



Minutes

City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee

April 24, 2025, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

City Council Chambers, Bend City Hall
710 NW Wall, Bend, Oregon

Vice Chair Woodfin called the City of Bend Accessibility Advisory Committee's (COBAAC) February 27, 2025, hybrid regular meeting from 1:01 to 2:35 p.m. This meeting was held through Zoom and in person in Council Chambers at City Hall, 710 NW Wall Street, Bend, Oregon. **Watch the COBAAC April 24, 2025, recording.**

1. Roll Call and Welcome: Committee Members.

Council Chamber Attendance (4)

- Liz Woodfin, Chair
- Derek Hofbauer, Vice Chair
- Carl Burnett
- Liz Diether-Martin

Zoom Attendance (6)

- Aaron Rivers
- Andrew Caruana
- John Heylin
- Stephanie Utzman
- Whitney Bennett
- Alysa MacRae (alternate)

COBAAC Absences Excused (3):

- Amanda Hamer
- Ian Isaacson
- Mariah Tennison (alternate)

Public (0):

City Staff:

- Cassandra Kehoe, She/Her/Ella, Accessibility & Equity Manager / COBAAC Staff Liaison (Chambers)
- Eric King, He/Him, Bend City Manager (Chambers)
- Ariel Méndez, He/Him, City Councilor & COBAAC Liaison (Absent)
- Andrés Portela, He/Him/El, Equity & Inclusion Director (Chambers)
- Agatha Ventura, She/Her, Human Rights & Equity Commission, Chair (Zoom)
- Lisa Larsen, She/Her, Administrative Support Specialist (Chambers)

2. City of Bend Land Acknowledgement: Timestamp 5:06

Vice Chair Hofbauer read the City of Bend Land Acknowledgment in English.

3. Minutes: Approval of March 27, 2025, Draft Meeting Minutes. Timestamp 6:11

Motion 1: Member Burnett motioned to approve the COBAAC March 27, 2025, Draft Minutes with the correct spelling of Chair Woodfin's last name. Member Rivers seconded the motion. The motion to approve March 27, 2025, unanimously passed, with the amendment, correcting the spelling of Chair Woodfin's last name, by all voting members who attended today's meeting, in person (4) and virtually (6)

4. Public Comment (0): No public in attendance. Timestamp 6:54

5. Human Rights and Equity Commission Feature, Andrés Portela, Equity & Inclusion Director // HREC Staff Liaison, & Agatha Ventura, She, Her, HREC Chair. Timestamp 7:04

The Human Rights and Equity Commission is here to make meaningful connections between HREC and COBAAC. Chair Ventura extended an open invitation to join their meetings and events and engage with the future work of HREC.

The Equity & Inclusion Director, Portela, shared the Human Rights and Equity Commission HREC's Work Plan Overview and Focus Areas:

- **Advisory:** Recommend policy and practice changes to the City Council through an equity lens.
- **Community Engagement:** build trust and facilitate a two-way connection with the community.
- **Education and Awareness:** Expand public understanding of human rights, equity, and inclusion through events, campaigns, and learning tools.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Analyze and recommend policy changes that address structural barriers and advance equity.

6. Accessibility and Equity Manager Update: Cassandra Kehoe (She/Her/Ella). Timestamp 21:44

- Reviewed the Sprouts Film Festival and its success.
- Taxi Letter Update: Next Steps. Create awareness around the impending changes, giving the companies enough time to become ADA compliant.

The committee discussed the future work on Licensing/Code and future conversations with Licensing.

We should discuss how some of these companies may not have the provisions to access a wheelchair accessible vehicle immediately in their fleet right away.

COBAAC members interested in this future discussion: Chair Woodfin, Vice Chair Hofbauer, Members Diether-Martin, and Burnett. Manager Kehoe will extend this invitation to the members absent from today's meeting.

7. COBAAC Work Plan: Upcoming Community Events: **Timestamp 39:25**

- a. Discussed: Walk and Roll – May 8, 2025, from 3:30 to 5:00 pm, reviewed the 0.8-mile route focused on the sidewalk conditions and connectivity, Juniper Park, and debrief at the end of the route at Dogwood at the Pine Shed.

8. COBAAC Support Letters: **Livestream 52:45**

- a. Dogs Off Leash and the Impact on People with Disabilities, Aaron Rivers:

They read and reviewed the letter, discussed, and noted the edits needed.

- Testimony: Affect not Effect.
- Be consistent with the acronym BPRD - Bend Parks & Rec., not BPD. Spell out Bend Parks and Rec, then add the acronym (BPRD)
- Item number 1: Space between (BPD) and the word to.

There were questions about which departments and to whom the letter should be addressed. Some areas need more clarification about the collaborators, and the wording needs changing.

The discussion ended with the edits needed and will be presented for a vote at the May COBAAC meeting after more discussion about this letter.

- b. Letter to Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee, Andrew Caruana:

Member Caruana wants feedback from COBAAC members for helpful and thoughtful suggestions for the Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee letter.

Vice Chair Hofbauer will receive and present the final letter to the Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee.

Motion 2: Member Caruana motioned to approve the Regional and edit his draft Public Transit Advisory Committee letter and move to final, with the following amendments:

- 1st Paragraph: Re-establishing Route 12 or an equivalent service.
- 3rd Paragraph: Creation of additional accessible transport options (period).
 - Next sentence: Restoring this route or an equivalent service would demonstrate a meaningful commitment.
- Member Caruana will email the final letter to Manager Kehoe.

Member Burnett seconded. It was approved by all voting members who attended today's meeting, in person (4) and virtually (6).

9. COBAAC Round Table: **Timestamp 1:22:58**

- COBAAC members shared: Member Heylin shared information about his daughter, **Dog attacks on the rise in Central Oregon; father of young bite victim seeks tougher leash laws - KTVZ**

- Member Utzman has noticed Bend Parks & Rec has increased its notices to the public concerning off-leash laws, COBAAC should help improve the education efforts towards the community, and create a committee to address this issue.
- Member Caruana met with Accessibility Manager, Kehoe, and the Emergency Management Manager, Karl, due to the long-term goals for the Oregon Accessibilities Commission, in which he is a member, they discussed Deschutes County Emergency Management and Accessibility. COBAAC Member Caruana shared advocacy day at the state capital for increases to the Employed Persons with Disability Program in Oregon.
- Member Liz Diether-Martin builds websites and digital communication for research out of the University of Washington, making technology accessible & making the world accessible through technology, along with advocacy. Her boss wrote an article **The erosion of DEI threatens rights of people with disabilities, too | The Seattle Times**, about some things that are under attack in protecting the rights of and well-being of people with disabilities.
- Member Utzman will email information she has gathered about the dog-leash efforts of others.

10. City Councilor Update, City Councilor Ariel Méndez: Timestamp 1:33:37

Due to prior commitments, Councilor Méndez sends his apologies for his absence.

11. Agenda Setting: COBAAC Members. Timestamp 1:33:53

- Walk & Roll Debrief.
- Approve the Dog Leash Letter.

12. Our next COBAAC meeting will be on Thursday, May 22, 2025, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

13. Adjourn: With no further COBAAC business, Chair Woodfin adjourned the April 24, 2025, meeting at 2:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Larsen, Administrative Support Specialist



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