



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: January 8, 2024

Time: 2:00 p. m.

PRESENT: Violet Horvath, Chairperson; Teri Spinola-Campbell, Charlotte Townsend, Board Members; Kirby Shaw, Bryan Mick, Sue Radcliffe, Staff

ABSENT: Gerald Ohta, Board Member

GUEST: Genesis Leong

- I. Chairperson Violet Horvath called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.
- II. Committee members, staff, and guest introduced themselves.
- III. Chairperson Violet Horvath reported no written public testimony was submitted.
- IV. The Committee approved the November 9, 2023 meeting minutes (M/S/P Townsend/Spinola-Campbell).
- V. Unfinished Business

- A. Review of DCAB Guiding Principles on Public Transit Fixed Route Bus Service and Paratransit Services and DCAB Guiding Principles on the Mobility and Safety of Pedestrians with Disabilities and proposed amendments

The Committee resumed reviewing the Guiding Principles on Public Transit Fixed Route Bus Service and Paratransit Services. Board member Charlotte Townsend mentioned that the City and County of Honolulu's paratransit system reflects the City's deep commitment to providing a vital service to the disabled community. The fare rate is noticeably less than other jurisdictions, and the service area exceeds the legal requirement. She also pointed out that the program requires a large taxpayer subsidy, so increasing the fare would only put a small dent in that amount while creating a large barrier for many people who utilize the service.

The Committee reviewed the Guiding Principles on the Mobility and Safety of Pedestrians with Disabilities. Chair Violet Horvath asked what the term "technology" meant in principle number two relating to enforcement. Bryan Mick explained cameras at intersections are an example. Board member Charlotte Townsend commented that she would like to see a sentence added about removing the bumpy mats when a crosswalk is removed, because when they are not removed a person with a vision impairment is led to believe

they should cross the street at that location. Bryan Mick replied maybe it should be a broader statement, for example there also were instances where a mid-block crosswalk would be removed and the curb cuts left in place, which also would indicate to a person with a vision impairment that they should cross. The City explained that two different departments are responsible for the removal of crosswalks and the removal of curb cuts.

Board member Charlotte Townsend mentioned she has not always agreed with the results when the City has tried to apply Complete Streets or Vision Zero principles to roadways. She would like to see the concept of Universal Design used by planners and thinks that concept should be incorporated into the Guiding Principles.

Chairperson Violet Horvath commented that principle 11 recognizes that speed is an important element of pedestrian safety but does not offer enough guidance on how that should be incorporated into any policy or designs. Bryan Mick suggested a sentence about advocating for setting and enforcing speed limits could be added. Board member Teri Spinola-Campbell suggested DCAB support enhanced penalties for speeding in pedestrian areas.

B. Possible Standing Agenda Items

The committee set the following as standing agenda items: Public Transit and Paratransit, Streets and Highways, Pedestrian Mobility, Air Transportation / Airports, Water Transportation and Harbors, Update from Standing Committee on Parking. Board member Teri Spinola-Campbell suggested that pedestrian mobility needs to be expanded to cover the built environment such as sidewalks. Bryan Mick it can be amended to cover that. Board member Charlotte Townsend said that perhaps the Guiding Principles should have an overall statement at the top regarding the importance of Universal Design and other philosophical considerations.

Guest Genesis Leong commented that the US DOT is starting to look at environmental justice and its nexus with transportation and mobility issues. Board member Charlotte Townsend replied that she agrees that environmental concerns should be part of every project or policy proposal. As an example, she has been dismayed that the City has not looked to procure electric paratransit vehicles like it has for buses. This is especially perplexing as the City had to invest money to create the electric charging infrastructure before it could purchase an electric bus, but that infrastructure is now in place.

C. Discussion Items

City and County of Honolulu Taxi Voucher Program

Bryan Mick explained this has been a program DCAB has been a strong proponent of for the City and County of Honolulu for some time. Various studies by the City have recommended this as a way to reduce demand on the existing vehicles and as a cost efficient measure. If designed similar to other jurisdictions, the program would allow rider to make same day reservations, which the current paratransit system does not allow. The rider

would pay the same initial fee to the taxi company, and the City would pay beyond that up to a certain cap. Any fare beyond that is the responsibility of the rider. This would result in the taxis mostly providing short trips and in urban areas where facilities are closer than in rural areas. This would free up the HandiVans to focus on long haul trips. Chairperson Violet Horvath commented that Hilo has such a program. Bryan Mick added that program is limited to the Hilo town area. Board member Charlotte Townsend reported that the City's Budget will include a funding request to run a pilot program with 500 existing HandiVan users participating. The City and County's Rate Commission has also been a strong proponent of this program. The Counties run the public transit and paratransit systems, so the decision to establish a taxi voucher program lies with them. She added that any required training of the taxi drivers would be the responsibility of the City. This likely will only utilize taxi companies and not ride share, as attempt to fold the into the public paratransit system in the past have not been successful. It is also correct that the taxi companies may not have available accessible vehicles in the fleet, so not every HandiVan user will be able to take a taxi.

VI. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be March 19, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

NOTE: All votes were unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

BRYAN K. MICK