



February 24, 2020

Public Meeting of the Howard County Commission on Disabilities
Howard Building, Columbia/Ellicott Rooms 1st Floor
3430 Courthouse Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043
6:30 to 8:30 PM

MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT:

Heidi Burghardt
Cynthia Coburn
Nicole Czarnecki
Elliott Finkelstein
Arthur Gold
Martin Jones
Andrea Kolp
Randy Murbach
Marian Vessels
Karen Woods

EXCUSED ABSENT:

Riffat Ashai
Joshua Hirsh
Doug Lea

ABSENT:

STAFF

Michelle Henry
Erica Lewis
Terry Zeigler

INTERPRETERS

Brenda Kelly Frey
Becky Frey

GUESTS:

Chris Eatough, Office of Transportation
Sharon Maneki, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland (NFB-MD)

- I. Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions

- II. New Business

A. Electric Scooter Sharing Program Discussion

Sharon Maneki, Director of Legislation and Advocacy, NFB-MD

Chris Eatough, Howard County Office of Transportation

- Electric Scooter Sharing Program - Bill CB3-2020- tabled by county council – Next vote due legislative session Monday 3/1/20.

Concerns

- Scooters are dock- less. Operators are permitted to ride scooters on the sidewalk.
- Scooter Operators may be careless about blocking entrances/bus stops, curb cuts.
- Scooters are quiet therefore a person may be unable to tell if one is approaching from behind.
- Concerns over mishandling of scooters – Scooter company has a 3-hour span to properly take care of any mishandling of scooters – after the 3-hour span and nothing is done, the County will handle the issue.

Suggestions/Recommendations:

- Commission needs to collaborate with County to think of what can be done to make scooters accessible and ensure that accessibility for pedestrians is not hampered.
- County needs to make sure Scooter companies educate riders.
- Scooter company will provide some designated parking areas as well as some docking stations.
- Scooter company is 100% reliable for all riders.
- The County, along with Columbia Association to partner in educating Scooter operators.
- Designated zones for Scooter riders – Oakland Mills/Gateway/Downtown Columbia.
- All riders are responsible for the handling of scooters and must sign a waiver.
- Hours of operation for scooters: From midnight to 5:00 a.m. there will be no scooter activity.
- Suggestion made for Access Committee to review permit and if possible, hold emergency commission meeting to discuss.
- Motion: Special Meetings: Access Committee to work with community partners impacted as well as members of commission to identify concerns. Commission wants to be involved and have impact on decision making. Motion passed unanimously.
- It was decided by the CoD that a special meeting will be held on March 16 to consider the recommendations of the Access Committee with respect to whether to support the concerns raised in the National Federation of the Blind – Maryland Chapter's (NFB-MD) letter, Support for CB3-2020 with Amendments, undated, as submitted by Sharon Maneki, Director of Legislation and Advocacy, NFB-MD (Letter was previously submitted to the Commission and reviewed at the 2/24/20 Commission meeting); (2)The Draft Terms and Conditions for the Permit to Operate a Publicly Accessible Electronic Scooter Sharing Program on Public Right-of-Way in Howard County;

B Approval of Minutes for December 9, 2019 meeting

- Cindy made motion to approve December minutes as written – Dr. Jones seconded the motion – passed unanimously.

C. 2020 Awards Program

- This year marks 30th Anniversary of the ADA.
- Discussion to have art contest this year with the artwork to be displayed in the lobby of George Howard Building.
- Reviewed proposed art contest official rules & procedures with suggested themes for 2020.
- Motion made for theme for Awards 2020 Program: Disability. Equity. Inclusion. One County. Accessible to All. Passed unanimously.
- Contest will be open to all Howard County residents.
- Commission will need to reach out to community to those who would be interested to serve as a judge.
- Motion to display/judge artwork. Passed unanimously.

D. Licensure of Sign Language Interpreters

Commission members expressed concern that some sign language interpreters in Maryland lack competency. There is an interest in statewide licensure/certification for sign language interpreters. On March 16 there will be a one-hour special CoD meeting to discuss recommendations regarding mandatory sign language interpreter licensure/certification in Maryland. The recommendations, if any, will be drafted in a letter and submitted to the County Executive.

III. Old Business

A. 2020 Meeting Dates

2020 Meeting dates will be sent to Commission in a calendar invite.

B. 2019 Annual Report

Has not yet been submitted County Council and County Executive

C. HCPSS Two-Way Communication System

Michelle reached out to the school system, who responded that two-way communication devices at schools comply with ADA regulations. HCPSS is working on ensuring that accompanying signs are compliant.

D. Commission's Name Change on County Website

Updated

E. Committee Updates

1. Access Committee

- Next meeting is March 10 and will include review of E-Scooter policies.

2. Provider Committee

- Next meeting is March 18 and will include a presentation on updates in the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration.

F. Howard County Age-Friendly Age Initiative: Online Survey

Commissioners are encouraged to complete survey and provide feedback

G. The Loan Closet's Open House at new location on Columbia
Cindy and Marian attended.

IV. Announcements

A. Public Input Sought for Transportation Funding Priorities

V. Adjournment

Commission meeting adjourned at 8:30pm

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at least five days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) prior to the meeting date.