

Wichita/Sedgwick County Access Advisory Board

Wednesday, September 25, 2024

Envision/Zoom

10:00—11:30 a.m.

Minutes

Members Present

Andrew Crane	Brian Powers	Chris Stanyer
Courtney Wages	Harley Anderson (z)	Jarod Holcomb
Jayne Otis	Karen Flateau (z)	Kyelene Flaming (z)
Lisa Vayda (z)	Mia Ocean	Raven Alexander
Shelley Herrington (z)	Tom Page	Virginia Zapote

City/County Staff Present

Adrienn Clark	Sabrina Young	Nate Johnson
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Guests

Cindy Unruh, Director, Independent Living Resource Center		
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- I. Welcome, Announcements & Introductions – Chair Brian Powers
 - a. Chair Brian Powers called the meeting to order and asked everyone to introduce themselves. Introductions served as roll call and a quorum was present.
- II. Meeting Minutes
 - a. Motion made by Lisa Vayda to approve the August 2024 minutes; seconded by Chris Stanyer. Minutes passed by a voice vote, **15-0**.
- III. Monthly Updates
 - a. Transportation Committee
 - i. Raven Alexander gave an update to the board.
 1. In the process of scheduling a ground breaking
 2. The website for the redesign has been updated
 3. Working on having a public hearing
 4. Have 4 new electric transit vans that go into service in January
 - ii. Tom Page asked, has there been any progress on identifying the bus stops that are not ADA accessible? And do you know anything about what is the plan to identify and mitigate this large number of inaccessible stops?

- iii. Raven Alexander answered, there are a couple of components with that. First we need to wait and see what happens with the routes and do an overhaul with that. We don't want to improve a stop that is no longer on a route. Second, there are funding restraints. There are currently no funds to improve the stops.
- iv. Chris Stanyer asked, would it be the role of this advisory board to assemble a bit of a cost analysis and say, here's and expected average cost to bring a stop into compliance, accessibility. And from this body, prioritize what order we would want to see those repaired or brought up to the accessibility standard and then make that recommendation to the city?
- v. Brian Powers responded, I think it's a good idea. So the ADA coordinators should have that research, we're not a research body, but we can ask for that research.
- vi. Brian Powers added, information needed, 1. Percentage of stops that are not accessible, and 2. How many stops have been improved since 1997. I think to have those numbers, to have those facts that we can address or our policymakers can, and at that point we could advise actions on those things.
- vii. Lisa Vayda asked, our next item is a report by Forbes on accessibility, don't they have a lot of the information that they based this study on? Where did they get that information that was used to write the study?
- viii. Raven Alexander commented, sometimes those are based on surveys.
- ix. Virginia Zapote asked to clarify, there were three main questions that we wanted to pinpoint. 1. The percentage of stops that are not accessible. 2. How many have been improved since the plan started. 3. The Cost Analysis of it.
- x. Brian Powers stated, I think we need that information before we can attempt to advise the policymakers.
- xi. Lisa Vayda asked, regarding last month's minutes, Craig asked about the Second Street stops and how there were many stops on that and I don't know if that was addressed.
- xii. Raven Alexander responded, Independent Living Resource Center was already on our radar as far as Wichita Transit knowing that that's needing to be serviced. The plan that was presented was only the consultant's recommendation, which is not the final say. Wichita Transit will take their recommendation, and input from the City Council, the Community, and everything else before a final plan is made. This is still an ongoing process.
- xiii. Kyelene Flaming asked, I understood from the presentation last month that the accessibility to the bus stops on Second Street were because of a lack of passageway on the residential streets.
- xiv. Raven Alexander answered, that is a thing and we're trying to not go through neighborhoods but an alternative has been suggested that may

not require them to do that. We're still going to go by ILRC, it just may look different as we'll have to get there a different way. But yes, we are trying to pull the busses off the neighborhood streets and putting them back on the major streets.

- xv. Brian Powers asked, would a month be enough time to assemble that data?
- xvi. Virginia Zapote, no, 90 days max though.
- xvii. Brian Powers stated, we'll carry this month to month just to make sure that we don't forget about it.
- xviii. Brian Powers asked, maybe a year and a half ago I counted the steps from the bus stop at the East Mall and walked to the door of the mall. I counted the steps and a quarter of a mile or around 450 steps. Has there been any movement on addressing that issue?
- xix. Raven Alexander responded, they were servicing the door while waiting on construction to finish. I believe they are going by there now, so I'll confirm exactly where those stops are at the moment. I can see the stop on the map but I can't tell exactly which door they are stopping at.
- xx. Brian Powers stated, it would be good to advertise that, because that's something new. That's something that people have been asking for for a very long time.
- xxi. Tom Page stated, one of the concerns during that period also was not necessarily the bus going to a door, but also the pedestrian access. Has there been any progress on pedestrian access out there?
- xxii. Raven Alexander replied, the city has no jurisdiction to tell it that it should be part of their constructions and things like that. And we don't do the final inspections.
- xxiii. Kyelene Flaming stated, I can follow up with MABCD which is a collaboration between the City of Wichita and the County and see if there have been any permits or anything ADA related to that and report back to the board.

IV. New Business

- a. Discussion of CDC Statistics – KSN Article
 - i. Karen Flateau commented, I brought this up because usually a vague-ish kind of article like this on a national level, I didn't think it would get that much attention. However, the local media picked it up. It's kind of surprising, especially the part about public attractions. I can understand that we have some older buildings that may not be ADA compliant but the 6th worst transportation system. I am curious how they got that information and how they scored it. I couldn't see anything that points to the metrics that they got on our transportation system. The article seems to be specifically for mobility disability.
 - ii. Lisa Vayda stated, if you look at it online, you can see the scores they give. One thing that surprised me is that we got a zero on accessible grocery stores for 100,000 people.

- iii. Tom page commented, I live downtown, not only non-accessible, but none at all.
- iv. Brian Powers asked, we have ADA specialists in the room and on zoom. What's been the discussion, if you can share it, in the organizations regarding this particular report? It had to be discussed. Did this make an impact on your agencies?
- v. Kyelene Flaming replied, I was completely taken back by this report, I was not aware that this was being published. I do feel like there are a lot of opportunities within the city and county. We are limited to our buildings. So any of the buildings that we are acquiring or transitioning to, all of them have been and are ADA accessible. In terms of the businesses, that needs to be more on economic development or even the city of Wichita in the terms of presenting this to Bob Layton. This is where economic development needs to be concentrating is in accessible venues, food deserts via grocery, prescription pick up in the down town area. No emergency accessibility in terms of a medical provider.
- vi. Kyelene Flaming commented, one of the things it noted specifically is the percentage of housing rentals in the city that are considered wheelchair accessible. I will say that I receive personally a lot of calls about this. There are not protections for wheelchair accessible parking spaces at locations that have housing. I don't have any control over that because those are controlled by other entities.
- vii. Virginia Zapote added, I get that quite a bit as well. There are so many situations that our hands are tied.
- viii. Nate Johnson stated, we do appreciate the suggestion as well as talking with the Manager's office. So we will definitely try to talk through that a bit more on our side. And just another thing that a lot of this seems based on coding a little bit, so I do want to look at that. As someone who lives downtown, the last of grocery store options in downtown is an issue but it seems like some around town probably are accessible. So having a zero seems like an odd score. So I don't know if there is some sort of disconnect there. I think to Mr. Page's point about the prior scoring and maybe consistent results there is something to talk through on our end as well. So we appreciate that from a business perspective.
- ix. Brian Powers stated, I know we've made a lot of process, but we're not done and it is an ongoing process. And I think this really reinforce that idea, that our work isn't done. We need to keep an eye on this and see the opportunity to improve.
- x. Karen Flateau commented, I'm very excited about his board addressing this article. Sometimes a national article can be nebulous, does it really apply to us? Where did they get the information from? But since it was reported locally, I think maybe we should address it. The one thing specifically listed was access to public transportation. There were two major things mentioned specially to Wichita, and I'm just wondering,

since it was wheelchair specific or mobility disability specific, what are our comments about where did they get the information? What should we have on our agenda to think about doing in the future to make it more accessible? What do you guys think about this as a board?

- xi. Brian Powers commented, I see 70% of this list is wheelchair. So we know what the focus of this survey or this study was. There are other needs beside wheelchairs.
- xii. Jarod Holcomb stated, we have a number of individuals in wheelchairs that we try and provide access to the community on a daily basis. And some of this surprises me because most of the time we are going to Exploration Place, the Zoo, the art museums. We have little to no issues. They are very accessible. The housing, the apartments, we do see issues there. One of the only issues we run into down town is parking. The two places that surprise me are restaurants because we take our individuals to a lot of restaurants.
- xiii. Tom Page commented, if we're less than half, we've got problems. Let's accept that we've got things to work on and let's look towards solutions. I think that would be a more useful way to put our time forward.

b. Election of Board Chair

- i. Brian Powers offered to continue as chair until his term expires next June so long as Tom Page agrees to be his Vice-Chair.
- ii. Tom Page agrees to be Vice-Chair.
- iii. Lisa Vayda made a motion to elect Brian Powers as Board Chair and Tom Powers as Vice-Chair. Kyelene Flaming seconded the motion.
- iv. Motion passed by voice vote.
- v. Kyelene Flaming asked for clarification on the by-laws regarding participation. Could we clarify On Section 3. Participation, Letter B. Numbers 8 and number 9. Does this mean there is one representative from each organization or one that represents all four?
- vi. Board decides to interpret the by-laws as stating that there should be one representative from each organization listed under numbers 8 and 9.

- V. Announcements – Raven Alexander announced the Parade of Stars from the Down Syndrome Society of Wichita happening in October.
- VI. Public Comment – No general public comment
- VII. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 11:11 AM.

The next meeting of the Wichita/Sedgwick County Access Advisory Board will be on October 23, 2024 from 10:00am to 11:30am at the Envision Building and Zoom.