



**Montgomery County, MD  
Commission on People with Disabilities  
December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**Welcome and Approval of November, 2015 Meeting Summary Minutes:**

Seth Morgan, Chair, convened the meeting. A motion was made to approve the November, 2015 Meeting Summary Minutes. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the November, 2015 Meeting Summary Minutes were unanimously approved as written. Approved minutes are available online at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cpwd](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cpwd).

**New Voting Machine Demonstration – Gilberto “Dr. Z” Zelaya II, Ph.D., CERA, Montgomery County Board of Elections, Outreach/Early Voting Coordinator**

[www.elections.state.md.us/voting\\_system/index.html](http://www.elections.state.md.us/voting_system/index.html)

Maryland’s new voting system produces a voter-verifiable paper record of each voter’s selections. This was mandated in legislation passed by the General Assembly in 2007, however funding for a new system was not available until now. The State of Maryland is currently leasing the new voting machines. Since August Montgomery County Board of Elections (BOE) has given equipment demonstrations at over 350 events. Montgomery County has approximately 660,000 registered voters.

Dr. Zelaya gave a demonstration of the new voting machines. The ExpressVote Ballot Marketing Device produces a voter verifiable paper record and allows voters with disabilities to vote privately and independently. The device features the ability to brighten or darken the screen, enlarge letters, has a key pad with Braille inscriptions, headset with the ability to increase or decrease and forward or reverse the audio, and has sip and puff capability.

During early voting, all voters will use an ExpressVote Ballot Marketing Device similar to the touchscreen machines Marylanders have used to mark their ballots for a decade. These devices will print voters’ selections on a paper ballot card. Voters will then review their ballots and then insert them into the DS200 tabulation device. The ballots automatically drop into the secure ballot box.

On election day, Maryland voters with disabilities will use the ExpressVote Ballot Marketing Devices to print their ballots while other voters will mark pre-printed paper ballots by hand. On election day, the number of ExpressVote ballot marketing devices available at each polling place will be limited.

Dr. Zelaya has given a demonstration of the Express Vote Ballot Marking Device to the Sligo Creek Chapter of National Federation. Members were pleased with the accessibility features. The Device has also been tested multiple times by an employee of Health & Human Services who is blind.

If you have a group or organization that would like to have a demonstration please contact Dr. Zelaya at 240-777-8532 (V), MD Relay 711 or email [gilberto.zelaya@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:gilberto.zelaya@montgomerycountymd.gov) with two weeks advance notice.

**Highway Snow Removal – Josh Faust, Outreach Manager, Highway Services, Department of Transportation**

Highway Services is responsible for road resurfacing, bridge repair, leaf removal, new sidewalks, and snow removal. In 1994 a bill was passed that requires homeowners to remove snow and ice from their sidewalk under reasonable circumstances 24 hours after a snow storm. The [Sidewalk Snow Removal Bill](#) went into effect this year in Fiscal Year 2016. The Bill requires that Highway Services make a reasonable effort to remove snow that is not on the general public’s property and to develop a plan for snow removal County wide that will be implemented next year in Fiscal Year 2017. Highway Services has been given a budget of \$200,000 to develop the plan and inventory all sidewalks and ADA ramps. There are approximately 600 miles of sidewalk and 200,000 ADA ramps in the County. There is currently one staff member working on this project and

the County will be contracting with GIS experts from the University of Maryland to assist with inventorying and mapping the data. There are several phases for inventorying: emergency routes, routes to transit hubs, sidewalks near Metro Stations, and heavily trafficked bus stations. The Department of Technology Services will be developing an interactive digital sidewalk snow map is expected to be operational in April 2016. The digital map will be updated to show which streets have been cleared. When snow removal is in progress the County is discussing having a smaller plow tail the snow plow crews that would remove the snow that has been dumped onto the sidewalk and to possibly have front end loaders that would push snow off of the sidewalks.

Highway Services currently has an [interactive snow plow map](#) which shows if your street has been plowed yet and where the plows are currently plowing. Once major and primary neighborhood streets are clear, only then are residential streets plowed with at least one pass and spot sanded when necessary. The County has 500 snow plow contractors that work to have all streets plowed within 36 hours at the end of the last snow storm.

The floor was opened for questions.

Hilary Kaplan, Commissioner, discussed the issue of snow plows blocking a storm drain when plowing snow on her street. She suggested installing a sign to indicate No Dumping in front of the storm drain. Josh said he will contact the sign shop to see what can be done. It was suggested that homeowners who have disabilities have signs indicating that snow should not be plowed into their driveways. Josh noted that a program in Boston that allowed homeowners who have disabilities to have such signs installed had to be suspended due to abuse of the program.

It was asked how the County will prevent blocked curb cuts during snow plowing. Josh reported that the County briefs snow plow contractors on snow plow policies, but that is an issue that needs to be addressed.

It was asked if individuals who cannot shovel their sidewalks due to a disability can receive assistance. Currently, if a complaint is lodged against a homeowner for an uncleared sidewalk the homeowner can notify the enforcing agency, the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA), that they are unable to shovel it due to their disability. Josh discussed the possibility of DHCA notifying DOT of homeowners who need assistance in clearing their sidewalks.

It was asked how the County will ensure that Metrobus stops will be plowed. Josh noted that Metrobus is managed by WMATA and the County has no authority over them. The County has asked WMATA to coordinate with DOT in their snow plow efforts.

If you have typical sidewalk or snow removal issues the first place to call is 311. For unique issues, you contact Josh directly at 240-777-7642 (V), [josh.faust@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:josh.faust@montgomerycountymd.gov).

### **Montgomery County Sidewalk Snow Removal Update – Hans Riemer, Councilmember, Montgomery County Council**

Several months ago Councilmember Riemer broke his leg and has since experienced firsthand the difficulties and challenges people with mobility impairments face on a daily basis. He knows that sidewalks snow removal is an important issue. He will be reviewing upcoming renovations at the County Council Building to ensure they are ADA compliant. Councilmember Riemer thanked the Commission for their advocacy efforts on accessibility taxis. The County is working to create a 100% accessible taxi fleet by 2025. Councilmember Riemer would like to see WMATA's MetroAccess program use the County's accessible taxi fleet to provide on demand transportation for those who use the service.

Kathy Mann Koepke, Commissioner, asked how the County will prevent and enforce dumping of snow in accessible parking spots in private parking lots such as shopping centers and strip malls. Betsy Luecking, Staff, noted that the Pedestrian Winter Safety Act of 2001 established that property owners that obstruct designed disability parking spaces with snow or ice can be fined up to \$100 for the first offense and \$150 for subsequent offenses. The question is which agency has the enforcement authority to write the fine. Betsy suggested contact Chief Tom Manger and Captain Tom Didone with the Montgomery County Police Department to discuss this issue further.

### **Chair and Vice-Chair Report:**

Seth Morgan, Chair, reported that he attended the County Executive's Summit on Aging last week. The Summit had multiple break out sessions that focused on topics such as employment, transportation, housing and technology. The information

gathered at the Summit will be used as a blue print by the County Executive for the next three year's of projections for projects for people in the aging community, which has a large component of seniors with disabilities.

Bill 37-15: Advocacy was discussed by the County Council Government Operations and Fiscal Policy (GO) Committee on November 30<sup>th</sup>. Bill 37-15 would allow certain boards, committees, or commissions (B/CCs) such as the Commission on People with Disabilities to advocate at the State and federal levels if the advocacy is approved by the Office of Intergovernmental Relations (OIR). The County Executive and the OIF has asked that they be allowed time to suggest changes to the bill. Seth has followed up the discussion with a letter of support for Bill 37-15. He encouraged Commissioners to contact members of the GO Committee to voice their support. Members include Councilmembers Nancy Navarro (Chair of GO), Sidney Katz, and Hans Riemer.

**Ex-Officio Updates:**

Jay Kenney, Chief, Aging and Disability Services, reported that Bernie Simons, Deputy Secretary for Developmental Disabilities, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) will attend the Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee meeting on Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. Betsy Luecking, Staff, noted that a representative from Congressman Chris Van Hollen's office will also be in attendance due to constituent concerns regarding the waiting lists for services. Jay added that the County's Coordination of Community Services (CCS) (formerly Resource Coordination) is now serving 246 clients with 26 more clients set to transfer in January. There are currently 5 Coordinators within CCS with an additional 6 Coordinators scheduled to start new week. Recruitment for a Quality Assurance position closed last week.

Susan Smith, Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC), reported that four HOC properties are currently undergoing renovations. She receives very little notice for site visits and thus has been unable to coordinate site visits with Commissioners. She also noted that there are currently 26,000 people on the waiting list for all HOC programs. By the end of December all homeless veterans will be housed. Susan reported that the Mental Health Advisory Committee has been advocating for years for the County to institute a mental health court. This may become reality in 2016. MHAC is also researching the possibility of providing tele-therapy for psychiatric services due to the lack of psychiatrists in the area.

Charlie Butler, Department of Recreation, reported that summer camp registration opens in January.

**Roundtable:** Betsy Luecking, Staff, reported that she has organized a meeting for Monday December 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss providing services to immigrants who are deaf and do not know how to read English. The Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy, Montgomery College, the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) and Nancy Greene, ADA Title II Compliance Manager, will be in attendance. Michele Dunefsky currently offers a class titled "ESOL for People Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing" every other Friday afternoon at the Gaithersburg Library, which has space for ten individuals. There is a need to have more classes to serve the growing of number of individuals in the County that need such services. It was asked where one can learn sign language. Montgomery County Public Libraries offers beginner classes as well as Montgomery College.

Betsy asked Commissioners whose terms have expired to continue serving until their slots have been filled by new members.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Next Full Commission Meeting:** Wednesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street, Lobby Level Auditorium, Rockville, MD 20850 – 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

**Steering Committee Meeting:** Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – Health & Human Services, 401 Hungerford Drive, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor 1D Conference Room, Rockville, MD 20850 – 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by: Carly Clem, Administrative Specialist I; Betsy Luecking, Community Outreach Manager