



MAUI COUNTY COMMISSION ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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MEETING MINUTES

**December 10, 2015, 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Cameron Center, Conference Room #1
95 Mahalani St., Wailuku, HI 96793**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kealoha Laemoa called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. in Cameron Center, Conference Room #1 at 95 Mahalani Street in Wailuku.

Commissioners present included Kevin Souza, Gabriel Johnson, Mikey Tomita, Vivian Lindsey, Faraz Azizsoltani, Sheila Villanueva and Andrew Valentine.

Commissioner David Courson was excused.

Staff present included Deputy Corporation Counsel Jennifer Oana and Nalani Podlewski, Secretary.

Guests present included Kate Eifler (sign interpreter) and Victor Lesa, Jr.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: November 12, 2015

Chair Laemoa asked if any revisions to minutes were needed. None offered.

Commissioner Azizsoltani introduced a MOTION to approve minutes. SECONDED by Commissioner Souza. Chair Laemoa opened discussion, none. Chair Laemoa called for the vote; all in favor, no opposition. MOTION CARRIED.

III. PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMUNITY CONCERNS AS THEY PERTAIN TO ISSUES AFFECTING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Victor Lesa shared that the sidewalks and wheelchair ramps are being installed near Iao Parkside in Wailuku.

Chair Laemoa closed public testimony.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

a. Paratransit Transportation Reservations Process and Ridership:

Commissioner Valentine commented that the reservation process is out of line. He shared that it does not negotiate in favor of the rider; riders don't know when bus will show up; and bus often arrives outside of the 30 minute timeline. He added that the County policy requires that the rider stay at the location an hour before the next transfer. He also expressed that the paratransit is not comparable to the fixed route; riders cannot modify paratransit schedule on the same day, they must cancel and reschedule for another day.

[DJ Schwind, ADA Coordinator, arrived at 12:39 p.m.]

Commissioner Villanueva asked if there is any access to the route schedule. Commissioner Valentine responded that riders are unaware what the schedule is, callers are offered different times based on their request.

Chair Laemoa requested that Commissioner Valentine draft a letter to the Department of Transportation to include his concerns and send to Ms. Podlewski for discussion at next meeting. Commissioner Valentine advised that he will discuss with wheelers and provide feedback.

b. Kalaupapa General Plan Update

Chair Laemoa reported that the general plan is online at Department of Interior website. She shared that she did voice

her concerns that the trails and Damien tours are not ADA accessible.

[Ralph Thomas, EEO Specialist, arrived at 12:47 p.m.]

Mr. Schwind commented that ADA will be coming out with guidelines for outdoor recreation areas. He also added that the federal properties fall under the 504 Rehabilitation Act.

[Darren Konno, DOT Transportation Specialist arrived at 12:49 p.m.]

c. American Sign Language (ASL) Pamphlets Update

Commissioner Tomita passed out a pamphlet to each commissioner. He stated that he plans to work with Mr. Schwind, Fire and Police Department to provide training. He also commented that a sign interpreter list needs to be provided to all emergency personnel.

Mr. Schwind shared that the County has a list of sign interpreters that are available on Maui. He also responded that the pamphlets have been forwarded to the departments along with the offer to provide training. Mr. Schwind will follow up on purchasing additional pamphlets for use by Civil Defense.

d. Upcoming Events

Ms. Oana shared that Imua Family Services is holding a Christmas party tonight at Wailuku Community Center. She provided a brief summary of the program for children from age zero to three years old with developmental disabilities.

V. NEW BUSINESS

a. Molokai Disability Resource Fair, September 22, 2016

Chair Laemoa reported that a request has been made to hold the fair at Mitchel Pauole Center and that the County sponsor

the event. She asked the Commission for input on how to attract employers to participate in the job fair.

Ms. Oana reminded the commission of its duty as advisory to the Mayor.

Commissioner Johnson shared that Ka Lima O Maui just did a job fair on October 16th.

Commissioner Valentine added that ADA.gov has a section with a self-evaluation checklist of resources.

Mr. Thomas recommended that Chair Laemoa contact the Molokai Chamber of Commerce.

b. Unemployment of Persons with Disabilities

Commissioner Johnson commented that he researched the issue and the State of Hawaii is leading the nation with hiring persons with disabilities yet the unemployment rate is still 63% for persons with disabilities, according to the 2009 Census.

He provided additional information about the Ka Lima O Maui job fair which has been held for four years. He spoke with their marketing director and only 20 people showed up at the last event. He commented that the County could do better to service the disabled.

Commissioner Tomita shared that federal and state government has been hiring disabled persons, yet the County has zero. He remarked that the County should be adding more people with disabilities.

Mr. Thomas responded that he is the County's Equal Employment Opportunities Specialist and he sends out job announcements and quarterly newsletters to groups who service those with disabilities. He mentioned that federal and state government have incentives that provide more leeway. He also shared that the County will hire the best qualified persons with or without disabilities.

Mr. Thomas also advised Chair Laemoa that he can provide an information booth at the Molokai fair.

Commissioner Valentine commented that transition programs for those leaving high school are highly needed.

Commissioner Azizoltani asked if the County had any volunteer programs. Chair Laemoa responded that there are a few including a neighborhood watch program thru Police Department and volunteer program to take elderly to appointments and recreational activities thru Aging Office. She also commented that her father used to assist Fire Department when water is needed for dehydration purposes. Commissioner Valentine added that the lobby at the county building is operated by volunteers and there is a listing of volunteer opportunities.

c. Closed Captioning for Videos Produced with County Funds

Commissioner Tomita shared that he viewed the October 28th Disability Forum and commission meetings on Akaku but there were no captions. He requested that Akaku include captions and was told that they cannot afford to add the service.

Chair Laemoa requested that Commissioner Tomita write a letter outlining his concerns about captions. He responded that he needs to confirm that Akaku is receiving county funds before he drafts the letter.

Mr. Schwind shared that there was a Subcommittee of this Commission to address the issue. He added that Akaku does receive county funds, but based on its total income it is not required to provide captions; whereas the County of Maui under Title II needs to provide effective communication to everyone. He shared that the Council is the department that puts broadcast of council hearings on Akaku, not the Administration. He recalled awhile back that he made a recommendation that the Office of Council Services take the lead to address this issue to create a plan. He added that the Commission should make a recommendation that includes all accessory aides, not only captioning.

Commissioner Valentine added that the Mr. Schwind is correct that this issue was brought up before and it has not moved forward.

Chair Laemoa recommended that Commissioner Tomita draft a letter and sent to Ms. Podlewski to bring to the Commission for review.

d. Bus Transportation Expansion of Routes and Hours

Commissioner Lindsey shared that changes to routes and hours are in process.

Mr. Konno added that 5-year transit plan was done in 2006 and it is now 10 years old. A consultant has been hired to review the plan for the next 5 years; it has been in process for about a year; community meetings were held in November; and a presentation to Council was done this past Tuesday. He mentioned that next steps would be up to the Mayor and Administration to carry forward, as well as Council to accept the proposed plan. Currently the plan is still in progress and the consultant has until February to complete.

Commissioner Johnson asked if he could see the proposed plan. Mr. Konno replied that there are basic slides that were provided at the community meetings. He will bring copies to next meeting for commissioners.

VI. AGENDA SETTING

Commissioner Azizoltani expressed that roads are not pedestrian or bike friendly. He added that crosswalks are not visible and requested that repainting should be done. He suggested that Public Works be invited to the next meeting. He commented that he believes that pedestrian and bicycle traffic collisions are high on Maui. Mr. Konno shared that it might be more beneficial to identify the specific road because it is helpful to identify the proper owner.

Ms. Oana asked if this issue is related to ADA or just in general.

Commissioner Tomita shared that he was walking in front of the Kahului Fire Station when the doors opened and there are no flashing lights to signal him that a fire truck would be entering driveway. He requested that this be placed on the agenda.

Ms. Oana shared that improvements are in the works for the Kahului Fire Station regarding the commission's concerns; she is not certain if flashing lights was included in the previous discussion.

Commissioner Tomita responded that he does not believe that this was included.

Ms. Oana suggested that a letter inquiry could be addressed to Department Directors rather than asking for presentation at the meeting.

Chair Laemoa asked Commissioner Azizoltani to draft a letter on sidewalks, crosswalk restriping and provide description of roads. Commissioner Azizoltani added that he would forward photographs to Ms. Podlewski.

Commissioner Johnson added that he would like to continue to include Underemployment of Persons with Disabilities on the agenda.

VII. NEXT MEETING

January 15, 2016, 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Cameron Center, Conference Room 1.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Azizoltani presented a MOTION to adjourn the meeting. **SECONDED** by Commissioner Villanueva. Chair Laemoa called for the vote, all in favor, no objection. **MOTION CARRIED**. Meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.