

Meeting Notes – 3/4/08
VAAC Meeting

Attendance: Kim Wyman, Ken Raske, Patty McDonald, Gwen Cornelius, Kellee Keegan, Verna Seagal, Stephen Peck, and an Intercity Transit Representative.

First we discussed putting out a log with each and every AutoMARK at Roadshow sites, to keep track of the user's name, and to know more about how and why they use it, especially if they have ever used the machine before or if they are aware of our other efforts (audio pamphlet). The committee discussed that it may deter individuals from using the machine by compromising their confidentiality and independence by asking them to fill out an actual log. However, our workers could take down information from a less-pointed conversation with the user. We want to do this to assure that we are getting the numbers of individuals who use the machines.

Patty noted the low response and usage could well be due to the convenience of vote by mail, that people generally are doing so at home, and having assistance from their caregivers or families.

It was requested we find out what usage is like in poll site states. Gwen will follow up.

Gwen addressed the issue of outreach, and that meeting with groups seems to be the most effective way to reach certain communities. Patty reiterated that we need to get in touch with the Area Agency on Aging, ARC, and the Senior Lobby.

The AutoMARK Roadshow was addressed, and the committee agreed to refocus our strategy. While we are planning to continue to offer the machine at the Transit Center, and have a machine at TCTV and the County Courthouse, we will no longer station one at Panorama City, etc. Instead, we will create appointment cards to be placed on meal trays, giving a time frame where the machine will be available. In this way, we would reach more individuals and not waste resources by sitting in a location that no one comes to.

The committee then addressed the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. The Auditor's Office intends to put together some PSAs that are accessible to this community, with a sign language overlay in the corner. One issue with closed captioning is that many individuals that are deaf from birth do not read.

It was suggested we consider video taping the voters' pamphlet in sign language, as well as the sample ballot. These could split into small segments, so that a person could give their name, we could look them up in our system, and then send them only the files that pertain to their districts.

Everyone was supportive of the idea of producing a video in sign language that would be available on disc and online. This could be used to translate the voter registration form, as well as some basic voter education information.

Gwen agreed to try to find out what other large states are doing to meet the needs of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community, to see if we can get inspiration.

Table tents will be placed in local restaurants, and will have information regarding disability access, as one issue is that while individuals active in the disability communities are aware of the availability of these machines, the average person in Thurston County is not. We need to make sure every person in this county knows the machines are available.

It was decided we would have our next regular meeting in June, to check in on what progress has been made. The Auditor's Office will apply for a HAVA grant to pay for the cost of some of the video translation items discussed at this meeting.