



## ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

### MINUTES

February 22, 2022

### VIRTUAL MEETING

#### ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (AAC)

##### PRESENT

Scott Norris, Chair  
Tom Jones, Co-Chair  
Ken Buchholtz  
Vendela Collins  
Michael Harris  
Neal McKenzie  
Jessica Stark  
Billy Vickers  
Bryan Wilkinson  
Robert Winn  
Duncan Wyeth

##### ABSENT

Cindy Burkhour  
Justin Lippe  
Will Purves  
Kim Woolridge

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

Daniel Lord, AAC Sponsor  
Alexis Hermiz, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer  
Michael Holsinger, ADA Coordinator  
Yolanda Taylor, Assistant to the AAC

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

Andrea Stay and Alexandria McBride, Grants Management  
David Haupt, *A-Team Chair*, and Cindy Krueger, *A-Team Co-Chair*, Marketing and Outreach  
Diana Paiz, Michigan History Center

#### INTERPRETERS

Janet Jurus and Andi Chumley  
Leticia Fox, Closed Captioner

#### PRESENTERS:

Keith Cheli, DNR Parks and Recreation  
David Kosick and Jeremy Detwiler, KMA Design  
Maia Turek, DNR Parks and Recreation

Other members of the public.

### REGULAR MEETING

#### INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Norris called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. and welcomed everyone to another virtual meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Council (council). He gave a brief overview of how the meeting would be conducted, including meeting protocols, and asked for everyone's patience as we work through this virtual format.

The Chair then took roll call.

Chair Norris introduced Dan Lord as the new council sponsor, replacing Sharon Schafer after her retirement in January. Dan gave a brief overview of his background and experience with accessibility and the ADA, beginning with his career in the Parks and Recreation Division as a landscape architect. Dan has been with the department since the creation of the Accessibility Advisory Council, which was formed by the Governor in 2007 in conjunction with the W. K. Kellogg Foundation and the Access to Recreation initiative, which directed the department into evaluating how they develop places and spaces that are accessible to all users. He then came to the Finance and Operations Division in 2015 where he was the former ADA coordinator and an accessibility team member before he became the Grants Section Manager overseeing the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, Recreation Passport, and Land and Water Conservation Fund grant programs.

Dan also announced that Erik Eklund is the new chief of the Finance and Operations Division, replacing Sharon Schafer. Dan is also working out-of-class as the Assistant Chief of the division. He oversees the Grants Management Section, Real Estate, Minerals Management, and Field Operations, and looks forward to reengaging with the council and the A-Team.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Norris asked the council if they had any additions, corrections, or discussion regarding the December 7, 2021, Minutes. No additional corrections, edits, or discussion was offered.

Chair Norris requested a motion to approve the December 2021 Minutes.

***Duncan Wyeth motioned to approve the Minutes; Michael Harris seconded the motion; the motion unanimously carried, and the December 2021 Minutes were approved.***

### **SIGNAGE STANDARDS FOR MICHIGAN STATE PARKS, TRAILS, AND WATERWAYS**

Maia Turek, Engagement and Innovation Specialist, DNR Parks and Recreation Division, announced a new initiative and an exciting program they are pursuing for state parks, waterways, and trails. During the pandemic they realized that, for many people, it was their first time discovering the outdoors or stepping onto public lands. They started receiving feedback from users regarding signage so they saw this as an opportunity to convey information that would be educational, instructional, and make visitors feel welcomed and safe. The division decided to work with an outside contractor to create accessible and inclusive signage at their facilities, and felt this council could provide valuable input and feedback.

Maia then introduced David Kosick, President, and Jeremy Detwiler, Senior Project Manager, of KMA Design; the contractor that will be helping them create new signage for their facilities. Dave Kosick commented they were retained by the state to develop a new signage program for all department-managed properties into the future. They have worked with Disney World, major universities, health care institutions, cities, and many agencies across the country. They more recently redesigned signage for Iowa's state park system. He further explained they are currently at the observation and input/feedback stage to identify what currently exists and what is needed. New users and new experiences are important. Visitors need to be able to find their way to or around a state park, state forest, trail, waterway, etc., especially first-time users. They will be designing new signage for all department-managed lands and facilities to be consistent in a brand, and to meet all state and federal ADA requirements. They are meeting with various groups to identify roadblocks or problems they run into when visiting or using a facility, what can be improved, and gathering a variety of input so they can add that information to their repository of information and figure out how to move forward with a brand/design.

Jeremy Detwiler commented that they want to key in on accessibility and inclusivity, making sure it is an all-inclusive design/experience. From Keith Cheli's update, he heard that EV charging station signage is not clear. This is an example of where signage could direct people to those stations or other amenities. This is an opportunity for the council to share ideas, identify shortcomings, where they could do much better and, basically, their wish list on how to improve the overall experience at state parks and other facilities, and what type of signage is needed, whether it be braille, audio, or visual cues.

Michael Harris commented that signage benefits everybody, not just people with disabilities. He gave the example of the Renaissance Center in Detroit where it was impossible to find anything in that building, even the elevators and the restrooms because of its design. After they had someone upgrade their signage, they still did not consider people with disabilities. He suggested that, throughout the process, KMA should engage with people of varying disabilities that can provide input on a location or a facility and if the signage is inclusive or intrusive. Sometimes too much signage can be intrusive and not conducive to everybody's needs. You want signage to be useful but without the overkill. All properties will also have unique characteristics so what may work for one location may not work for another.

David Kosick responded they recognize they cannot design a one-size-fits-all signage program. They are working with partners of the department, like this group, with the expertise to help them understand the concerns so they can develop a comprehensive program that can be utilized statewide. Their goal is to limit the amount of signage while enhancing the experience without cluttering the woods and the parks with signage. They also want it to be welcoming, create a sense of enjoyment, and something you will want to do or visit again.

Maia also commented they are in the early stages of this initiative. They are not in the design phase yet so they are looking for information as to what this group feels would be best practices and what they should strive for.

Council members continued to engage in discussions with KMA to share their thoughts and ideas. Some of the suggestions that came out of this group include:

- You want signage to be useful but not intrusive.
- No signage clutter.
- Consider the use of tactile signage and braille to get a sense of the topography or identify where buildings or features are located.
- Tactile signage would be useful to all users, including the blind and deaf communities.
- Electronic signage where it makes sense.
- Signage at entrances that address alternative formats for enhancing their experience at a given location, such as audio/digital or video options, and where they can be accessed.
- Directional signage, especially for trails or locations that have unique features.
- Video options for facilities or locations that are inaccessible (i.e. the second floor of a lighthouse or historical building), including locations that are inaccessible by people with limited mobility.
- Signage for quiet places for people/children with autism.
- Signage or notification that there is signage.
- Emergency signage for trail closures, flooding, road washouts, or other natural disasters or damage to a particular park or area that hinders access.

- Signage does not always have to apply to people with disabilities, it should apply to all users and consider seniors or people with temporary disabilities (i.e. broken leg).
- The use of drone footage of an area that may otherwise be inaccessible to everyone.
- The use of sign language interpretation and closed captioning for all video footage.
- Include parking spaces and signage for senior citizens without taking away ADA parking spaces and signage for people with disabilities or wheelchair users.
- Include a user group of individuals with varying disabilities to complete a survey, or another means of gather information where all users can submit their ideas or suggestions.
- Signage may not be required for every single location.
- With smart technology, considerations could be made for downloadable information, such as directional, wayfinding, instructional videos, or audio applications.
- Focus on the varying user groups.

It was noted that only about eight to ten percent of blind people can read braille. Some people acquire blindness, or deafness, later in life. It was also noted that ADA requirements for signage is just the minimum requirement. It does not mean you cannot think outside the box and create a design that other states may want to duplicate or is universally accessible to all users.

Yolanda also mentioned this group has visited various state facilities to provide their input and accessibility review. Those locations/facilities include the Outdoor Adventure Center and Belle Isle Park in Detroit, the Platte River Fish Hatchery in Beulah, the Manistee Fish Hatchery/Weir, Sleepy Hollow State Park, and a few other state facilities. She suggested they visit the Outdoor Adventure Center, as well as the Platte River Fish Hatchery since they had an accessibility review completed and are implementing suggested improvements. She also suggested they reach out to the Disability Networks around the state for additional input, as well as any council members as they have in-depth knowledge and experience on a personal level and working with various groups. The Explore the Shores organization in Manistee could also provide valuable information about the accessibility improvements they are implementing in that area. Diana Paiz, accessibility team member, was also involved in the trail signage for the Kal-Haven Heritage trail, in partnership with MSU, and works at the Michigan History Center where they have incorporated signage at their facility. She would be a good contact, as well as council members Cindy Burkhour and Robert Winn who have done accessibility reviews for various organizations and communities.

David, Jeremy, and Maia thanked the group for their input. They will take this information back to the department and explained that some of these suggestions will depend on how deep the department wants to dive into tactile signage and alternative formats, especially if it requires being connected to infrastructure or will require facility upgrades. However, part of their initial assessment is to identify those types of enhancements that can or should be applied. Maia offered all council and accessibility team members to submit any additional comments or suggestions to her.

### **EV CHARGING STATION UPDATE**

Keith Cheli, Landscape Architect, Parks and Recreation Division, has been the department lead on promoting the universally accessible EV charging station template since the council endorsed the design in 2018, in partnership with Cindy Burkhour who is the chair of the council's infrastructure subcommittee.

Keith first thanked Dave Haupt and Yolanda Taylor for their assistance by connecting him and Cindy, and others, with interested parties and scheduling meetings, leading up to the conversations Keith and Cindy are having today with various organizations and agencies.

He gave the group a brief overview of how this template came to be, which started with a cooperative in northern Michigan that was interested in installing EV charging stations at three state park/harbor locations. He reported that, unfortunately, the park/harbor initiative has come to a standstill because the cooperative has run into issues with increased construction costs, the costs of installation and maintenance, and finding contractors that would stay within their budget. It was disappointing but through that initiative this universally accessible design was created. The council endorsed this design and encouraged the department to elevate it to become the statewide standard, and possibly advance it to a national level.

In the past six months, conversations have been initiated with John Perrachio, chair of the Governor's Council on Future Mobility and Electrification; Tim Woods, general manager of the Autonomous Vehicle Alliance, a national organization; and the department's Energy Sprint Team, and other state agencies. John Perrachio and Tim Woods are extremely supportive of this design and, in turn, have been reaching out to various organizations and manufacturers since they were first introduced to the design last August. Conversations are gaining momentum, especially now that EV cars/trucks and EV charging across the state is on the fast track. In fact, following this meeting, Keith, John, Tim, and others have a meeting with a major automobile manufacturing company in Michigan. Their design team is interested in hearing about this universally accessible EV charging station design, how it may relate to their production of EV vehicles, and do further facilitation and testing to take this concept and make it a commercially viable application.

The department's Parks and Recreation Division is also partnering with another EV manufacturer who is working on finalizing plans to install EV charging stations at various state parks this summer, at no cost to the department. This universally accessible template will be the model they use to implement these structures in the state parks, which will expose this design to the public and industry and allow us to lead by example.

This is an exciting time. Keith hopes to share more information and provide further updates to the council as things progress. It is difficult to keep up with this tsunami of energy and interest in advancing EV in this state and around the nation. As a result, however, it becomes clear just how inconsistent EV charging stations are being implemented. Not only are many not accessible for people with mobility impairments, but they are also not accessible or safe for any users. There is a lot of room for improvement, but he is excited to align ourselves and share this information with major industrial leaders on a global scale. If we can partner with organizations like this, we have an opportunity to get this template out there as an industry-wide standard as initially intended. A universally accessible design just makes sense.

Dave Haupt commented that Keith's persistence is amazing. This meeting with the automobile manufacturer and the presentation was pulled together in less than two weeks. The presentation they will be making this afternoon also highlights pictures of EV charging stations that are not safe and are not accessible to any users. There is no forethought into the placement of these charging stations, to include drainage, lighting, placement, coverage, safety, etc.

Keith thanked the council for their initiatives, efforts, contributions, and direction over the years. This just shows that the concept is still alive and well and moving forward at an accelerated pace. He also thanked Cindy Burkhour, who could not attend the meeting. Her input, guidance, direction, and persistence in going above and beyond the ADA has been extremely instrumental

in the design of this template. She continues to attend meetings and provide input as often as she can.

Duncan Wyeth also commented that Michigan Tech is working on major projects associated with autonomous vehicles and EV. There may be synergy there to connect Michigan Tech with Upper Peninsula Power and some of these other agencies and manufacturers. Keith responded that conversations in the Upper Peninsula have focused on tourism and geographical placement, to attract more visitors and provide EV charging in more desolate locations.

The State of Michigan is also utilizing the Volkswagen settlement money. Michigan received \$10 million out of this settlement. These dollars will be utilized by the Department of Energy, Great Lakes and Environment for a cost-sharing EV charging station grant program. The Michigan Department of Transportation has also been involved in these discussions as they will be responsible for implementing infrastructure along state highways.

Michael Harris asked if the State of Michigan has adopted this recommendation. Keith responded that, on a statewide level, there is no overall commitment. They are trying to find the right path to make this a statewide standard. Working with John Perrachio is a move in the right direction, but there is still much work to be done and we must remain vigilant. Mike is trying to get their federal office to take the lead on this initiative. He would like to forward the recommendations and the template to his regional office. Keith and/or Yolanda will provide him with the template and a copy of the PowerPoint presentation they will be using this afternoon.

Diana Paiz also thanked Keith for his hard work and, from the beginning, not settling with the fact that there are no federal guidelines but, instead, choosing to investigate further and create a design that can set the example for others.

The council thanked Keith, Cindy, as well as Dave and Yolanda, for pushing this initiative to the forefront and promoting a design that goes above and beyond ADA standards.

### **MENTORED HUNTING PROGRAM UPDATE**

Chair Norris announced the department is still working on establishing language to address revisions to the mentored hunting program, with the intent of creating more access to individuals that have difficulties obtaining their hunter safety certification, including people with cognitive or intellectual disabilities, to align with a long-term mentored hunting program. The bill would provide guidance on who would qualify for a long-term mentored hunting program, including those hunters that age out of the apprentice or currently established mentored hunting program and may need continued assistance. This long-term program would allow them the opportunity to experience hunting, or continue to hunt, with their family members, friends, groups, or another licensed hunter.

As of early February, the mentored hunting expansion statute update has been shared with legislators. They anticipate a bill being introduced, with hopes that the Legislature acts on it quickly. However, even with quick legislative action, these changes may not take effect until the 2023 hunting season at the earliest. We will not have any more details until the bill is introduced.

### **AAC INITIATIVES**

#### **Adaptive Sports Card**

Co-chair Tom Jones reminded the council that this initiative was discussed at the December 2021 meeting and the idea behind an adaptive sports card are explained in detail in the

December 2021 minutes. However, as a brief overview, the proposed adaptive sports card would allow hunters with disabilities to have all of their qualifying information housed in one location versus being required to carry around all of the qualifying paperwork and permits that show law enforcement they are qualified to hunt from a standing vehicle, hunt with a laser sighting device, are eligible for the Liberty or Independence hunts, is blind or 100% disabled, and so on. Also, if this long-term mentored hunting program is enacted, this would also be one of the qualifying indicators on the card. It would also alleviate conflicts, problems, or communication barriers between Law Enforcement and the hunter because all the information would be encoded on the card.

This would be on a voluntary basis only. Hunters with disabilities will not be required to obtain an adaptive sports card, but it is being proposed as an incentive to encourage more people with disabilities to get back into the outdoors. It would also tie in all the demographics and numbers that could be useful to the department, while making it easier for the hunter and law enforcement.

Chair Norris reported the workgroup had another meeting with the department's Licensing Control unit to further discuss the feasibility of introducing and implementing such a card/program. The conversation went very well, and they do not foresee any problems with implementing this type of card/system. If implemented, it may also be possible for a qualifying individual to load this adaptive sports card onto their iPhone.

Co-chair Jones, as the lead for this workgroup, will update the council as talks/discussions progress with the department.

## **DEPARTMENT UPDATES**

### **Executive Updates**

Dan Lord reported the Governor's office introduced the Fiscal Year 2023 state budget, which is the first step in the budget process leading up to the effective date of October 1, 2022. The department's portion of that budget proposes a 15% increase from Fiscal Year 2022 and is infrastructure heavy, which speaks to the backlog of infrastructure needs and upgrades. Some of the highlights include a one-time investment of \$30 million to bring the fish hatcheries system up to date; a \$12.4 million equipment upgrade for forestry, wildlife, and parks; an increase in operations for state parks maintenance and upkeep from restricted funds; a one-time investment to replace an aging 54-year-old research vessel; and an additional \$2 million one-time investment to construct the new Customer Service Center in Newberry.

He also reported the department is tracking three bills that would allocate federal relief dollars to state park infrastructure (\$250 million), and grants to local parks and trail development (\$1.5 million).

The department is also getting ready for their all-employee meetings (statewide) with the Director, which will be held virtually this year. Department staff will hear from the Director on department initiatives and priorities, as well as updates on what divisions are working on, including various department sprint teams (i.e. Energy, Training, Employee Engagement, and DEI).

Dan asked the council to let him know what types of updates they would like to receive in the future, and to submit those requests to Yolanda or to him directly.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Updates**

Alexis Hermiz, the department's DEI officer, reported that Yolanda has been working with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights to deliver training on how to conduct accessible meetings/events and providing reasonable accommodations for department staff that are responsible for or assist in the coordination of department meetings/events. These sessions will be scheduled for mid-March and early April.

Duncan Wyeth commented he would like the opportunity to involve council members, including himself and Ken Buchholtz, in a discussion with the department about training, recruiting, and hiring people with disabilities as part of the conservation officer's core. So much of what the council discusses involves law enforcement and people with disabilities. He believes there are many qualified individuals that would make excellent law enforcement officers, especially since they have a personal understanding of physical or mental disabilities. Michael Harris agreed and seconds Duncan's sentiments that hiring someone with a personal understanding would be an asset to the department, and start them on a path of diversity and inclusion in law enforcement. Alexis responded they could start this discussion offline and will coordinate an initial discussion/meeting.

### **ADA Coordinator Updates**

Mike Holsinger reported he has been attending the required ADA coordinator trainings, and participating in the department's accessibility team meetings. He has received a few calls dealing with a couple of reasonable accommodation requests, and recently assisted with a Freedom of Information Act request regarding the use of an e-bike in a state game area. Under the ADA, e-bikes are now considered as a personal assistive mobility device.

### **A-Team Updates**

Dave Haupt reported the accessibility team has been working on a few issues and building out some programs. He and Yolanda have participated in the adaptive sports card discussions with the council's workgroup and department staff, meetings and discussions with Cindy Burkhour, Keith Cheli, and other outside organizations regarding the universally accessible EV charging station template, and delivering training for department staff. The team has also been working on marketing materials and creating radio spots for WCMU radio to promote accessible recreation, the track chair fundraising campaign and a reservation system lead by Michelle OKelly, and a gift and acceptance agreement addressing accessible hunting/wildlife viewing blind donations with Kristin Wildman as the lead. The marketing subcommittee has also started an ADA newsletter that goes out to department staff where they are trying to promote the accessibility team and cover topics to ensure everybody understands the importance of creating accessible documents.

Yolanda further commented that various council members have been involved in the development of the adaptive sports card program, promoting the universally accessible EV charging station template, and getting involved in other programs and initiatives. She also expressed her thanks to the Michigan Department of Civil Rights for their willingness to provide accessibility training to department staff.

Tom Jones also mentioned that MUCC is having a habitat day in Clare to clean up a site to place the accessible hunting/wildlife viewing blind at the Gladwin state game area. They will be cutting lanes to provide a trail from the parking lot to the blind. Eventually, this blind will be posted to the department's accessible recreation webpage. Bryan Wilkinson offered to bring track chairs to this event. Dave thinks this is a great idea and will follow up with Bryan. They will also be filming the event so they could share this on Wardens TV.

Dave also reported that the Gladwin state game area currently does not have a track chair. However, the Wilson State Park manager is willing to house a track chair to be used at the park during camping season, and will then coordinate its use during the hunting season at the Gladwin state game area. The state park is only a 10-minute drive from the game area. It is just a matter of raising funds for a track chair at this location.

Duncan Wyeth also commented that the Superior Alliance for Independent Living in the Upper Peninsula has a dedicated account where people can donate towards a track chair for their adaptive sports programs. They are getting involved in the track chair fundraising effort as well and, once they obtain a track chair, will be promoting its use with other groups and organizations in the Upper Peninsula, like Wheelin' Sportsmen.

Duncan Wyeth also asked if Diana Paiz could give an update on what is happening with Idlewild, in conjunction with Black History month, and if there is any role that the council could play in any project or promotion of this historical site.

Diana Paiz gratefully accepted Duncan's offer to update the council on Idlewild. She reported Idlewild is in the northern lower Peninsula near Baldwin. It is a gem of black history for both the state and the nation. They (Michigan History Center) have been covering Idlewild recently, and are always examining it with their historical marker program and social posts. They just did a post last week on their Facebook page about Carlean Gill who was a dancer and student at the Lewis College of Business in Detroit. She was discovered and became a showgirl/dancer in Idlewild, and later founded the Saginaw Beauty Academy and Saginaw Barber College. The Michigan History Center's Freedom Trail council continues to look at Idlewild and the surrounding area. They are currently working on a story about the Civilian Conservation Corps camps of the 1930s that were segregated and designated for black men. Their state marine maritime archaeologist was also involved in recovering and documenting a Tuskegee airman's plane that crashed in Lake Huron. Helping in the recovery process involved the department's conservation officers and was featured on Wardens TV.

She closed by stating that anything the council would like to get involved with as it relates to looking at issues surrounding the history and access to any historical sites around the state would be very much appreciated and appropriate.

Michael Harris asked if Idlewild was segregated for black people only. Diana responded Idlewild was a resort of sorts where blacks were welcomed. People came from around the country to visit Idlewild. It offered resorts, camping, recreation, and entertainment from top performing artists like Sammy Davis Jr. It was considered a haven where the black community could recreate, feel safe, and where famous or up-and-coming artists could perform.

Duncan will contact Diana to talk more about getting the word out about the history of Idlewild, creating access, and promoting more visitors to the area.

Yolanda also mentioned she was working in the Parks and Recreation Division with a lady that was dedicated to revitalizing Idlewild, Monica Terrell. She spent most of her time working on revitalizing Idlewild and its history. After losing her battle with cancer, the Governor wrote a proclamation honoring Monica. It was presented to the family at a tree-planting ceremony at Idlewild Park in her honor. Idlewild also used to have a jazz festival every year, which the community is trying to bring back to the area. For anybody that would like to read up on the history of Idlewild, she recommends reading the book, "*Black Eden: The Idlewild Community*," by Benjamin C. Wilson and Lewis Walker.

Other books and articles regarding Idlewild that were shared with the council are listed below:

*"Idlewild: The Black Eden of Michigan,"* by Ronald J. Stephens

*"Idlewild: The Rise, Decline, and Rebirth of a Unique African American Resort,"* by Ronald J. Stephens

[Idlewild Historic & Cultural Center](#)

[Restoring Idlewild, a historic vacation spot for Black people — 110 years later \(msn.com\)](#)

[Idlewild Lake: Michigan's Black Eden](#)

[Bringing back 'Black Eden': The push to restore Idlewild's historic hotel](#)

### **Track Chair Program Updates**

Michelle OKelly was unable to attend the meeting but submitted a written update. They have added Leelanau State Park to the track chair fundraising campaign. No new chairs have been funded since the last meeting, but they continue to receive donations. She is also working with division staff to discuss the possibility of adding track chair reservations to the central reservation system, the same system they use for campground reservations. This should help with consistency and ease the process of reserving track chairs at state parks. She also reported that a donor provided \$38 thousand for a non-off-road motorized chair for Tahquamenon Falls State Park to be used at the viewing decks.

## **COUNCIL BUSINESS**

### **Vacancies**

Chair Norris announced they are working on filling vacancies on the council. If members know of any individuals or organizations that would be an asset to the council, he recommends reaching out to them and having them contact Yolanda for an application.

### **Chair/Co-Chair**

Chair Norris announced it is time to nominate a council chair and co-chair according to the bylaws. Scott Norris and Tom Jones are willing to continue as chair and co-chair for another term if no other council members are interested or object.

Chair Norris asked if there were any other members that would like to be chair or co-chair. No other members volunteered and expressed their desire to have Scott and Tom continue for another term.

***Duncan Wyeth motioned to appoint Scott Norris as council chair, and Tom Jones as council co-chair for another term; Robert Winn seconded the motion; there were no objections and the motion unanimously carried.***

## **COUNCIL UPDATES**

Neal McKenzie shared an update with the council regarding his future ability to participate in council meetings. It was determined that he will continue as a member of the council until he notifies the chair that he can no longer participate. Members of the council expressed their gratitude to Neal for his past and continued participation on the council as a long overdue representative of the deaf community, and for bringing his humor to the meetings. With his input, the department pushed through the inclusion of the deaf community in the Liberty and Independence hunts, a wonderful feat on his part.

Duncan Wyeth commented the department's drone unit is very interested in doing a drone demonstration for this group; maybe at the May or August meetings if it is determined groups can gather in-person at that time.

Ken Buchholtz reported he attended the national convention for the Wild Turkey Federation in Nashville, Tennessee this past weekend. Michigan ranked #1 in new hunter recruitment in the nation. In April, he will be working with the Michigan Builders Association to build an accessible hunting blind like his hunting blinds. Ken will share the blueprints with the council for anybody that is interested in building an 8x8 accessible hunting blind.

Jessica Stark reported she has been busy taking clients downhill skiing this winter. At Caberfae Peak they have a non-profit called [Full Potential Adventures](#), that provide adaptive downhill skiing events at no cost for people with disabilities. Their clients enjoy getting outside, especially during the winter.

Tom reported he is completing the construction of three blinds with Ford Motor Company, and has been purchasing the materials at Home Depot. After discussions with the store manager, who also runs the Team Depot project and volunteer work, the store manager indicated he wants to get all three of his stores in the region involved in habitat work and placement of the blinds or other adaptive equipment. After further discussions with the store manager, Home Depot will be donating \$20,000 in materials towards the construction and placement of accessible hunting features in state parks and game areas.

Bryan Wilkinson reported he is gearing up for their summer adaptive sports, like wheelchair tennis and cycling. The Holland State Park track chairs have arrived and they should be announcing their availability soon. Ludington State Park has also ordered a track chair.

Duncan Wyeth reminded the council that March 4 marks the opening of the winter paralympic games in Beijing.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Joseph Ouellette was unable to make public comment; he was having technical difficulties. On his behalf, Duncan Wyeth announced that Hillsdale College is hosting the national disabled skeet shooting competition this summer. Yolanda will share the information with the council, or members can contact Joseph direct at [johncash1980@gmail.com](mailto:johncash1980@gmail.com).

#### **CLOSING BUSINESS**

Chair Norris announced the next meeting of the council is scheduled for May 24, 2022. The department is considering if it will be a virtual, in-person, or hybrid meeting. Information and updates will be posted to the council's [webpage](#).

#### **ADJOURN**

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

***Michael Harris motioned for adjournment; Duncan Wyeth seconded the motion.***

The Chair thanked all members of the council, the accessibility team, the interpreters and CART service providers, and the presenters for their participation in today's meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 pm.