

**HOUSING, HUMAN SERVICES, AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE**

Council of the County of Maui

MINUTES

October 25, 2016

Council Chamber, 8th Floor

CONVENE: 9:02 a.m.

PRESENT: VOTING MEMBERS:

Councilmember Stacy Crivello, Chair
Councilmember Gladys C. Baisa, Vice-Chair
Councilmember Robert Carroll
Councilmember Don Couch
Councilmember Don S. Guzman (in 9:28 a.m.)
Councilmember Riki Hokama

EXCUSED: VOTING MEMBERS:

Councilmember Michael P. Victorino

STAFF:

Michele Yoshimura, Legislative Analyst
Clarita Balala, Substitute Committee Secretary
Ella Alcon, Council Aide, Molokai Council Office (via telephone conference bridge)
Denise Fernandez, Council Aide, Lanai Council Office (via telephone conference bridge)
Dawn Lono, Council Aide, Hana Council Office (via telephone conference bridge)

ADMIN.:

Carol K. Reimann, Director, Department of Housing and Human Concerns (HHT-43)
Linda R. Munsell, Assistant Housing Administrator, Housing Division, Department of Housing and Human Concerns (HHT-43)
Donald Medeiros, Director, Department of Transportation (HHT-5)
Marc Iwao Takamori, Deputy Director, Department of Transportation (HHT-5)
Jeffrey T. Ueoka, Deputy Corporation Counsel, Department of the Corporation Counsel

OTHERS:

Debbie Cabebe, Chief Operating Officer, Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.
Additional attendees (1)

PRESS:

Akaku--Maui County Community Television, Inc.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: . . .(gavel). . . Good morning. The meeting of the Housing, Human Services, and Transportation Committee will now come to order. It is about 9:02 a.m., on Tuesday, October 25, 2016. Before we begin, may I please request that we all turn off or silence our cell phones or other noise-making devices? At this time, I'd like to introduce our Committee voting Members. I'm Stacy Helm Crivello, Chair for this Committee, and our Committee Vice-Chair, Councilwoman Gladys Baisa.

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VICE-CHAIR BAISA: Good morning, Chair.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Good morning. Councilmember Bob Carroll.

COUNCILMEMBER CARROLL: Good morning, Chair.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Good morning. Councilmember Don Couch.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Aloha and good morning, Chair.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Aloha. Councilmember Riki Hokama.

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: Good morning, Madam Chair.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Good morning. Member Don Guzman is excused till about 11:00 a.m. this morning. Likewise, Councilmember Mike Victorino is excused. I'd also like to take this time to introduce our Administrative representatives. The Director of Housing and Human Concerns, Carol Reimann. Thank you for being here. And with us is Director of Transportation, Don Medeiros. And Carol, will you introduce your guest?

MS. REIMANN: Thank you, Chair. Aloha. Linda Munsell, the Assistant Housing Administrator.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you for being here, Linda. And our Committee Staff, of course, who work so diligently, our Committee Secretary, Clarita Balala, and our Legislative Analyst, Michele Yoshimura. Members, we have two items on the agenda today so I don't believe...I believe, we don't have any testimony from in the Chamber. And District, I'm going to just check with our District Office if we have any testifiers. From our Hana District, Dawn Lono.

MS. LONO: Good morning, Chair. This is Dawn Lono at the Hana Office and there is no one waiting to testify.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you, Dawn. From our Molokai District Office, Ella Alcon.

MS. ALCON: Good morning, Chair. This is Ella Alcon on Molokai.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you, Ella. And from our Lanai District Office, Denise Fernandez.

MS. FERNANDEZ: Good morning, Chair. This is Denise Fernandez on Lanai and there is no one waiting to testify.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you. Members, it appears as though we have no testifiers and if you have no objections, public testimony will be closed.

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COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

ITEM HHT-43: GRANT OF A NON-EXCLUSIVE EASEMENT TO OCEANIC TIME WARNER CABLE FOR THE KULAMALU AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT
(CC 16-235)

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Our first item on the agenda this morning is HHT-43, Grant of a Non-Exclusive Easement to Oceanic Time Warner Cable for the Kulamalu Affordable Housing Project. The Committee is in receipt of County Communication 16-235, from the Director of Housing and Human Concerns, transmitting a proposed resolution entitled Authorizing the Grant of a Non-Exclusive Easement to Oceanic Time Warner for the Kulamalu Affordable Housing Project. The purpose of the proposed resolution is to authorize the grant of a non-exclusive easement to Oceanic Time Warner Cable LLC over 4.179 acres owned by the County to afford cable television and telecommunication services to the residents of the Kulamalu Affordable Housing Project at 65 Ohia Ku Street, Pukalani, Maui, Hawaii. The Committee may consider whether to recommend adoption of the proposed resolution with or without revisions. The Committee may also consider the filing of County Communication 16-235 and other related action. At this time, I'd like to ask our Corporation Counsel to present comments and then the Department of Housing.

MR. UEOKA: Thank you, Chair. I believe, there were some issues regarding potential liability for this, but it's just a standard easement for Oceanic to come in and install their necessary equipment for the provision of cable and telecommunication services. It is a little different than normal easements. Well, I shouldn't say normal easements, but the easements we typically see for water and sewer lines where it's over the entire property. The Director will go into that a little further, but this is generally over the entire property because I don't believe at this time the project is clear where the lines will be going and everything. But after our review, we feel there are adequate protections in it for the County and it seems like the equipment will be in places that will work for the County and be easy for both us and Time Warner...Oceanic Time Warner. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you, Mr. Ueoka. Ms. Reimann, Director of Housing and Human Concerns.

MS. REIMANN: Thank you, Chair. Aloha, Members. The Kulamalu Affordable Housing Project is a 56-unit rental project currently under construction by the County of Maui in Pukalani. The construction is 36 percent complete as of the end of September and is continuing to make progress. The schedule has slipped by approximately one month and is currently expected to be completed in March of 2017. As part of the construction, we are making provision for the infrastructure required to provide television, internet, and telephone connections for our eventual residents. As one step for providing the infrastructure we have for your consideration today a non-exclusive easement agreement between the County of Maui and Oceanic Time Warner Cable. As part of the general construction, the County will be providing all interior wiring and

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connections to provide these services in each of the buildings and individual units. We are then partnering with Oceanic Time Warner Cable who will be providing the cabling to connect service from the street to each of the residential buildings and to the community center. Once the project is complete, each resident will then have the option of contracting directly with Oceanic for a mix of services that will best meet the individual's needs. In evaluating various service providers, we found that Oceanic provided the project with the most cost-effective option for providing bundled access. Oceanic was the only provider offering to provide a connection at no charge to the project. The agreement you have before you is non-exclusive, meaning that in the future should the County find that it is cost-effective to include other providers for these services, we will have that option. The easement is a blanket easement. Our construction team will be working with Oceanic to utilize existing conduits and raceways so that the infrastructure installation is effectively accomplished. We're requesting that this Committee grant approval of this non-exclusive agreement to Oceanic Time Warner Cable for the Kulamalu Affordable Housing Project. Thank you.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you, Director. Members, any comments or questions for the Department as well as Corporation Counsel? Mr. Couch?

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you for that information, Ms. Reimann. The question I have is...I don't know if people have seen in the news that Oceanic is gonna be sold potentially to another company. Is there anything in here that allows...I couldn't quite see that if Oceanic gets sold that this will move with it? Or, do we have to go through that whole --

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Mr. Ueoka?

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: --thing again when the other company buys Oceanic?

MR. UEOKA: Thank you, Chair. Mr. Couch, our understanding is this agreement is with Oceanic, so assuming the company buys Oceanic they would be buying all of these rights. And it won't be necessarily...there's a...they can't assign without our consent. But if they're acquired I don't think that's necessarily an assignment. So, our understanding is it should be okay going through. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Okay, thank you, Chair.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you. Any further comments or questions? Ms. Baisa?

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: Thank you very much, Chair. I would just like to speak in support of this. I think, it's very important that we get this done. We want this built and let's get all the roadblocks out of the way. Thank you.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you. Any further questions or comments? Mr. Hokama?

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: The easement can, I know, we asking for just 56 units, can the easement handle more community needs?

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CHAIR CRIVELLO: Mr. Ueoka?

MR. UEOKA: Thank you, Chair. If we were to expand more on this property, yes. But this is essentially just allowing the Oceanic hook up to put in equipment and stuff, to hook up on this parcel, our Kulamalu Affordable Housing, the County's Kulamalu Affordable Housing Project.

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: So, this helps nobody else but 56 units?

MR. UEOKA: At this time, yeah, unless we expand, of course, on our project.

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: Okay. It's site specific and it's unit specific and no one else gets the benefit?

MR. UEOKA: Yes, as of right now.

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: Okay, thank you very much.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Hokama. Members, any further questions or comments in regards to this item? If not, I would like to entertain a motion to recommend adoption of a proposed resolution entitled Authorizing the Grant of a Non-Exclusive Easement to Oceanic Time Warner Cable for the Kulamalu Affordable Housing Project; and filing of County Communication 16-235.

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: So moved, Chair.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Second.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you. We have a motion and a second to accept adoption of a proposed resolution entitled Authorizing the Grant of a Non-Exclusive Easement to Oceanic Time Warner Cable for the Kulamalu Affordable Housing Project; and filing of County Communication 16-35 [sic]. All those in favor, say "aye."

COUNCILMEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Opposed? None. So today we have five in favor and two excused.

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bi-monthly and members appear satisfied with the service. They report that the on-the-way calls, which is a feature of the software systems' accuracy have improved and Ecolane, which is the software vendor is working on personalizing the call to address the rider by name when they receive these calls. Generally these calls come in to a rider the evening before the service. This should be ready to roll out on or before the end of the year. The Advisory Council is also pleased with the expansion of the Kula route as they benefit as well. As you know, the Paratransit service operates within three-quarter miles of the fixed route. As a result of meetings that we just undertook by the Administration and through our Advisory Council, many of the comments we've received is they would like to see expanded hours of operation of the bus system to include later returns from South and West Maui to the Central area, and expanded service to include Maui Meadows and upper Wailuku. In August, an Ecolane trainer came down to MEO to work them for two weeks. They worked with management, the reservationist, the dispatchers, the drivers, including our Department, and trained us and explained how the system functions. This provided a better understanding to the users of how the system functions. In general, that two-week visit yielded huge benefits that we reap today. That concludes my comments. We're open for any questions that you may have. Thank you very much.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Medeiros. Members, I'm going to open the floor for discussions or comments or questions, and we have with us Ms. Cabebe from the MEO Bus Service.

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: Chair?

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Ms. Baisa?

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: Thank you very much, Chair. Chair, we have a computer generated presentation, are they gonna make that?

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Are you gonna do that presentation?

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: I think, it might help to clarify what the service is, and what's going on.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't believe we have that.

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: Well, it's in my Granicus. Well it's from the last time but that was a long time ago. None of us can remember from day-to-day what this is about. It's the people that run it that know.

MR. MEDEIROS: I don't...Councilmember Baisa, I don't have any computer-generated presentation. I'm sorry. I'm a little flat-footed on that one.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: I believe Granicus has carried over from what was presented before, so. That's the...

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VICE-CHAIR BAISA: You know, this presentation explained like what is Paratransit, what are the limitations. 'Cause what we hear as Councilmembers are people calling in and having concerns about this or that, but we need to understand what is Paratransit and what its limitations are. That helps us when they call.

MR. MEDEIROS: I'll be happy to...

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: And the public who's watching today has no idea what we're talking about.

MR. MEDEIROS: Okay. I'll be happy to explain. Essentially with the Federal ADA law for addressing persons with disabilities, one of the mandates for transportation as with accessibility for buildings, for instance, if have a two...three-story building, you need to have an elevator. If you have steps leading into the building, you should have a ramp and these sorts of things so that people that use different mobility devices are able to access buildings and what have you and services. And transit is part of that. So, all of our fixed-route buses, for instance, have ramps in them or they have lifts, which allow someone that's using some sort of a mobile device that they can get into the bus and get out of the bus. And that at our locations, our hubs, they generally need to be accessible as well. Well, not everybody can get to a bus stop. And so, therefore, we needed to have this Paratransit system that's mandated by Federal law that essentially will go to your home to get you if you're unable to get to a bus stop. To be qualified as a Paratransit passenger, your doctor or medical advisor needs to sign a form that you fill out, that asks several questions, among them mainly is can you get there? Can you physically get to that...a location? And if the answer is no, and then there's a few other questions that have to be asked, then, and it's certified by a medical professional, then you would qualify. At that point, it comes to our office and we have 21 days to respond to a application that comes into our office, and then that is handed off, in this case, to Maui Economic Opportunity, MEO, that is our Paratransit provider. We have, MEO has...the County of Maui has provided MEO...I think, we have 35 Paratransit buses now at MEO to provide this service. So what are Paratransit buses? It's the little bus. You can carry anywhere from eight ambulatory folks or up to four wheelchairs. And the service...the system is set up and the vehicle is set up that it can accept people with mobility devices. So someone might say well what's a mobility device? A mobility device can be something like Councilmember Carroll uses, which is a wheelchair. It could be a powered wheelchair. It could be a manual wheelchair. It could be a scooter. It varies with the person with the disabilities. And so we have to be able to accept those and handle it. The majority of the small Paratransit buses have a lift. You'll see them at different locations, supermarkets and whatnot where we're loading...MEO is loading and unloading folks. And so, the caveat for all of this is that under ADA law where our fixed routes operate this Paratransit service will operate three-quarter miles on either side of that fixed route. So in the case of Wailuku, our fixed route, the end of our fixed route, is right up here on High Street where it heads out to the West Side or it heads into, through Wailuku. So, I mentioned earlier here that people were asking about upper Wailuku. Upper Wailuku would be Wailuku Heights, Iao Valley, where they're beyond that three-quarter mile, and so there is no Paratransit service under the ADA rule to those

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folks. Anytime we extend a route, as I mentioned with Kula, that extends the breadth of the Paratransit service. So now where, prior to us extending the Kula route, as an example, it stopped at Rice Park. Now that we go all the way to Kula Hospital, that route, which is the farthest reach in that area, would go three-quarter miles beyond that location, which is across from Fong's store, and Kula Hospital, and whatnot. So that's what provides it. That's what distinguishes our operating area as such. We run into many areas where we don't get to, particularly up in the Haiku area, and even Kula, because in Kula we're on the Old Kula Road, the Lower Kula Road, which now it only goes three-quarter mile. It will not reach as high as the Upper Kula Road, but we don't have fixed route bus service up there. Therefore, that area is not served under the ADA Paratransit. That's, I think, I've touched on all of 'em...all of the issues with regards to ADA. If I haven't and you have some questions, I'll be happy to answer them.

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: Thank you, Chair. I thought that was important. You know, when people look at the bus service they're used to seeing the MEO bus. And they have no idea that there is a separation in contracts or services. They just see MEO and how come they go here and how come they don't go there? And, you know, why can't I do what I wanna do? Why can't I go when I wanna go? I think, it's important that we explain this to the public. And those who know today forgot tomorrow. Remember, we're all seniors and so it's very difficult to, you know, deal with this population. And we are the ones, like I said who get the calls, and get stopped in the supermarket about, you know, what's going on, and why can't I go when I wanna go, and whatever. So, it's really important, I think, that we educate the public about the differences in the contracts. You know, when they see Paratransit services it doesn't mean anything. So, I thought that was important, Chair. Thank you.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you, Ms. Baisa. Members, any other questions or concerns? Mr. Couch?

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Medeiros, thank you for that report. You mentioned that most of the buses have ADA ramps. Do we have only buses, or I just happened to notice just the other day, it looks like a brand new van that says Maui Bus and then Paratransit operated by MEO. What is that vehicle used for? And how many of those do we have?

MR. MEDEIROS: Some of the areas that we attempt to serve are very tight. We have an old community. It's a rural community. And so we have three Dodge Caravan-type units that will load from the rear of the vehicle and can accommodate a couple of wheelchairs. We also have another vehicle, which is new on the market, which can accommodate one vehicle. And those particular vehicles don't have lifts. In other words, you don't get on something that elevates you to another level. They've got these little ramps, which has its challenges, but it also helps to serve the target population because various people have various needs. And so, we have tried to put in a system that would be responsible to respond better to the needs. We have just transferred a vehicle that was previously in the fixed-route fleet to the MEO fleet, which has a ramp and could hold about, be about 5 wheelchairs and 14 ambulatory folks to assist MEO

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here with expanding their reach to different, you know, to the community of persons with disabilities.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Okay. That brings up another question. How many, you know, when you drive...when the bus goes by a lot of times you see just one person on the bus, but it could be they're on their way to pick up somebody else. What is your average number of riders per vehicle?

MR. MEDEIROS: On the Paratransit, it's usually about three. They'll pick up as they go. The software is set up so, yeah, if...pending...there's a few things here. Pending on where you need to be, what time you need to be, and this sort of thing. Generally, we'll pick up in a regional area two to three different folks. Sometimes they'll have a caregiver with them that assists the person with disabilities to get around. And so, we have to be able to handle that as well. So when you, if you go into one of these little vehicles or even in our fixed-route buses a lot of the seats flip up and it's so just, you know, how many wheelchairs, and how many ambulatory, and you try to make accommodations so they'll all fit, and we'll service their needs.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Okay. And the other thing is, how long does the driver wait for the passenger when they call and say hey I need to get picked up? I heard that there were some issues and, Madam Chairman, I'm kind of surprised that we got no testimony, written or no one here.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: We do have a couple of written testimony.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Oh, we do?

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: I didn't...it didn't show in Granicus to me and I don't have it in writing.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Oh, I'm sorry. Not so much testimony. I just got couple e-mails.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Oh, okay.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Yeah, not necessarily...

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: It's just that's interesting, it must mean that everybody...

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Well, may I add, Mr. Couch, in reference to Ms. Baisa's concern about the presentation that's in file from March of 2015. So at that time, we had a number of concerns and quite specific. And so, the call for this particular agenda item is a follow-up on the concerns that was brought up to us during that time, so from that presentation.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: So, yeah, it seems like that things must be going well.

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CHAIR CRIVELLO: I'm sure we still have concerns, but maybe not as major as we had in the past. But we do have. And, I guess, lots have to do with the time schedule according to a couple of the e-mails I've had...I've received.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Okay. Yeah, so that was one of my things, I did ask about the amount of time that the driver waits for the person.

MR. MEDEIROS: Well specifically if you have a reservation and the bus gets to your home, and you're not there, they'll wait five minutes, and that's it. They'll leave and call you a no show.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Do they attempt to call since we now have this whole personalized thing?

MR. MEDEIROS: Yes, what happens is there are two features of the software. And the first one is that you will receive a phone call or on your personal phone or your ground line or however you choose. But a reminder call that says you have a pick up tomorrow morning at such and such a time. The next thing that happens is, and this is one of the things that we've been working on that has been some contention on is that there is supposed to be a five-minute reminder. Five minutes before your pick up, you're gonna get a call and say the bus will be there in five minutes. And that has been problematic in that if they're picking me up at 9 o'clock, and they're supposed to pick you up at 9:05, and we live maybe a block away or something, and the bus gets there, and say I'm early. He loads me and, of course, he's gonna take off and so the GPS it doesn't have enough time...there's not enough time left to give you a five-minute call so sometimes the calls will come in, and you're on the bus, and the five-minute call comes in. Well, you know, technology is great. Technology is not perfect. But in general it works and we've been...MEO has been working with Ecolane to tweak that to get it down. But in the example I gave you, it's just physically not possible. So there are reminders ahead of time to remind you that there is a run scheduled for you, for the day before and including that morning. One of the other things that, I believe, came up as a result of this and is that many in the disability community want to have same day reservations. They wanna be able to call, right now it's 9:33 and say I want a pick up at 11 o'clock. Under ADA that's not required and they want us to expand beyond ADA. As it is now, the service is used a lot. And, as you mentioned...as I mentioned earlier with the stats, it's growing. And as we know, us older people, there're gonna be more and more of us getting older and older. And so, it's gonna stretch the system. So, we're...as the Director, I'm reluctant to come before this Council and ask you for more money to change the Federal regulations to go beyond the Federal regulations by requiring something for same-day service. As it is, we've gotten to the point we're in the 90s, high 90s with on-time and what have you. I think, that, personally, as the Director, to try to move this beyond that we're just gonna ask for more, for additional operational issues, which we don't feel we can address at this time.

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CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you, Director. Mr. Couch, before you go any further, I'd like to recognize Councilmember Don Guzman. Thank you for being here.

COUNCILMEMBER GUZMAN: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Yes, Mr. Couch?

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Okay, that brings up yet another question is so we don't have the same day, which is understandable. But MEO does something very similar to this. So is that an instance where MEO would, and I don't know if, Madam Chair, we're talking about Paratransit, I don't know if it's just...

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Yes, we're...our discussion is Paratransit.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Is that just our bus system or is MEO Paratransit allowed?

CHAIR CRIVELLO: It's MEO.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Okay.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Yeah.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: So, do they have the same day? Can somebody call up at 9:30 and say I need a pick up at 11:00?

MR. MEDEIROS: In general, the answer is no. However, MEO being MEO, they will take things on a case-by-case basis. I think what Debbie is trying to say and having been there, you know, if there is a dire...something is really dire and it needs to be done they're gonna do their best. But please keep in mind that every day the Paratransit gets about 200 reservations every day. On the other side, they get about 600 to 700 reservations every day.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: They who?

MR. MEDEIROS: The Human Services side that we're not talking about. But that, you know, you're inferring can MEO, the Human Services side transportation do it, you know, and they have three times the amount of reservations as the Paratransit does.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: We're gonna just --

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Okay.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: --stick around about the Paratransit, Mr. Couch, please. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Yeah. That answers my questions. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you. Thank you. I'd like to also add in regards to Mr. Couch's concerns or questions, surprised I'm not seeing a number of testifiers here. One of them is access for, to be here at 9 o'clock with the Paratransit buses and depending what kind of reservations they've made. So that's also another reason perhaps why we don't have the kind of testifiers so that could be one part of it. And the other part of it is not that...there's been...I would say there's been respond to the concerns that were brought up at previous Committee meetings that we've had and not to say we don't. I think, it still needs...we still need to scrub little bit more as far as schedule and appointments through the system. And like you said we know it's not perfect, but I appreciate MEO and the Department working on it. Any other questions or comments, Members? Mr. Hokama?

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: I would...thank you. I would ask Director Medeiros, you know, for me, we tend to use certain words that people have different understanding of. I bring up in a testimony here, and it's dated, but, I think, it brings up a good point for my illustration. It's stating part of the Federal ADA Code about capacity constraints. And in this testimony they state and I'm reading what they have written. The entity shall not limit the availability of complementary--okay, that's the word I want you to remember--complementary Paratransit service to ADA Paratransit eligible individuals by any of the following. Then it goes down: restrictions, waitlist. You are aware of those specifics. My concern is what do you believe is the ridership's understanding of the word complementary means?

MR. MEDEIROS: That's an interesting question. I think, a lot of times people think that means it's free. And that's not the way it's spelled. It's to provide additional to something. It doesn't necessarily mean monetary.

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: You're trying to reach capacity --

MR. MEDEIROS: Correct.

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: --within the availability of resources provided.

MR. MEDEIROS: Correct. It's the spelling of it, right?

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: Is this a problem? Do we need to have an education of what we are required to provide within the means available? Government can provide anything provided the people are willing to pay. Okay. Government can provide anything. So, my question is, I guess, because, I think, we need to have this term squared away, complementary Paratransit service and what is the ridership's willingness regarding ability to pay.

MR. MEDEIROS: We, and MEO, has done an awful lot to educate people and to explain that. And, I think, the general community understands it. But we always have new people coming into the system so we go through that again. But working with the Paratransit Advisory Committee and other venues that we attend, you know, many feel that the service should be free. And we've, you know, we've had that discussion over the years.

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And that's why I feel it's extremely important that we follow the Federal ADA regulations and the law to the T. And yet, this Council has been really, really great and has really extended beyond the ADA requirements by providing passes for people with...monthly passes. That's not required under ADA. And under ADA, a transportation provider, such as us and the County, we could actually charge double the fare of the fixed route. So, whereas now we're charging \$2, which is the fixed-route fare, to pick you up from your home and take you to a location. And when we take you to another location it's another \$2. Well under the ADA, we could charge \$4 for each one of those and that there would be no monthly pass. So, this Council has been very, very receptive to the needs of the disabled population. And but for the grace of God, we'll all be there at some point. So, thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: Okay. Well, there is nothing free. Okay, it's fact. There's nothing free. Somebody pays the bill. And we need to inform people and educate them that somebody else is paying. Maybe not that directed beneficiary, but somebody is paying the bill. Okay. We are hiring drivers. We're buying equipment. There is a bill. And so one of the things, I believe, that you may assist this Committee and our Chairman, I believe, we need to have some performance metrics. You know, you gave us some great information earlier this morning that you shared with us. I would like to see that on a spreadsheet. I'm not a discipline of Mr. White, but I would like to see over a period of years the metrics to see whether or not there is improvement. I heard there is improvement so let's go see it by the metrics. Or not, I'm gonna say, I'm going to ask the Chair, do we need a performance audit?

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you. Staff will make note of this request, Mr. Hokama.

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: Thank you. And, again, Madam Chairman, we just need to do audits period. It doesn't matter which department, which program. Council needs to do audits, so. This could be one of those that we may wish to consider. Thank you.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Yes, thank you, Mr. Hokama. Members, any other comments or questions or further discussion? Ms. Baisa?

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: Thank you very much, Chair. I'm sorry, was Mr. Carroll trying to get your attention?

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Mr. Carroll, were you trying to get my attention, Mr. Carroll?

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: No.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: You're good? Thank you.

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: Okay, I wanted to, you know, not be hogging. But anyway, Mr. Medeiros mentioned some areas where they would like to expand where there's been request for expansion. And I'm curious if any of this is gonna be coming up in the new budget. Is there any intent to try to fulfill these needs that we're hearing about?

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CHAIR CRIVELLO: Mr. Medeiros?

MR. MEDEIROS: Thank you, Member Baisa. We're in the early stages of the budget. It still needs to go through Administration. We have put in some requests to extend some of the hours later in the evening for the fixed route operation, which as I mentioned would benefit the Paratransit operation as well. Yeah, and that...I believe, that's it. And, of course, we're looking for a few more buses, which we're always looking for. That sort of thing. I believe, that's the extent of it at this point. We're also looking for some additional staff because of the additional loads that we're facing to answer the Federal requirements.

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: These would be Transportation staff?

MR. MEDEIROS: Yeah.

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: The bus company's staff?

MR. MEDEIROS: No --

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: Or in your office?

MR. MEDEIROS: --would be the County Department of Transportation. We have a huge amount of requirements, Federal requirements, and we still have a six-passenger canoe. The canoe has just gotten longer and wider, but we still have six oars in the water. And it's getting kind of tough to move that forward.

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: You have my complete empathy. I know about doing more with less until you can do everything with nothing. But, you know, the reason why I'm asking the question is, and, Member Hokama brings up a really good point, and that is all of this revolves around money. You know, we can do whatever we wanna do and we can be wonderful but somebody's gotta pay for it. So, I was just concerned that, you know, we're gonna continue to have these requests until we try to figure out how to pay for them. So, I wondered if that was gonna happen immediately. That was the reason for the question.

MR. MEDEIROS: Okay, thank you very much.

VICE-CHAIR BAISA: Thank you.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you. Members, any further discussion? Mr. Hokama?

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: I like how my colleague thinks. She had a good mother and a good father that taught us what money...value of money is. So following up, tell us, is there any benefit with the MPO and programs like Paratransit? I don't know so I'm asking the question. Is there a benefit that now we have a designation regarding an MPO? Is there a benefit to this County regarding the Paratransit program?

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CHAIR CRIVELLO: Mr. Director?

MR. MEDEIROS: As you know, the point of the MPO is to get...to solicit public involvement to get public opinion on various transportation matters, generally transportation matters, its roads. However, transportation, our type of transportation, the bus transportation, is part of that. And, I think, there is a venue for that so that some of these plans, some of these requests could go through the MPO process, and help passengers, you know, get it to the County, get it to this body, to open the purse strings a little bit more to provide more services. I think, that's just another venue that's going to happen. That's what I see happening. It's still too new.

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: Again, we're all learning with this MPO entity, so. It's still tax money. We pay Federal taxes all of us so, it's a re-route. But my job is to take care of County General Fund. So, if we can get Federal dollars to assist you with planning, including Paratransit planning on new roadways or system expansion and maintenance, then I would be thrilled to have you coming back and report that you have so much Federal support in the future.

MR. MEDEIROS: That's a really good point and you're heading in the right direction. I think, that's the other piece of it that I neglected to say. The more we can prove it and use it through the MPO possibly we could access more Federal money. And that, you hit the nail on the head. Thank you.

COUNCILMEMBER HOKAMA: Thank you. Thank you. Chair.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you. Mr. Couch?

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Thank you, Madam Chair. All this talk about money brings up another question. You know, we have Medicare and Medicaid, that kind of thing. Do they do any kind of subsidy for something like this? Is that something that we can take advantage of?

MR. MEDEIROS: That's a touchy one. Let me put it this way. When Gladys and I were at MEO, we had a separate department that would handle Medicaid claims. And that generated a certain amount of revenue that went into the system to help run the system. Now they've changed it. How it's done has been changed and what we see happening is that there's been a deterioration of this system. And so MEO has tried to keep up with it, but to keep it, I guess, to simplify it, the Feds have mandated that this goes out to like a brokerage type system. And so far it's been really difficult because all that's happened is they put a middle person involved who wants a piece of the pie that's now getting smaller. And so I don't, I think, from what I've heard and what I've seen, talked to MEO, but let me --

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Yes, Ms. Cabebe.

MR. MEDEIROS: --let Ms. Cabebe take a shot at that one.

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CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you, Ms. Cabebe.

MS. CABEBE: Good morning. The Medicaid as Director Medeiros explained has changed considerably. And a lot of that is due to the cost reimbursement, it's dwindled. And what we're finding is that there are entities that are purchasing Paratransit passes utilizing Medicaid credits because it's cheaper for them to buy a Paratransit pass than it is to get reimbursed through the Medicaid reimbursement system. They make more money off of it. So right now, we actually discontinued accepting Medicaid runs for a couple of months because there was a transfer in...there was a change in vendors and the whole billing process was so cumbersome and they couldn't explain it to us how we would get reimbursed. We actually stopped doing that for about three months. We started doing it on Molokai and Lanai because they had a better handle on it on that island. So recently we have started doing some Medicaid billing separately. They were for people that aren't covered under either Paratransit or under Human Services. And then that money, in the past, was used to help supplement unfunded, you know, transportation items. But that pie has really shrunk. I think, it's the same issue like that Hale Makua was having where the reimbursement rates have gotten so low it's made it very, very difficult. You'll notice that there are a lot of mom and pop vendors driving around right now doing one-on-one. So, I think, for certain clients there's a benefit to the Medicaid, if they have high needs because it is currently more of a one-on-one kind of service.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: So does that answer your question, Mr. Couch?

COUNCILMEMBER COUCH: Yeah, I think so. Thank you.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Alright. Thank you. Any more comments, further discussion for our Director of Transportation or our resource person, Debbie Cabebe, from MEO? People, I want to thank you for being here. And since we have no legislation to consider, if there's no objection, I would like to defer this matter.

COUNCILMEMBERS: No objections.

COUNCILMEMBERS VOICED NO OBJECTIONS. (Excused: MPV)

ACTION: DEFER.

CHAIR CRIVELLO: Thank you. Members, we have completed today's agenda. I'd like to thank the representatives from the Administration. I'd also like to thank our Staff and most of all you, Members, for being here today so that we could complete our agenda. Again, thank you. And at this time the October 25, 2016 meeting of the Housing, Human Services, and Transportation Committee is now adjourned. . . .(gavel). . .

ADJOURN: 9:55 a.m.

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APPROVED:



STACY CRIVELLO, Chair
Housing, Human Services, and
Transportation Committee

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Transcribed by: Delfey Fernandez

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CERTIFICATE

I, Delfey Fernandez, hereby certify that the foregoing represents to the best of my ability, a true and correct transcript of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not in any way concerned with the cause.

DATED this 14th day of November 2016, in Wailuku, Hawaii.


Delfey Fernandez