

**Walla Walla County**  
**Accessible Communities Advisory Committee**  
**Zoom Meeting Minutes**  
**May 20, 2021**  
**6:30-8 pm**

**Welcome**

Connie welcomed all committee members to the meeting.

**Members Present:**

Arecelli Castro, Joshua End Hepler, Connie Taylor-Randall, Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer, Amelia Odeen, Cynthia Wolski

**Excused Absence:**

Aniko Kuschatka, Emma Kubrock, Amy White

**Unexcused Absence:**

Kati Tureman, Dwayne Williams

**Guest:**

David Brauhn, Marketing Director of Valdemar Estates Winery

**March Minutes**

It was moved and seconded to approve the March 18, 2021 minutes.  
Motion approved.

**Missed April Meeting**

Connie apologized for the missed April meeting. It was simply an oversight on her part. She thanked Amelia Odeen for bringing it to her attention.

**Guest Presentation:** David Brauhn, Director of Valdemar Estates Winery gave a presentation on the focus the Valdemar Estates Winery has had in reaching their goal of being the Nation's and Walla Walla's First Fully Accessible Tasting Room and Inclusionary Winery. He shared that he has been focused on updating their website with QR codes and ASL friendly presentations. In addition, menus and other information has been translated into Braille with the help of Heather Meares from the United Blind of Walla Walla. David asked for our assistance as they move forward to reaching their goal of being Walla Walla's first fully accessible tasting room. The committee thanked him for the work that he, the owner, general

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manager, and the winery employees are doing to improve accessibility and inclusion at their winery. **UPDATE: David spoke with the CEO Jesus who has invited us to hold one of our meetings at Valdemar Estates. The facility would be available on a Tuesday or Wednesday evening and we could make arrangements for this to happen if we are interested.**

### **Sub-Committee Reports**

**By-Laws Committee:** Connie reviewed the annual by-laws draft indicating that the revisions mostly consisted of the name change to include Columbia County and the number of representatives to the committee. She urged committee members to review these as they will be voted upon at the June meeting. Here is the link to the document. Annual Review of By-Laws - May 20, 2021 [DRAFT By-Laws - WWCACAC 4-2021](#) - Final Approval - June 10, 2021

**Membership Committee:** Connie share the terms of office status 2019-2023 [Terms of Office Status 2019-2023](#) and indicated that three members need to make an application to continue to remain on the board as their terms have expired. These members are Aracelli Castro, Emma Kubrock, and Connie Taylor-Randall. The applications are available on the website. If anyone needs assistance with the application, she indicated that she would be willing to help them and that they would need to contact her at 509-301-1640. She indicated that it is very important for us to actively recruit members in both Walla Walla and Columbia County so we have a wide representative group of individuals with disabilities serving on the committee. She also encouraged members to step up to serve as vice chair and secretary for a two year term. She asked if there were any members interested in serving as chair and to let her know if they are so she can provide those names to the Board of Commissioners on Monday so that

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they can make a selection on the chair. She indicated she would be willing to continue if the group so desired.

**Community Outreach Committee:** Connie gave the report in Kati's absence indicated that they had met with Dr. Wade Smith, Superintendent of Walla Walla Public Schools for a walk about the Walla Walla High School Campus to review accessible areas during construction. Their were findings of issues that needed addressed which included moving accessible parking closer to the main office, boarding walkways over gravel for wheelchairs and scooters, and issues that might affect students, parents, and staff accessing various areas of campus. Dr. Smith took notes and corrected most issues while indicating that the Construction Company has authority over these decisions and "owns" the property during construction and is therefore ultimately responsible for the area during construction. However, he was able to communicate with them and correct issues regarding accessible parking and placing mats down for easier access.

**Grant Proposal Committee:** Amy and Emma were not present. Therefore, Connie indicated that she received word from the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employee that they had not received any applications from our committee by the mid-April deadline. Connie will follow up with Amy and Emma to see what the issue was with the application process. In addition, Connie announced that the grant for the accessible door at Son Bridge had been installed and the work completed. The only thing left is to secure some publicity on the project.

**Communications/Media Committee:** Andrea indicated that she did not have a report. Connie asked if she would be willing to help put together a brochure and packet plus volunteer business cards for our committee. She

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indicated that she would but that she didn't have access to a printer. Cindy indicated that there may be some adlorum funds available to pay for these costs and that she knew of a printer who did this most reasonably. Connie will provide Andrea with the materials from the state that might be a template for her.

**Transportation Update:** Andrea reported that the work on the roundabout on 9th Street and Plaza has begun. While it is in the early stages, she indicated that it will get more intense in the months to come and this area will not be as accessible as it has been.

**Columbia County Joint ACAC Progress** - Connie indicated that she had collaborated with Cindy to present information to the Columbia County Board of Commissioners to join in with Walla Walla to form a joint committee. After conversations with Dan Tompkins, Walla Walla County Board of Commissioner, to confirm the intentions and make up of our committee, the Columbia County Board of Commissioners approved the Letter of Assurance on May 3, 2021. Connie thanked Cindy Wolski for her efforts in pulling this together. We will be actively recruiting members of Columbia County to apply for membership.

**Walla/Columbia Counties ACAC Annual Report 2021** - May 24, 2021 - 11:30 am - Walla Walla County Commissioners WebEx Meeting

[WWCACAC Annual Report 2021 Presentation](#) - Connie indicated that she would be giving an annual report to the Walla Walla County Commissioners since there are two new members: Jenny Mayberry and Todd Kimball. She said that Jim Johnson and Dan Tompkins had been involved with the initial formation of our committee, but these new members were not as familiar. She shared the annual report and asked members to provide her with any information she might have omitted. She also invited members to join in the meeting if they so desired.

Call in 1-408-418-9388 access code: 146 784 0290

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Meeting link:

<https://wwco.webex.com/wwco/j.php?MTID=m6ef6c0710e4eb57be4e10ce0cc827a38>

**Goals** - Connie reviewed the goals and indicated that we are still making progress on these.

- 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) **Housing Report Update** - Connie indicated that we are in need of an Ad Hoc Committee Chair since Jessica moved out of the area to take a job in Olympia. If anyone is interested, please let her know.
- 2) **Accessibility Report Update** - Connie gave an update on the following:
  - a) City of Walla Walla - Connie shared correspondence that she had received from the City of Walla Walla re: Josh's application to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Committee. Josh was not selected for this round and asked to reapply. Connie had contact with the City of Walla Walla asking that Josh be appointed in an advisory capacity. Connie is awaiting a response.
  - b) Walla Walla United States Postal Service - Connie received a call from the Post Master to reschedule the meeting, but did not

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have a date because he wanted to include the City Engineer. She has not received a follow up call.

c) Walla Walla Public Schools - See above under Community Outreach Report

d) Elections - Amelia indicated that in order to increase security for the Court House that the accessible parking may be moved. It was suggested by the committee that Connie bring this to the attention of the County Commissioners.

**New Leadership at Walla Walla County Department of Health** - Connie announced that Nancy Wenzel and Dr. Daniel Kaminsky, MD have been appointed by the Walla Walla Board of Commissioners to oversee the Walla Walla County Department of Health. She noted that the transition and getting information has been difficult due to the work they are doing for the pandemic.

**Announcements and Further Discussion Items**

1) Connie indicated that she was invited to speak at the Walla Walla Presbyterian Church Ground Breaking to improve building accessibility. The church members raised over two million dollars to improve access and add an elevator. The presentation is included. [Walla Walla Presbyterian Church Ground Breaking Ceremony](#)

2) Connie asked if the committee was interested in putting together a certification to recognize former members for their contribution to the committee once their term has been fulfilled. The committee agreed unanimously. It was recommended by the committee to recognize Jessica Tourlette for her service. Connie will follow up on this.

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

a) The importance of membership recruitment and application for members whose terms have expired was discussed.

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- b) Employment
  - i) The discussion about the use of Inclusion Stickers will be discussed more at the next meeting.
- c) Housing - The need for a new ad hoc chair was discussed.
- d) City of Walla Walla Next Steps were discussed.
  - i) WWACAC member to serve on Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee Issue
  - ii) Develop checklist for Downtown Alfresco Accessibility for Policy Development
  - iii) Develop pamphlet and materials on Accessibility for Building Permit Office
  - 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
  - vii) National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) - October

**Public Comment** - Time was provided for public comment. There was none.

**For the Good of the Order**

Andrea indicated that Blue Zones would be hosting a walkability audit on three dates in June. Connie will check with Meghan DeBolt to see when those dates are scheduled.

Amelia announced that July 13-17 is National Disability Voter Registration Week so we might want to consider getting some publicity for this.

It was suggested by the committee that Connie contact the Union-Bulletin to see what could be arranged to get more information out to

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the public to introduce our committee to the Walla Walla/Columbia County communities.

**Next Meeting Date** - Due to several conflicts and the available schedule for Angie Peters, General Manager of Valley Transit to present information on their ADA Transition Plan to the committee, the June meeting date was changed from June 17, 2021 to June 10, 2021. Connie will confirm this with Angie. **UPDATE: THIS DATE HAS BEEN CONFIRMED WITH ANGIE PETERS, GENERAL MANAGER OF VALLEY TRANSIT.** [Meeting Dates ACAC 2021](#)

**Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.