



## ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

### MINUTES

August 11, 2020

### VIRTUAL MEETING

#### **ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (AAC)**

##### **PRESENT**

Scott Norris, Chair  
Tom Jones, Co-Chair  
Ken Buchholtz  
Cindy Burkhour  
Michael Harris  
Neal McKenzie  
Sarah Peurakoski  
Will Purves  
Jessica Stark  
Billy Vickers  
Bryan Wilkinson  
Robert Winn  
Kim Woolridge  
Duncan Wyeth

##### **ABSENT**

Vendella Collins  
Justin Lippe

#### **PRESENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR)**

Sharon Schafer, AAC Sponsor  
Stacy Haughey, Upper Peninsula AAC Sponsor/DNR Field Deputy  
Alexis Hermiz, DNR Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer  
Michael Holsinger, ADA Coordinator  
Yolanda Taylor, Assistant to the AAC

#### **PRESENT FROM THE DNR ACCESSIBILITY TEAM (A-TEAM)**

Tamara Jorkasky, Executive  
Rachel Coale, Forestry  
Andrea Stay, Grants Management  
David Haupt, *A-Team Co-Chair*, Marketing and Outreach  
Diana Paiz Engle, Michigan History Center  
Angie Herrera, *A-Team Chair*, Minerals  
Ryan Soulard and Kristin Wildman, Wildlife

#### **INTERPRETERS**

Andi Chumley and Janna Rowan  
Karen Snyder, Captioner

#### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Chad Stewart and Ashley Autenrieth, DNR Wildlife Division (*Presenters*)  
Brad Garmon, Director, DNR Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry (*Presenter*)

## REGULAR MEETING

### INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Norris called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He announced that the Accessibility Advisory Council's (council) May meeting was cancelled due to the pandemic, so this is the first virtual meeting of the council. He gave a brief overview of how the meeting would be conducted and asked that everybody be patient as we work through this new format.

The Chair then introduced two new members to the council, Robert Winn and Duncan Wyeth. Both gave a brief background on themselves and why they wanted to be a member of the council.

Robert Winn is an ADA Coordinator and Facilities Manager at Disability Network Oakland and Macomb. He conducts ADA compliance assessments for multiple businesses and cities, reviews city and township plans/drawings, conducts on-site reviews, and provides recommendation letters for those requesting grant funding for their projects. He also facilitates a "wreck-it" program that teaches Do-It-Yourself projects and repairs around the home, as well as crafts, holiday cooking, and other projects to keep people socially connected while learning life skills. Robert became interested in the council based on his experience working with communities and people on accessibility.

Duncan Wyeth was one of the original council members since its inception (2007-2017). He is an adjunct professor with Michigan State University, was the Director of the state Commission on Disability Concerns, and also served on the Department of Natural Resources (department) Michigan State Parks Advisory Council who were instrumental in creating the Recreation Passport. Duncan was also a Paralympic athlete in Barcelona, Spain and Seoul, Korea, and served on the U.S. Olympic committee representing people with disabilities for eight years. Duncan lives in the Upper Peninsula and loves the outdoors. He was impressed to see the work and accomplishments of this council and is excited to be back.

The Chair then took roll call.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Norris asked the council if they had any additions, corrections, or discussion regarding the February 25, 2020 Minutes. No additional corrections, edits or discussion was offered.

*Chair Norris requested a motion to approve the February 25, 2020 Minutes; Duncan Wyeth motioned to approve the Minutes; Cindy Burkhour seconded the motion; the motion unanimously carried, and the February 2020 Minutes were approved.*

### ENDORSEMENT OF DNR RECREATION GRANT APPLICATION/PROJECT

Chair Norris explained that grant application/project number TF20-0095, Wells State Park Stone Building Renovation, is being presented to the council for endorsement. The application/project has been thoroughly reviewed by the two subcommittees and department staff. All members of the council also had the opportunity to review the proposal and materials and provide input in advance of the meeting. Therefore, a brief overview of the project will be presented with very limited discussion. The Chair asked that each council member be prepared to cast their vote on the project.

Angie Herrera, chair of the department's A-Team Grant Application, Project and Program Review subcommittee, explained that the grant application and proposed project was vetted through an accessibility review and input process involving the grant applicants, respective

division representatives, representatives from the department's internal A-Team subcommittee, and the AAC's Infrastructure and Natural Resources Program subcommittee.

Cindy Burkhour, chair of the AAC's Infrastructure and Natural Resources Program subcommittee, gave a brief overview of the grant application/project and the changes that were made to the project to enhance accessibility. Cindy further commented that this is the first application/project that truly went above and beyond the ADA to make it universally accessible. After brief discussion, Cindy gave her full support and recommendation that the council endorse this project as being fully and inclusively accessible and recommend it for funding through the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant program. The Chair asked for a motion and the council endorsed the project/application as follows:

**Wells State Park Stone Building Renovation (TF20-0095)**

DNR Parks and Recreation Division

*Michael Harris motioned in support of the council endorsing the Wells State Park Stone Building Renovation grant application/project TF20-0095 as a fully and inclusively accessible project and recommended it for funding by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant program; Duncan Wyeth seconded the motion; the motion unanimously carried. The council wholeheartedly endorsed the Wells State Park Stone Building Renovation grant application number TF20-0095 and highly recommend approval of this grant application by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board at their December 2020 meeting.*

Chair Norris thanked the subcommittees and the council for their review and endorsement of this project/application.

Cindy Burkhour asked for additional members to serve on this subcommittee. Council member Tom Jones will join the AAC's Infrastructure and Natural Resources Program subcommittee.

Duncan Wyeth asked if this project could be shared throughout the department as the model of an excellent template to use for grant application proposals that go above and beyond ADA standards. After further discussion, Cindy Burkhour will work with her subcommittee and the A-Team's subcommittee to create a template and work to establish standard design Adjustments for projects such as vault toilets, boardwalks, etc.

**DEER REGULATIONS**

Chair Norris introduced Chad Stewart, deer management specialist, and Ashley Autenrieth, deer program biologist, from the department's Wildlife Division. Both have been working with the council's Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on Deer Regulations and are here to provide the council with an update.

**2020 Amendments to Deer Regulations**

Chad Stewart reported the more relevant and high impact changes that were approved by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) at their July 2020 meeting.

The most important recommendation that came out of this group, spearheaded by council member Neal McKenzie, is the opportunity to allow people that are deaf to participate in the Liberty Hunt (a 2-day special hunt that is held in September), and the Independence Hunt (a 4-day special hunt that is held in October) during Michigan's deer hunting season. The NRC approved this recommendation. People that are deaf are now eligible to participate in these two hunts. No type of identification or certification is required to participate.

Hunters that are eligible to participate in the Liberty or Independence Hunts can now bait up to five days in advance of each hunt to attract deer to that area and, hopefully, increase the opportunity for a successful hunt. However, they cannot hunt over that bait or hunt in that area until the official start of the Liberty and/or Independence Hunts. Previously, the opportunity to bait early was only allowed in advance of the Liberty Hunt in September, but now it is allowed for both hunts.

Another change that was made from a consistency standpoint is the type of bait that can be used. Initially, in the Lower Peninsula, there were different types of baits that were authorized depending on the hunting zone. Now, any bait is allowed by qualifying individuals in advance of the Liberty and Independence Hunts, which includes single-bite and multi-bite baits. Up to two gallons at any one time can be used. If the two gallons are consumed, it can be replenished.

Chad further reported other changes to the deer regulations that were approved by the NRC in July (too many to list here). All approved changes to the deer regulations will be posted in the 2020 Deer Hunting Digest and on-line.

#### Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Deer Regulations

The council's ad hoc subcommittee will reconvene to further discuss the possible renaming of the Liberty and Independence Hunts and additional recommendations for the 2021 hunting season. Any additional recommended changes would have to be submitted by November 2020 to be in place for the 2021 hunting season. Council member Tom Jones will be designated as the chair of the ad hoc subcommittee.

Ashley Autenrieth also encouraged the ad hoc subcommittee and council members to think about bigger changes down the road. Although 2022 and 2023 seem like a long way away, any changes to the deer regulations would have to be in place well in advance of those hunting seasons.

Chad entertained a few questions from the council. The council thanked Chad and Ashley for their efforts in getting the deaf community included as eligible participants in the Liberty and Independence Hunts, for the numerous changes to the deer hunting regulations to make them clear and more consistent, and for their willingness to continue to work with this group.

#### **BRAD GARMON, DIRECTOR, DNR OFFICE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION INDUSTRY**

The Chair introduced Brad Garmon, Director of the department's Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry. Brad agreed to attend this meeting to give the council an overview of this office and his involvement with industry to increase the outdoor recreation economy.

Brad Garmon commented that this is a new office in the department. He is switching the name to the Michigan Outdoor Industry Office. He changed the name because recreation is a small part of what he does compared to other divisions within the department. His focus is on growing the outdoor recreation industry and contributing to everyone's ability to get in the outdoors. For example, Ford Motor Company made a conscious decision to design the new Ford Bronco as an outdoor recreation vehicle for consumers that are passionate about living or embodying an outdoor adventurous life. Only recently has industry begun to measure itself and think about the range of ways that outdoor recreation is more than just the act of going outside. Whether you walk, bike, run, or boat, it is about the tools and the jobs that underly that ability to go outside and enjoy those opportunities. The state has tried to focus in on new emerging economies, such as aeronautics and medical device technology. Michigan made a choice to also focus on trying to grow the outdoor recreation economy.

Brad further commented that his role is two-fold. There is a joint agreement between the department and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). He works across both lines to support and build on what the department is working on to provide a great outdoor recreation lifestyle, while also focusing on supporting what MEDC is working on to grow and attract talent and companies specifically dedicated to the outdoor recreation economy.

From a Great Lakes perspective, Michigan has a strong economy in boating, ranking #5 nationwide. Michigan manufactures boats, pontoons and paddle boats, boat accessories, components, and so on. Michigan is also strong in ATVs and RVs. Although we may not necessarily manufacture the ATVs or RVs in this state, we manufacture a lot of the components, equipment or tools that can be attached to ATVs or installed in RVs, ranking #7 in that economy.

Initially, Brad's goal was attracting and creating more businesses to enhance Michigan's economy by adding more jobs and more companies to the landscape, as well as focusing on areas where there is the potential for a lot of growth and opportunity. However, since the pandemic, his perspective has changed. He spends more time focusing on community development, small business support, main street redevelopment and how to retain the industries, economies, and small businesses that we have.

His other focus is on what we can make or what people are interested in making to enhance accessibility in the outdoors for people of all abilities. Making new gear, equipment, wheelchairs, etc. to get more people in the outdoors and how to make those connections. Brad is a connector and wants to help Michigan grow in these areas.

Brad stopped at this point to entertain questions from the council.

Cindy Burkhour used the council as an example of bringing together people with disabilities, advocates, community developers, and others that think about inclusiveness, accessibility, and universal design first. She encouraged Brad to think about, or have industry think about, universally accessible and inclusive design; something that everybody can use or do within that specific realm. Thinking in advance and up front about the importance of accessibility and serving all our citizens by incorporating that caveat into everything that we do or design. We also need to think culturally as well. Not everything is inclusive to people of color or from different cultures. Bottom line is how to make it more fun, cool, exciting, and accessible for everyone, both physically, culturally, emotionally, and so on. It is not just about physical disabilities anymore; it is a much broader focus.

Brad thanked Cindy for that input. He had the same conversation with Lieutenant Governor Gilchrist. Not all outdoor spaces are necessarily welcoming to all colors, cultures, or abilities. This is an industry that Michigan has not put a lot of thought into. He asked if the council had any idea or data on the size of this potential market. It would be very convincing to suppliers, manufacturers, and other providers to possibly consider adding these products to their lines. Cindy offered to help Brad gather this information.

Duncan Wyeth recommended three magazines that would help him get an idea of the types of products, manufacturers, recreation groups, and chapters around the country that would be useful to his endeavors and his research. They have a lot of ads that feature products and companies that are focused on manufacturing, creating, selling, and marketing a wide range of outdoor recreation equipment targeting the disability community. Bryan Wilkinson shared links to those magazines. Duncan also suggested that, down the road, this council could work with his office to offer forums or demo days around the state for manufacturers, suppliers and the

like to demo their products and give people a hands-on experience. Brad agreed that demo days would be an exciting venture to consider and work on down the road.

Chair Norris asked that Yolanda share Brad's contact information with all council members. Yolanda confirmed she will share Brad's contact information with the council, and provide Brad with all council member's contact information so they can connect directly.

Duncan also suggested Brad visit the Demmer Shooting Sports and Education Center in Lansing. It is a world-class shooting facility that provides archery and gun range opportunities for people with or without disabilities. Brad responded that he has visited the center several times and is very impressed with their programs and products.

Brad thanked the council for the opportunity and looks forward to collaborating with this group.

### **ADA 30-YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

Kim Woolridge, Attorney/Title II ADA Appeals Coordinator with the Department of Civil Rights, thanked everyone, especially Diana Paiz Engle who is representing the department on the steering committee, and mostly Kelly Frake who has been spearheading the ADA 30-year anniversary for the ADA Compliance Division. Kim also mentioned that she would like to echo Cindy Burkhour's comments about moving people towards inclusion and equity. She also mentioned that the ADA 30-year event was supposed to be a live event; however, due to the onset of the pandemic, they switched to having virtual events. So far, the virtual events have been well attended and very well received. They have been using Zoom for these virtual sessions because it is the most accessible format. Due to spending restrictions that have been imposed on state agencies, she is asking other department's for their assistance in providing any resources that could help offset the costs so they can continue to offer these sessions. Kim had to depart the meeting and turned it over to Kelly Frake to provide the update.

Kelly reported they have been very successful in getting departments to sign on for 30-year anniversary events. Last week they had a two-part session for employers and businesses. It was hosted by former Lieutenant Governor Brian Calley who is now the president of the Small Business Association in Michigan. That session was about Accommodating Employees during Covid-19. It included speakers and panelists from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons, the Division on Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, and Kim Woolridge herself as the State ADA Coordinator. This week they are doing the employee version of that session which is more focused on working during Covid-19. Those sessions are scheduled for August 12 and 13. She provided the registration link for these sessions.

Other upcoming sessions include:

August 27 - Anthony Ionni, "Relentless Tour." Ionni was diagnosed as a child with pervasive development disorder, which is on the autism spectrum. He was the first person with a disability to play Big 10 basketball at MSU. He also works for the Department of Civil Rights and has traveled around the country speaking to K-12 youth about bullying, and educating people about autism through his Relentless Tour campaign (<http://relentlesstour.com>). This session is specifically for youth.

September 10 – Discussion on Intersectionality, Race and Disability

September 17 – Presentation from the Division on Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing

End of September – Disability in Law Enforcement with mCOLES (Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards). They really want to hear from the disability community about the challenges they face with law enforcement and what they can do better, taking into account disability training for law enforcement officers.

In October, they have Labor and Economic Opportunity, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and the Department of Corrections scheduled.

In November, they have the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to talk about accessible travel.

The Elder Abuse Task Force and the Attorney General will give an update in December, as well as the Department of Technology, Management and Budget. They are also planning some sort of session on mental health and self-care in December to help people deal with Covid during the holidays. The Michigan History Center may also do pre-recorded sessions on the history of disability in Michigan, with Duncan Wyeth as a speaker.

All session can be found on their website at [Michigan.gov/ADA30](https://www.michigan.gov/ADA30).

Kelly further mentioned that they will potentially have issues with funding so they are calling on departments to provide any monetary or non-monetary resources, such as sharing a Zoom account, or to recommend other vendors, sponsors or partners that would be willing to offer their assistance to mitigate costs. Will Purves commented he would be willing to collaborate with them on using his Zoom account.

Cindy Burkhour asked who was spearheading the department's presentation and the content. Diana Paiz Engle responded she is leading this effort through the A-Team's Marketing subcommittee. They have been working together on an outline and are at the point where they will be reaching out to A-Team and council members to participate. The department's presentation will focus on accessible recreation.

#### **ADA 30-SECOND INFOMERCIAL**

Dave Haupt, A-Team Co-Chair, reported the department's ADA 30-second infomercial is also a product of the A-Team's Marketing subcommittee. A link to the infomercial was provided to the council and was shown after the meeting adjourned.

Chair Norris thanked Kelley, Diana and Dave for the updates.

#### **RECREATIONAL SAFETY COURSES UPDATE**

Alexis Hermiz, the department's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, provided an update on the following topics that were brought up by the council at previous meetings. Lt. Wanless was unable to attend. He coordinates the Rec Safety courses for the department.

##### On-Line Safety Courses Platform

The council had addressed the fact that the hunter safety course, specifically, was not accessible to people with disabilities, especially for those who are blind, have limited sight, are color blind, deaf, deaf blind, hard of hearing, or with developmental or cognitive disabilities.

Alexis reported she has been working with the Law Enforcement Division and Kalkomey Enterprises (the vendor that offers these courses) on the hunter safety and all other Rec Safety courses that are offered on-line. She commented that ensuring these on-line platforms are accessible to all users is important, especially now during the pandemic, and is the one issue they are mostly focusing on at this time. Kalkomey's on-line platform follows the Web Content

Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 for ADA compliance, but they have shared with them that accessibility issues still exist. Lt. Wanless has encouraged and is working with Kalkomey to reanalyze their on-line platforms and content to ensure accessibility. Alexis will report further at the next council meeting or as things develop. Lt. Wanless has asked for input from council members that they could share with the vendor. Those comments can be sent to Alexis.

#### Accommodations for People with Disabilities

Alexis further reported there is no language on the website that highlights specific contacts or the process for requesting accommodations for people with disabilities. The department receives requests for accommodations from people with disabilities through the ADA coordinator, their legal department, the Law Enforcement Division, herself, or other means. The department then gets them connected with someone that can assist. The department is working on reviewing and updating this information on all sites so people with disabilities have a way of contacting someone for accommodations or assistance, including the vendor's site.

Neal McKenzie asked if the department provides interpreters for people that are deaf or hard of hearing. Alexis responded that an interpreter can be requested.

Tom Jones asked if the department has come up with accommodations for range time qualification, which is a requirement for finalizing the hunter safety course, and what type of locations they use to accommodate people with disabilities (i.e. shooting ranges, field trial areas, etc.). Also, as previously raised by Jessica Stark, are hunter safety instructors also required to hold classes or courses in an accessible format or provide those accommodations. These accommodations need to be considered, especially with the uptick in the universal group of hunters that are coming in.

Chair Norris also asked if hunters who are visually impaired are allowed to have someone work with them or accompany them to complete their range time.

Alexis did not have the answer to these two questions but will follow up with Lt. Wanless and report back to the council.

#### Extending the Apprenticeship Program for Hunters with Disabilities Over the Age of 18

Alexis reported that this issue would require legislative changes and is much larger than coming up with a solution or resolving it within this council. She is pursuing this further to identify if or how these changes may be made or considered.

Neal McKenzie asked if there have been discussions on accommodating youth hunters with disabilities between the ages of 9 to 18. Alexis responded that youth hunters have other avenues available to them and can hunt with an adult, a mentor, or an apprentice. The issue at hand is when a hunter turns 18. More restrictions are imposed, and they are required to complete a hunter safety course and obtain a hunting license. For people with cognitive or developmental disabilities, this may be difficult to impossible for them to complete a safety course and obtain a hunting license so they can continue to hunt, either on their own or with a companion. Those that may have been hunting during their youth under a parent or guardian will have significant barriers when they turn 18. This topic may require a subcommittee to work through the rules and regulations so it can be elevated for consideration.

Chair Norris reminded the council that an ad hoc subcommittee on deer regulations was established earlier this year. He suggests the deer regulations subcommittee tackle this issue with Tom Jones as the lead/chair of this subcommittee.



All topics are separate issues so Alexis will reach out to others to figure out how best to address each of them appropriately.

The Chair asked the council if they had any additional questions or comments.

Cindy Burkhour asked how this council can make a request or recommendation to the department that vendor contracts should include language holding them accountable for making sure their products are accessible to all users. Contracts should not be awarded to vendors who do not meet or exceed ADA requirements and ensure their products are universally accessible.

Kelly Frake, on behalf of Kim Woolridge and the Department of Civil Rights, commented that the Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB) has an internal group that is focusing on these same issues, but from a technology (IT) standpoint. The language in contracts needs to be more robust, and departments should be more vigilant and not allow vendors to redline these requirements. Chair Norris is also on this workgroup and commented it is a long process. Another area they are working on is that a vendor should not get a pass by a department, or bureau within a department. If a vendor does not adhere to ADA requirements, ultimately, the responsibility falls on the department that awarded that contract.

Sharon Schafer responded that there are different components to varying contracts, so it is a matter of getting all the parts moving in the right direction. Members of the department's A-Team also play a role in working with their respective divisions to get involved and make sure those contracts or projects are in compliance moving forward. She will discuss this further with the department's procurement manager; she may have more information on any efforts that are taking place to address these issues. In the meantime, Sharon suggests maybe a subcommittee of the department's A-Team would be willing to take this on and work with a subcommittee of the council or varying members from the council. Any suggestions from the council or the A-Team would be appreciated.

Mike Holsinger commented that he has an upcoming meeting with the DTMB Design and Construction group and will bring this topic to their attention.

Billy Vickers commented that he and other council members work with a lot of different organizations in varying areas that do not think about the end user. They only focus on meeting the bare minimum requirements of the ADA. They get a lot of calls from an end user's perspective. The more the department can involve the end user as part of the process, from beginning to end, would be beneficial to both versus doing damage control after the fact. Walk throughs would also be beneficial.

Yolanda reminded the council that they conducted a few walk-throughs to assess and provide input on various department facilities, including Belle Isle Park and the Outdoor Adventure Center in Detroit, and Sleepy Hollow State Park. All facilities were very appreciative of the information and feedback they received from the council and have worked towards improving access.

The Chair thanked Alexis for the update and the council members for their input on these important issues.

#### **ANNIE URASKY'S SURVEY/REPOT**

Annie Urasky, Director of the Division on Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing, which is housed within the Department of Civil Rights, thanked the council for the invitation to participate in the meeting. She commented that several discussions have occurred with the A-Team and this

council about how we can continue to build a stronger partnership and provide improved accessibility for Michigan residents who identify as deaf, deaf blind or hard of hearing (DDBHH). She is thrilled to continue this partnership and was asked to give the council an update on the 'Not Without Me' survey and census they conducted.

Annie reported that, in 2017, they received funding from a legislator who realized there was a dire need for a census and needs assessment of Michigan residents who identify as DDBHH. The statistics and data were lacking and, to continue to receive community funding for programs and services, it was crucial to obtain up-to-date information. The last survey of this type was conducted in 1989; over 30 years ago.

The "Not Without Me" survey and census had 145 questions that targeted experiences, needs, preferences, identity (i.e. as being DDBHH), their age at the onset of their hearing loss, residence/location, and their experiences in education, employment, housing, transportation, health care, community and other services related to those domains. Using this data, they focused on the discrepancies and where the disparities lie so they could further discuss how to break down some of those barriers and improve or provide better services in those communities and the state.

Annie emphasized there are many people that will never know what it is like to identify as being DDBHH unless you are a member of that community. They were shocked to discover that many of the communities are often overlooked or under-represented, especially when it comes to local or government funding to help support needed programs or services. Looking at the state population, Michigan residents who identify as being DDBHH make up 7.4% of the population, which is an increase of about 3.4% since the last survey in 1989, so it has nearly doubled. This shows that some of the programs and services that are supposed to be serving these communities are not getting adequate funding because they have been overlooked.

Annie also provided data and disparities that exist in communication, diversity, education, and employment. From the survey, 48% indicated they were currently employed, which is 10% below the state's average. Also, many have experienced discrimination or mistreatment in the workplace, which is not acceptable, and it has a strong negative impact on a person's perceived quality of life. She also mentioned that we need to do a better job of increasing awareness on how vitally important captioning is for this community to access information. Accessibility needs to be integrated into all products, services, and processes. The number one deterrent to accessing programs and services is the requirement to fill out so many forms to prove a disability. If accessibility were just a given, more people would buy or utilize those goods or services.

Annie closed by asking the department and the council to think about how they can partner or collaborate with the Division on DDBHH and their advisory council. She would like to have more discussion about how state government agencies can help educate the public, as well as think about the big picture by incorporating accessibility into all of their goods, programs, and services. She also asked agencies to think about employment opportunities (i.e. park employees). So many people love the outdoors and exploring this Great State. She suggests the department could think about introducing programs like Tourism ASL, DDBHH awareness week, braille signage in the parks and facilities, and so on, as well as thinking about the users of their parks or facilities. For example, if someone that was DDBHH got lost or there was a disaster in a rural area, how would that communication look like. The more opportunities to collaborate and make everything more integrated, streamlined and inviting, the more welcoming and inclusive it will be for everyone.

The Chair thanked Annie for her report and encouraged council members and staff to think about what she reported and submit any ideas on partnership or collaboration to her office.

The full report can be found by clicking here: <https://notwithoutusmich.org/survey/>

## **DEPARTMENT UPDATES**

### DNR Executive Updates

Sharon Schafer, AAC Sponsor/Chief of the Finance and Operations Division, reported that the department's Natural Resources Deputy, Shannon Hanna, was recently married and has changed her name to Shannon Lott; Deb Begalle who was the Forestry Chief retired, so Jeff Stampfly is now the Acting Chief, with Jason Stephens as the Assistant Chief; and in the Wildlife Division, Dan Kennedy is now the Acting Chief. These positions cannot be permanently filled until the hiring freeze that was imposed due to the pandemic is lifted or authorization is granted.

Sharon also assured the council that she will address the concerns expressed regarding contracts with the procurement manager, and she will also take it to the department's management team to reemphasize with the division chiefs the importance of taking a proactive versus reactive approach when contracting with vendors.

Tom Jones asked if there is any word as to when state facilities will reopen to allow partners to conduct training or events, especially with the Liberty Hunt right around the corner. Sharon responded there is no new word on when that may occur.

### ADA Coordinator Updates

Mike Holsinger, the department's ADA Coordinator and Field Operations manager for the Finance and Operations Division, gave an update on the department's shooting ranges. The Supply Road (Traverse City) and Echo Point (Allegan County) shooting ranges are complete. The Supply Road range has accessible parking spaces (van), concrete pathways, restrooms, and three 100-yard stations, three 50-yard stations, three 25-yard stations, and three 10-yard stations, all fully accessible. Echo Point has accessible parking spaces (van), aggregate pathways, restrooms, and four 100-yard stations, four 25-yard stations, and four 10-yard stations, with ten accessible lanes. The Lapeer shooting range is currently being updated. It will have eleven accessible shooting stations, with a targeted September or October completion date. They are waiting on the lease for a shooting range in Marquette, and they will also have a new range in Roscommon that will have twelve accessible lanes. Construction on the Marquette and Roscommon ranges is anticipated to begin in 2021.

Tom Jones asked if they are offering led sleds at any of the shooting ranges to shoulder a firearm for those that cannot hold or lift a gun or laser-sighted device. Mike responded they do not currently have that equipment available, especially since most shooting ranges are not staffed. However, Mike said he will discuss this with the design team. Tom responded that it is something to think about acquiring or offering in the future.

Bryan Wilkinson commented that the Island Lake shooting range is managed by a private entity. They offer equipment (i.e. sandbags, etc.) to accommodate shooters that cannot hold a firearm.

Will Purves asked if there is WiFi service or cellular reception at these ranges, especially for those that rely on assistive-type apps on their phones. Holsinger responded that most of these ranges are located in remote locations and do not have the greatest cell service, if any at all. Some people have relied on the hotspots on their phones, but he will also take this into consideration and discuss it with the design team for future consideration.

Dave Haupt commented that he has worked on getting routers to some remote locations (i.e. Sharonville). He would be willing to work with Mike to see what, if anything, they can get installed at these remote locations.

Cindy Burkhour suggested that maybe this is something they could discuss with Brad Garmon, to see if he can get a company to partner with the department to install emergency hot spots at these remote locations.

### A-Team Updates

Angie Herrera reported she is now the new chair of the A-Team and just recently transitioned into that position in May, with Dave Haupt as the co-chair. She further reported that the A-Team is currently working on identifying training needs as it relates to creating accessible documents, as well as converting existing documents into an accessible format.

### **COUNCIL MEMBER UPDATES**

Due to timing, the Chair tabled this discussion until the next meeting.

Instead, he took this opportunity to gather input from all participants on their experience with this virtual meeting platform. There were a few quirks here and there but, overall, all participants were pleased and felt the meeting went very well, especially since it was this council's first virtual meeting. They also felt the CART (captioning) service was very useful as well. All acknowledged they were able to participate and felt that it also gives the public an opportunity to participate versus in-person meetings.

Sharon Schafer thanked those that worked behind the scenes testing numerous meeting platforms to determine which would be the best for this council. Many hours were put into making sure this meeting would be fully accessible for all participants.

The Chair echoed Sharon's comments. He also thanked the interpreters, the captioner and others behind the scenes. He felt the meeting went very well; therefore, the council will use the same meeting platform for their next meeting.

### **COUNCIL BUSINESS**

The Chair announced that the next meeting of the council is scheduled for December 8, 2020. It will be a virtual meeting and information will be posted on the council's web page.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

### **CLOSING BUSINESS**

Duncan Wyeth expressed his gratitude to be back on the council. He asked Sharon Schafer, when she meets with the department's executive team, and Angie Herrera, when she meets with the A-Team, to share how incredibly unique this council is in local, state, and federal government. This council is an example of how the department has tapped into the diversity, equity, and inclusion values. He asked that they please share with their colleagues how unique, how important, and how valued the activities of this council are as it relates to public policy and public input. Duncan stated this is exactly why he applied to come back to the council.

The Chair asked Robert Winn how he felt about his first meeting as a council member. Robert responded that he is very appreciative, very impressed, and very excited to be a member on this council. The subjects that this council discusses are things that need to be addressed and it gives people with disabilities a voice.

Will Purves wanted to reiterate Duncan's sentiments. He also commented that their agency has a pretty robust Zoom account. He offered the use of their account and his assistance in setting up future meetings.

## **ADJOURN**

Chair Norris asked if there were any further comments. No additional comments were offered. He then asked for a motion to adjourn.

*Duncan Wyeth motioned for adjournment; Cindy Burkhour seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.*