



ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

MINUTES

August 4, 2015
Manistee, Michigan

MEETING LOCATION

The August 4, 2015 meeting was held at the Little River Resort in Manistee.

PRESENT FOR THE ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (AAC)

Rick Briggs, Chair
Al Bobrofsky
Ken Buchholtz
Cindy Burkhour
Jonathon Edgerly
Carolyn Grawi
Michelle Mull (*via conference call*)
Scott Norris
John Witzke
Kim Woolridge (*via conference call*)
Duncan Wyeth (*via conference call*)

ABSENT

Bill Sheffer, Vice Chair
David Campbell
Vendela Collins
Daryl Domke
Sharon Ellis
Aaron Harris
Michael Harris
Sara Peurakoski
Marc Russell
Amy Trotter

PRESENT FOR THE DNR

Sharon Schafer, AAC Sponsor
Stacy Haughey, AAC Upper Peninsula Sponsor (*via conference call*)
Dan Lord, ADA Coordinator

PRESENT FROM THE DNR A-TEAM

Vicki Brown; A-Team Co-Chair, Wildlife
Fran Ryan, Forestry
Lynne Thoma, Fisheries

Christie Bayus, Grants
Tamara Jorkasky, Grants (*via conference call*)
Diana Engle, Michigan Historical Center
Steve Burton, Law Enforcement
Christine Schwerin, Marketing & Outreach
Mike Evanoff, Parks & Recreation

INTERPRETERS

None Requested/Required

OTHERS PRESENT

Tom Jones, Michigan Operation Freedom Outdoors Project Coordinator
Terry Herman, Michigan Lake Products, Elk Rapids
Tim Schreiner, DNR Parks and Recreation Division Cadillac District Supervisor
Carin Soderman, Facilitator, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

REGULAR MEETING

INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Briggs called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. He then took roll call, made introductions around the room and asked if there were any additions or adjustments to the agenda. No additions or adjustments were made to the Agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Briggs asked the Council if they had any additions, edits or changes to the June 2, 2015 Minutes. Council member John Witzke was present at that meeting and the Minutes should reflect his presence. No additional edits were offered for the Minutes.

Chair Briggs motioned to approve the June Minutes; Duncan Wyeth seconded the motion; the motion unanimously carried and the June 2, 2015 Minutes were approved incorporating the corrections noted.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Executive Update

Sharon Schafer, AAC Sponsor and Chief of the DNR Finance and Operations Division, reminded the Council that Dan Lord, Yolanda Taylor and herself are all new to the Council this year due to Joe Frick's retirement and Greg Andrews departure from the DNR. She reported that they are still working on AAC membership, terms and the by-laws. She also reported that the DNR will have a booth at the September 17, 2015 25th Anniversary of the ADA Celebration on the Capitol Lawn and invited all to attend. She reminded the Council to submit their travel expense reimbursements but also informed them that we, as a state agency, cannot pay for or reimburse expenses for their guests.

Sharon also reported on the Council's request to obtain data that reflects the percentage of Recreation Passports that are purchased by people that have an ADA notation on their license plate. She reported that they worked with the data that they obtain from the Secretary of State,

and discussed it with their contact at the Secretary of State. Nothing in their records differentiates or denotes that someone with an ADA sticker/notation purchased the Recreation Passport. Even if they were able to provide this data, the information would only reflect a partial component because Recreation Passports can also be purchased directly at a state park.

Carolyn Grawi requested that we ask the Secretary of State to cross reference those that have an ADA placard with people who purchased a Recreation Passport. Dan Lord responded that they will again look into the possibility of obtaining this data.

DNR Accessibility Team (A-Team) Updates

Dan Lord commented that, in light of the 25th anniversary of the ADA, the Department issued a press release drawing attention to this celebration and highlighting accessible recreation opportunities that are available at state-owned facilities. He also reiterated that the DNR will have a booth at the celebration taking place on the Capitol Lawn on September 17th.

Dan further commented that he did receive a few phone calls as a result of this press release; one of them having to do with the lighthouse at Copper Harbor and the fact that there are no accessible means of getting to the lighthouse itself. Since then, he has discovered that there are two methods of accessing the lighthouse. One is through a contracted service via boat, but that has its limitations as far as getting people in/out of the boat. The second is a service drive agreement with the homeowner's association.

Discussion ensued regarding access to the lighthouse. Diana Engle commented that the Copper Harbor Lighthouse is part of the Michigan Historical Center and the information on their site provides information regarding access to the lighthouse, but there is always room for improving the information that is posted on the web. Dan Lord will review the information posted on Fort Wilkins Historical State Park's site for comparison and compatibility. We should get the same information posted on-line.

Comments from the Council included providing diagrams of the land and surrounding areas, maps and photos of historical sites, and accommodating all users, including those that would like to travel by boat. Improvements can be made to the information that is provided on-line as well as at the historical sites themselves.

The Council asked that this topic be added to the next meeting agenda for further discussion.

NON-AGENDA ITEM

Chair Briggs invited Tom Jones, Project Coordinator for Michigan Operation Freedom Outdoors, to talk about the 600-acres at the Sharonville State Game Area that will be designated as a restricted access hunting area for people with disabilities during specific, specialized hunts. During special hunt opportunities, hunters with disabilities who successfully draw a permit will be the only ones allowed to hunt in this restricted area. This gives hunters with disabilities the opportunity to hunt deer on state land without competition from other hunters, allows Michigan's deer resources to be more accessible to hunters with disabilities, and allows successful applicants with disabilities to designate up to three (3) non-hunting operators to accompany them on the hunt.

The special hunts being proposed at the Sharonville State Game Area for the 2015 deer hunting season include:

September 19-20, 2015 to coincide with the Liberty Hunt.

October 1-7, 2015 to coincide with the first week of archery deer season.
October 15-18, 2015 to coincide with the Independence Hunt.
November 15-30, 2015 to coincide with the regular firearm deer season.

This proposal is being presented to the Natural Resources Commission at their August 13 meeting for action. The full details of the proposal can be found on the Commission's web site.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Terry Herman, Michigan Lake Products, was asked to attend the meeting on behalf of Neil Pokela. He commented that he is impressed with this Council and applauds their efforts as well as the DNR's efforts in providing accessible recreation.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Chair Briggs thanked everyone for their attendance, participation and input. He also thanked DNR staff and the resort staff for accommodating the Council, and for going out of their way to make this group feel welcome.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2015, and will be held at Belle Isle Park in Detroit.

ADJOURN

Chair Briggs adjourned the regular meeting around 10:00 a.m. so that the Council could move into their facilitated working session to discuss the goals and future direction of the Council.