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Council for Community Accessibility Meeting Notes for March 29, 2021, 4:00-5:30 p.m.

Katie Herron opened the meeting by Zoom at 4:00 p.m. Members introduced themselves through the Chat Box.

Members: David Carter, John Brady, Susan Russ, Nick Philbeck, Chris Jackson, Christopher Baskins, Eli McCormick, Kelly Clark, Katie Herron, Sara Frommer, Aaron Smith, Michelle Moss, Zoe Waters, Barbara Salisbury, Leslie Davis, Trish Ierino, Michelle Hahn, Sam Dove, Casey Guarino, Barbara McKinney, Iris Kiesling, and Linda Crawford.

Guests: Breanca Merritt, Chief Health Equity and ADA Officer for Indiana's FSSA's Office of Healthy Opportunities and Shelli Yoder, State Senator

Staff: Michael Shermis

Minutes: Minutes were accepted as distributed.

Financial Report: Balance in the CCA account is \$3051.18.

Election of Officers: Susan Russ moved to nominate and Chris Jackson seconded the following slate of officers: Chair—Katie Herron, Vice-chair-- David Carter, Secretary—Linda Crawford. Motion carried.

Partner Organizations Awareness & Outreach:

Kelly Clark reported from the meeting of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Commission that the road through Lower Cascades Park is closed and residents are citing accessibility problems due to this closure. The path to the Waterfall Shelter is no longer accessible. Barbara Salisbury says that the Transportation and Mobility Committee is looking into accessibility concerns. Michael will put a link in a separate email that he will send out seeking responses to what might be done to accommodate this accessibility concern.

Aaron Smith reported that the 40th anniversary of *LIFE Designs*, celebrated with a picnic, will be held on July 17th from 11-2 at Karst Park. The Aaktion Club's annual talent show will take place on September 30th.

Report from the City: Michael reported the City's Engineering Department has requested ADA training pertaining to pedestrian facilities and he will meet with the department next week. It was suggested by the Council that perhaps the Transportation and Mobility Committee be involved. Michael ensured that they will absolutely be consulted in the development and implementation.

New Accessibility Concerns: Chris reported that a volunteer assisting with Covid vaccinations at the Convention Center reported chipped concrete and brick inlays at the Center back entrance (Michael will contact the Convention Center concerning the situation.) There was also a comment from a person who went to the IU Medical Arts building for a Covid vaccination about the limited accessibility, along with no information provided concerning this when making the appointment.

Committee Reports:

- A. Accessibility Committee: Chris reported that no physical surveys have been done recently. The committee is working on digital accessibility, assisted by students from the IU School of Informatics, to establish a survey tool.
- B. Transportation Committee: The grant from Indiana ADA will host a Pedestrian event relevant to our Bloomington streets to be held in mid-June, starting at 9:30 with a speaker. This event would include a walking assessment of relevant roads and Switchyard Park, concluding with lunch and accompanying discussion.
- C. Activities and Events Committee: Susan reported that Breaking Down the Barriers will be held virtually on Monday, April 26th from 2:00 to 5:00 pm. This virtual event will focus on how barriers have changed since the start of virtual programming as well as helping businesses and other organizations increase their accessibility. Speakers include Brian Richwine, Holly Elkins, and Ted Boardman. Registrations will be taken through April 21st. The budget of \$930 includes two interpreters and fifty-eight charcuterie boards.

Guest Presentations: Dr. Breanca Merritt, Chief Health Equity and ADA officer for FSSA, talked to the Council about her position as leader of the Office of Healthy Opportunities. She is charged with achieving racial and social equity in accessibility to food, transportation, and other necessities. She sees her responsibility in this area as gathering support within local organizations to meet these needs. She suggests, as one possibility, setting up a website or Facebook page to find employment and other needs.

Shelli Yoder, Indiana District 40 Senator, seeks to make the workplace more inclusive and mentioned work done by Susan Rinne in this area. A study from last year showed an overwhelming desire to include people of all abilities in the workplace. One particular challenge facing Hoosiers is to increase the rate of pay for service providers, hopefully accomplished in the next budget. (\$16/hour is desired, but \$12-13/hour more likely.)

Senator Yoder asked for CCA concerns --patients with Covid who cannot be visited by family and friends was mentioned. Senator Yoder mentioned there is a bill currently being heard in the House (Senate has already passed it.) to make sure every person in a nursing home can identify two people who can visit and those two people would be given the privilege of visiting that resident.

Michael mentioned that vans with wheelchairs can't get into parking garages because of a discrepancy between ADA and Indiana building code. Senator Yoder said she would look

into this situation and work on language for a bill to correct this situation. (She mentioned that even the State House is inaccessible.) Senator Yoder provided her phone number as she wishes to be readily accessible to her constituents: 812-327-4249

Meeting was adjourned at 5:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Crawford, Secretary