

# Governor's disability committee hosts Shelton town hall

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The Washington State Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment (GCDE) wants to hear about the issues affecting Mason County residents with disabilities.

The GCDE hosts a town hall meeting from 5:30 to 7:30 tonight in the Skookum Room at the Mason PUD 3 Johns Prairie Operations Center, 2621 E. Johns Prairie Road, Shelton. Topics could include affordable and accessible housing concerns, transportation obstacles and available services.

The GCDE is a 27-member volunteer board, appointed by Gov. Jay Inslee to advise him and the Legislature on disability issues, generate local campaigns and introduce projects to address issues for those with disabilities.

On Feb. 4, Inslee announced the appointment of 20-year Lake Limerick-area resident Kevin Frankeberger to the GCDE. Frankeberger, who is legally blind, said last week he hopes to be surrounded by a lot of familiar faces working to improve the lives of those with extra challenges at tonight's town hall meeting.

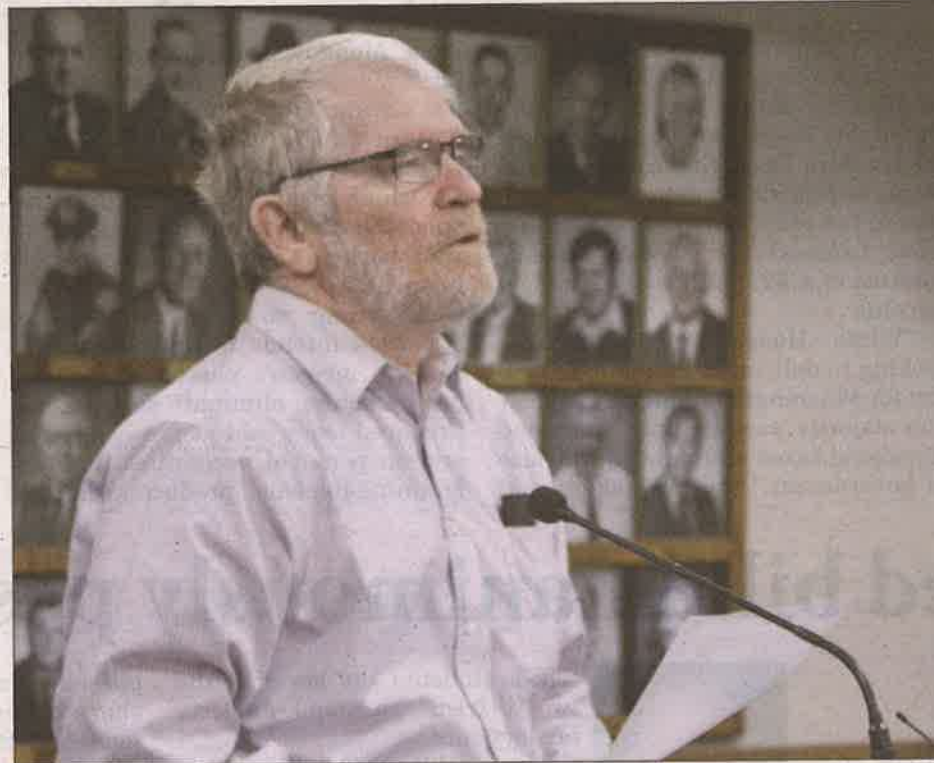
"Basically what you have is an opportunity to work through some of the issues faced by people with disabilities," Frankeberger said. "We want a huge turnout for this and I hope we pack the place."

Some of the of the GCDE's responsibilities include:

- Monitoring legislation to ensure equal opportunities for employment, education, health care and public services.

- Promoting awareness of the needs of people with disabilities.

- Recognizing employers who dem-



Lake Limerick-area resident Kevin Frankeberger, shown at a recent county commissioner's meeting, is a recent appointee to the Washington State Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment. The GCDE hosts a town hall meeting tonight in Shelton. *Journal photo by Michael Heinbach*

onstrate leadership in hiring people with disabilities.

- Providing training and assistance to the business sector to promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Those attending tonight's town hall are asked by the GCDE to limit their use of fragrances such as perfumes, colognes and scented lotions to accommodate those with scent sensitivities.

Frankeberger, guided by a service dog, also deals with chronic pain due to

a 1995 car accident. He's been active in the community promoting the cause of those with disabilities for years. Reliant on public transportation, Frankeberger spent 14 years on the Mason Transit Authority's Citizens Advisory Board and is a six-year member of the Mason County Board of Equalization.

Frankeberger said he was proud and honored by his appointment by the governor to the GCDE and wants to use his new position to bring some "grease and oil to what's going on in the county."

## IF YOU GO

**WHAT:** The Washington State Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment host a town hall meeting

**WHEN:** 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Today

**WHERE:** The Johns Prairie Room at Mason PUD 3's operations center, 2621 E. Johns Prairie Road, Shelton

**COST:** Free

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** The committee asks those planning to attend to limit their use of fragrances (perfumes, colognes, scented lotions, etc.) to accommodate those with aroma sensitivity.

That starts tonight at the board's town hall meeting.

"We're talking about 1 in 4 people in the United States have a disability or are affected by those with a disability, such as a parent or a child," he said. "And think about it, us baby boomers are coming for services and we, as a whole aren't ready for that. I want people at the meeting to be vocal about what exactly do we need."

On Friday morning the GCDE reconvenes at Mason PUD 3 for a leadership breakfast to review issues and concerns addressed at the previous evening's town hall, gather additional information and explore possible solutions.

To learn more about the GCDE, how it can help individuals in need and for links to resources, GCDE projects and more, go to <https://esd.wa.gov/GCDE>.