



ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

MINUTES

December 5, 2023

DNR Glassen Shooting Education Center
Rose Lake Shooting Range
14500 Peacock Road, East Lansing, MI

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (AAC)

PRESENT	ABSENT
Scott Norris, Chair	Ken Buchholtz
Bryan Wilkinson, Co-Chair	Will Purves
Tina Nowakowski	Tyra Khan
Allen Beauchamp	Cindy Burkhour
Jessica Stark	Michael Harris
Billy Vickers	Kimberly Woolridge
Robert Winn	
Duncan Wyeth	
Yasmina Bouraoui	

PRESENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (DNR)

Daniel Lord, AAC Sponsor
Stacy Welling Haughey, UP AAC Sponsor
Lindsey Dowlyn, Assistant to the AAC

PRESENT FROM THE DNR ACCESSIBILITY TEAM (A-TEAM)

David Haupt, A-Team Chair, Marketing and Outreach
Michelle OKelly, A-Team Co-Chair, Parks and Recreation
Jeff Sears, ADA Coordinator, Finance and Operations
Charamy Cleary, Finance and Operations
Alexandria Galloway, Finance and Operations

OTHERS:

Dave Bulkowski, Public

REGULAR MEETING

OPENING REMARKS – Scott Norris

Scott Norris called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the December 5, 2023, Accessibility Advisory Council (AAC) meeting.

Scott Norris took roll call.

Scott Norris introduced new AAC member Yasmina Bouraoui, Executive Director, Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Scott Norris

Scott Norris asked the Council if they had any additions, corrections, or discussion regarding the September 12, 2023, minutes.

Scott Norris requested a motion to approve the September 12, 2023, minutes as written.

Rob Winn motioned to approve the minutes; Duncan Wyeth seconded the motion; the motion unanimously carried; the September 12, 2023, minutes are approved.

TRACK CHAIRS – Michelle OKelly

Signage – A QR code has been developed to add to accessible parking signs. This QR code will bring up the DNR accessibility webpage that includes all accessible features including track chairs, hunting blinds, and color-blind viewers.

Kali's Cure – In addition to some individual donations, the DNR received another donation from Kali's Cure that allowed the DNR to purchase nine additional chairs. That will put track chairs in 25 locations.

State Park Usage – Bryan Wilkinson commented that adding additional signage at Petoskey State Park and Silver Lake State Park could be beneficial to direct visitors to the track chairs. The DNR may also want to consider additional communications on where track chairs can and cannot be used (dunes, off-site).

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

DNR Executive Updates – Dan Lord

Robyn Afrik, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer, apologizes for missing the meeting, but is attending a mandatory meeting at this time. Dan Lord shared some DNR personnel updates including new DNR Director M. Scott Bowen, which allowed Shannon Lott to return to her role as Resource Deputy Director. With Shannon Lott returning to her position, Scott Whitcomb is no longer Acting Resource Deputy Director, returning to his role as Director of the Office of Public lands.

Additional division appointments include Sara Thompson as Chief for Wildlife Division, Keith Kintigh as Assistant Chief for Wildlife Division, Jason Haines as Chief for Law Enforcement Division, Brandon Kieft as Assistant Chief for Law Enforcement Division, Ed Eisch as Assistant Chief for Fisheries Division, and Dan Lord as Chief for Finance and Operations Division.

Dan Lord also shared that the DNR fiscal year 2024 budget is in place, fiscal year 2023 closes on Friday, December 8, 2023, and that year two with mandatory harvest reporting for hunting went smoothly.

Scott Norris asked if Director Bowen would be able to attend a future AAC meeting? Dan Lord stated we would provide the 2024 meeting dates with Director Bowen.

Mentored Hunter Program Update – Dan Lord

Taylor Ridderbusch, Legislative Liaison, could not attend today but provided a summary. The language adjustments discussed at the last AAC meeting have been incorporated into the draft bill and there is a bill sponsor. However, with the legislature breaking early, the bill has not been introduced.

A-Team Updates – Dave Haupt

USFWS Title VI Audit Response – Dan Lord

The USFWS is one of our primary federal fund sources. Every five years, they provide a questionnaire on accessibility with a site visit every 10 years. In September 2022 we received their questionnaire and conducted the site visits in June 2023. The USFWS report on our questionnaire response and site visits was received fall of 2023. In the report, there were only 9 findings. Our response activity plan to address those 9 findings was provided to the USFWS on December 4, 2023.

ADA Coordinator Update – Dan Lord

The newly created ADA Coordinator position will align with Executive Division and Robyn Afrik. It has been close to 10 years since the DNR has had a stand along ADA Coordinator position. The position has been posted and Scott Norris and Bryan Wilkinson reviewed the interview questions providing additional questions and feedback.

Ask the DNR Segment / Media Meets – Stacy Welling Haughey

The Ask the DNR segment focusing on accessibility has been completed. Allen Beauchamp represented the AAC on the panel. Stacy Welling Haughey commended Allen on a wonderful job.

Allen Beauchamp stated it was an amazing opportunity. He was the first non-DNR staff on the show. Allen Beauchamp was also asked to participate in a future Media Meets segment.

Duncan Wyeth noted that it would be helpful to Allen in the future Media Meets segment to have the DNR's top 5 focus areas on accessibility. DNR staff will follow-up with the A-Team and provide these topics at the February AAC meeting.

A-Team Updates – Dave Haupt

Cindy Krueger has accepted the role of Chair to the Marketing Subcommittee. Pam Vance has accepted the role of Chair for the Training Subcommittee. Dave Haupt and Michelle OKelly have been asked to present ADA training at an upcoming Forest Resources supervisor training.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

DiverseAbility Day Event and Update – Billy Vickers/Michelle OKelly

Billy Vickers works with Metro Parks to conduct DiverseAbility Day events that include accessible kayaking, off-road wheelchairs, hand cycles, and track chairs. Billy invited Michelle OKelly to attend this year at Lake St. Clair in August where there were over 300 individuals present! The idea is to highlight state parks and bring these events to the DNR.

Michelle OKelly shared that the event was very well ran and very well attended. Michelle met with Oakland County on replicating this event in the DNR's state parks. Oakland County has a built-in-system and is willing to help organize these events. One event is already scheduled for Maybury State Park in August 2024, with options at Port Crescent and Island Lake.

Corewell Health Limb Loss Support Group – Charamy Cleary/Dan Lord

Charamy Cleary and Dan Lord shared a presentation on September 13, 2023, to the Corewell Health Limb Loss Support Group. It was a small group, but the recreational therapist in attendance were very interested in the resources we were able to share.

Interest in Participating with Additional Medical Support Groups – Scott Norris/Bryan Wilkinson

Scott Norris asked if there are other support groups that would be interested in receiving this presentation? Bryan Wilkinson commented that it would be a great idea for members of this council to spread out and share our accessibility message and resources. Some group/facility ideas include the Disability Network support groups, Rehab Institute of Michigan, Mary Free Bed, University of Michigan, and other physical therapy facilities.

Adaptive Equipment Trail Use – Billy Vickers/Bryan Wilkinson

Bryan Wilkinson and Billy Vickers were on an adaptive use trail committee with the DNR. Adaptive off-road ebikes are a passion for both Bryan and Billy. Bryan stated it would be great if people could purchase this equipment and know they have somewhere that it can be used. If Michigan had 5 mountain bike trails that were supported by mountain biking organizations that were widened for this adaptive equipment, it would open a new outdoor experience for citizens with disabilities.

Jessica Stark asked for Parks and Recreation Division to attend a future meeting to provide an update on their trail use policy.

2024 Meeting Dates (Motion for Approval) –

February 13, 2024 – Rose Lake Shooting Range

May 9, 2024 – Rose Lake Shooting Range

August 13, 2024 – TBD – Please share any location suggestions with Scott Norris and Bryan Wilkinson.

December 10, 2024 – Lansing Area TBD

Scott Norris requested a motion to approve the 2024 Meeting Dates, listed above.

Yasmina Bouraoui motioned to approve the 2024 Meeting Dates; Rob Winn seconded the motion; the motion unanimously carried; the 2024 Meeting Dates are approved.

COUNCIL UPDATES

Roundtable – All Members

Jessica Stark – We will be starting adaptive skiing in January at Caberfae on Thursday nights. Hosted kayaking clinics this summer at Interlochen State Park.

Rob Winn –Gearing up for kayaking clinics and DiverseAbility Days.

Yasmina Bouraoui – An area our staff overlaps with the topics of the AAC is our Public Policy Advocacy staff. If there are public policy related changes either legislative or administrative (adaptive devices) we can help facilitate spreading the word on those changes.

Yasmina Bouraoui volunteered to sit on the Legislative Subcommittee.

Bryan Wilkinson –We did not host wheelchair tennis in 2023 as other organizations are doing well with that. In 2024, we are looking at new opportunities with adaptive equipment.

Duncan Wyeth – The AAC has not meet in the Upper Peninsula in several years, perhaps the August 2024 meeting date would be a great opportunity. Marquette has a new shooting range, Wheeling Sportsmen has a state-of-the-art building, Bay cliff BOW, and more.

Tina Nowakowski – mParks is hosting their annual conference at the end of February. Regarding DiverseAbility Days reach out to mParks to help spread the word. If there are communication pieces that mParks can share with local communities, they would be willing to do that.

Billy Vickers – Will be doing DiverseAbility Days, Disability Dirt Day, and Veteran Day. Billy has also sat on a few panels this year (consult work on appliances). The appliance companies were taking a lot of notes on making their equipment more accessible.

Allen Beauchamp – During the Ask the DNR segment we had a question from the public regarding grants to upgrade a boat launch dock in Michigamme. Allen didn't understand the full process and wanted to make sure she received a complete answer. Stacy Welling Haughey replied that John Pepin probably sent that question to Merry Carlock, Upper Peninsula Grant Coordinator.

Scott Norris commented that he will reach out to Annie Urasky, MDCR for outreach in the deaf and hard of hearing community to fill a vacancy on the AAC.

Dan Lord will reach out to the DNR Legislative and Legal Affairs office, to request Tribal participation on the AAC.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CLOSING BUSINESS

The next Council meeting is February 13, 2024, at the Rose Lake Shooting Range/Glassen Shooting Education Center, 14500 Peacock Road, East Lansing.

ADJOURN

Chair Norris requested a motion to adjourn.

Yasmina Bouraoui motioned for adjournment; Jessica Stark seconded the motion; the motion unanimously carried; meeting adjourned at 11:16 p.m.