



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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MINUTES

Standing Committee on Transportation Meeting

Location: Virtual via Zoom and 1010 Richards Street, Room 118

Date: September 24, 2024

Time: 11:25 a.m.

PRESENT: Violet Horvath, Chairperson; Gerald Ohta, Charlotte Townsend, Board Members; Kirby Shaw, Kristine Pagano, Bryan Mick, Elizabeth Pearson, Sue Radcliffe, Staff

ABSENT: Teri Spinola-Campbell, Board Member

GUEST: Alberto Perez

- I. Chairperson Violet Horvath called the meeting to order at 11:25 a.m.
- II. Committee members, staff, and the guest introduced themselves.
- III. Chairperson Violet Horvath reported no written public testimony was submitted.
- IV. The Committee approved the July 10, 2024, meeting minutes (M/S/P Townsend/Horvath).
- V. Unfinished Business

A. Standing Agenda Items

Public Transit and Paratransit

Bryan Mick reported that the City and County of Honolulu's Department of Transportation Services (DTS) Committee on Accessible Transportation and the Honolulu Rate Commission will be meeting in October. The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) will ask for an update on the low income fare for paratransit and the proposal for a pilot taxi voucher program at those meetings.

Bryan Mick reported that the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) had supplied details about a person who uses a wheelchair and was dropped curbside by a private transportation company. The individual would call 911 for assistance in getting into the residence. The same individual has called six (6) times this year. At that frequency, it would not appear to be a threat to HFD's operations, but it does highlight the lack of accessibility in the built environment and private property, and the need to increase public awareness of programs which provide door to door service. There was a bill considered by the Legislature last session which may be reintroduced, it would provide grants for people to make accessibility modifications to their homes.

Bryan Mick reported that the Board packet included a consultant's recommendation to DTS that a second base yard for paratransit vehicles should be established in West Oahu. The existing base yard is almost at capacity preventing any fleet expansion, and a second base yard would cut down on the travel time vehicles must make at the start and end of their runs. Committee member Charlotte Townsend commented that at one point there were five (5) sites in West Oahu under consideration for a second base yard. She is not sure if DTS is still pursuing the establishment of a second base yard.

Bryan Mick circulated a press release from Kauai County inviting non-profit organizations to apply for their low income transit fare program. The program's fund can be used to provide bus passes or paratransit ride coupons to eligible residents. Committee Chairperson Violet Horvath commented that Maui County has a similar program. Bryan Mick responded that the City and County of Honolulu has a low income fare that a person can apply for directly but this is not well publicized.

Bryan Mick circulated an article from Midweek highlighting Catholic Charities Transportation for Kupunas (TFK) program and provided additional details from TFK. The program is currently only on Oahu and volunteers can serve as chaperones or as drivers. None of the volunteers have accessible vehicles.

Bryan Mick shared information from the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UH) regarding their pilot project of an autonomous electric student shuttle. The vehicle has a space for a wheelchair, but as the vehicle tends to stop and start suddenly and UH worries it might be dangerous for a wheelchair user. Staff will monitor and advocate if the shuttle is implemented as a regular service that it must use an accessible vehicle.

Streets and Highways

Bryan Mick reported after great difficulty, he was able to obtain contact information for a person at the State Department of Transportation (DOT) who could respond to the Committee's questions and comments about the Kahaluu roundabout. Those had been compiled, but this was a chance for additional comments to be included. There were no further comments for DOT. Committee member Charlotte Townsend commented the project was at least fifty percent (50%) completed as of a few weeks ago.

Bryan Mick reported that at the last meeting, a bill was discussed which proposed to repeal the fines for jaywalking. The Legislature did not pass it, but it is possible it will be reintroduced. The report that was used as justification for the bill details how historically streets were designed for many types of users, and when cars were introduced, the public blamed them for collisions. However, the auto industry made a concerted effort to get jaywalking laws adopted and to change public sentiment so that streets were primarily thought of for vehicular travel. In some ways Complete Streets is an attempt to go back to the original approach of designing streets. However, the fact that vehicles are faster and heavier these days needs to be considered when considering jaywalking laws.

Air Transportation and Airports

Bryan Mick mentioned that staff had received a concern about the procedure at Daniel K. Inouye International Airport to inspect a service animal arriving from out

of state. Pre-COVID, a person could request the inspection occur at the gate. This was very important for someone with a mobility disability who otherwise would have to travel a far distance to the inspection station. Additionally, the accessible route from the inspection station to the baggage claim is poorly marked. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture responded to an inquiry that staffing shortages are the reason gate inspections were ended, but someone could still request one as a reasonable modification though they did not guarantee staffing levels would allow it to be provided. The Committee commented that the procedure for arriving with a service animal should not be onerous, and asked staff to follow up with the Department of Transportation about improving the route from the inspection station to baggage claim. This issue is a good example of how an Airport Accessibility Advisory Committee could bring together various entities that operate at the airport. Committee Chairperson Violet Horvath mentioned that terminal one was designed horribly, the bag check in and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) checkpoint are on opposite ends.

Update from Standing Committee on Parking

Bryan Mick reported DCAB staff met with the State Department of Land and Natural Resources as they have enforcement officers who travel around the State as part of their job duties. They agreed to help enforce accessible parking not only on the properties they patrol, but at other ADA Titles II or III properties if violation is witnessed. Staff is also trying to meet with the Honolulu Chief of Police to stress the importance of the Volunteer Special Enforcement Officer program.

VI. The next meeting will be Friday, November 15, 2024, at 12:00 p.m.

VII. The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

NOTE: All votes were unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/
BRYAN K. MICK