would need additional and brighter light fixtures with dimmer switches. Bright, over-the-counter lighting in kitchens and over appliances like the stove would also be something to consider.

**3) Accessibility Report Update** - Larry, Anikó, and Betsy - Betsy met with Mike Rizzitiello about the paved multi-use path at the end of College Avenue, near the highway at the blind corner, connecting to Old Milton Highway. It is owned by the state, and with the reconstruction that will take place, the intent currently is to remove that path. Mike is seeking support to advocate for keeping this path in place, and Betsy requested possible contact information from Connie.

The Art Walk on Whitman Campus has one inaccessible location, and Betsy is working with them to improve this issue (curbs and sidewalk). This may be delayed by questions of who has the right-of-way for the area. She plans to loop Nabel into the conversation in hopes of facilitating a quicker resolution.

**4) Care Options** - (needs chair) - no report tonight, waiting to speak with Cyndy Knight

**Announcements and Further Discussion Items**

1) no feedback has been submitted on business cards, please bring your comments to this meeting

**Walla Walla/Columbia County  
Accessible Communities Advisory Committee  
In-Person/Zoom Meeting Minutes for  
4/20/2022**

- 2) still coordinating attendance to BPAC and affordable housing committee
- 3) pictures of committee members needed for the website, if you have a headshot already, please send it to Connie
- 4) Connie is heading an effort to make a slide deck for community outreach presentations and invites input from anyone on the committee

**Moving Forward - What are our next steps?**

- a) Membership Recruitment and Application for Members Whose Terms Have Expired
- b) Employment
  - i) Inclusion Stickers
- c) Housing - Need new ad hoc chair -
- d) City of Walla Walla Next Steps
  - i) WWACAC member to serve on Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee Issue - current opening, receiving applications
  - ii) Develop a checklist for Downtown Alfresco Accessibility for Policy Development - Betsy and Anikó
  - iii) Develop pamphlet and materials on Accessibility for Building Permit Office - Betsy and Anikó
  - iv) Partner with Developmental Disabilities in Inclusion Stickers and Informational Pamphlets for Walla Walla Businesses
  - v) Possible Grants and Revenue Options
  - vi) Downtown Accessibility Study of Parking Options and Sidewalks Walkways with Alfresco Outside Dining - Larry

**Public Comment - none**

**For the Good of the Order -** Betsy asked about the ADA minimum for new housing, and it was recommended to speak with John Maland about this

**Walla Walla/Columbia County  
Accessible Communities Advisory Committee  
In-Person/Zoom Meeting Minutes for  
4/20/2022**

requirement, as well as to encourage universal housing as an alternative minimum requirement.

**Next Meeting Date** - May 18, 2022. [Meeting Dates - 2022](#)  
**In-person** at [Valley Transit](#), hybrid **Zoom** option available.

**Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned by 6:27

**NOTE:**

If you have not yet done so, **please** fill out the survey and send it to Connie so we can ascertain if the meeting time needs to change.