



## **Commission on People with Disabilities**

November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### **Welcome and Approval of October 2017 Meeting Summary Minutes:**

Seth Morgan, Chair, convened the meeting. A motion was made to approve the October, 2017 Meeting Summary Minutes. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the October, 2017 Meeting Summary Minutes were unanimously approved as written. Approved minutes are available online at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cpwd](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cpwd).

### **Snow Removal on Sidewalks, Parking Lots and Streets – The Honorable Hans Riemer, Council Vice President, Montgomery County Council**

Council Vice President Hans Riemer shared the following handout regarding updates the sidewalk snow legislation that passed the County Council in 2016: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/CPWD/RiemerSidewalkSnowLegislation.pdf>.

Council Vice President Riemer noted that as there were not many major snow events last winter the County was not able to test out some of the new policies and procedures.

The County's online Winter Storm Information Portal now has an interactive map so residents can check to see who is responsible for clearing snow on a sidewalk ([www.montgomerycountymd.gov/snow/index.html](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/snow/index.html)) – Scroll down to County Maintained Sidewalks Map on this County's Winter Storm Portal. Through this map, the County can start identifying other kinds of concerns and flagging them in a more systematic way in terms of audits for accessibility.

Council Vice President noted that within the past few years the County has purchased more specialized equipment for clearing sidewalks. The 311 online complaint form has also been improved.

The floor was opened to questions.

There was a discussion about homeowners who have disabilities who could receive fines for not clearing the sidewalks in front of their homes. While a system of matching volunteers with homeowners who need assistance has been discussed, it is unknown how good of a solution such a system would be. Trish Gallalee, Commissioner, suggested reviewing jurisdictions such as Chicago that may have a program in place. If you are a resident who is having issues clearing their sidewalk and have been fined, they are asked to please notify the County. These and other such issues should also be shared with Council Vice President Riemer and his staff so they can help identify solutions.

It was asked if the County is responsible for damage that is done to a homeowner's curb that is not part of a sidewalk. The County should maintain the curb. Call 311 to report any damages.

It was asked what kind of training snow plow operators receive and if they are asked to avoid dumping large pieces of ice into a homeowner's driveway. Council Vice President Riemer stated that he has participated in a ride-along with a snow plow operators after a winter weather event. The plow operator said they are trained to plow from curb to curb. Whether the snow plow operator leaves snow in a homeowner's driveway is dependent on the operator. The Department of Transportation (DOT) may want to develop training and a set of requirements for the snow plow contractors to follow. Council Vice President Riemer suggested as a possibility to add to the snow plow operator's GPS system the addresses of individuals who have notified the County that they are unable to shovel their driveways and the system would then alert the driver.

It was discussed the possibility of snow plow operators not adhering to the curb-to-curb mandate and instead plowed snow into a lane that still allowed traffic to get by, but would not be pushed up onto the sidewalk. This option could work for some areas where multiple lanes of traffic are present. Council Vice President Riemer noted that the County deployed hundreds of hours these past two years to clear bus stops and there has been much improvement in this area.

Seth discussed the issue of private lots and snow plow operators that dump snow in accessible parking spots. The Pedestrian Winter Safety Act passed by County Council in 2001 fines private lot owners up to \$100 for the first offense and \$150 for subsequent offenses. It was suggested that the fine could be increased to deter this practice. Complaints of parking spaces being inaccessible due to snow should be filed through 311 and can be sent to Council Vice President Riemer as well.

Further suggestions or comments can be sent to Council Vice President Riemer and his staff.

[County.council@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:County.council@montgomerycountymd.gov)

### **Chair Report:**

Seth reported that a local news station recently aired a segment on the accessible raised garden beds at Holiday Park Senior Center: <http://www.localdvm.com/news/i-270/accessible-garden-helping-disabled-seniors/852048404>.

Seth and Betsy attended an open house at the ALS Association DC/MD/VA Chapter for their Assistive Technology Lab. These labs are available free of charge where our families and health care professionals can receive expert AT education, demo of equipment, and user support. For more information, please visit: [http://webdc.alsa.org/site/PageNavigator/DC\\_8a\\_augmentative.html](http://webdc.alsa.org/site/PageNavigator/DC_8a_augmentative.html).

Seth recognized Commissioner Tom Liniak, JSSA's Specialized Employment Services for recently receiving the "Provider of the Year" award from Maryland Works, Inc. for achieving significant outcomes in the employment of people with disabilities.

The Steering Committee will meet next Wednesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> from 5:30pm to 7:00 p.m. at Health & Human Services Building, 401 Hungerford Drive, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room, Rockville.

### **Ex-Officio and Member Updates:**

Nancy Greene, ADA Title II Compliance, Department of General Services (DGS), noted that Ride On bus drivers are trained that if a bus stop is inaccessible due to snow, etc., they are to stop at the next clear spot so passengers can exit. DGS is working with the DOT on installing two new types of bus stops. One type would install a protected bike lane that would be adjacent to the sidewalk with a barrier such as poles so cars could not pull into the lane. The bus would stop at an island with a curb cut on the sidewalk to a road level crossing and a curb cut on the island. There has been discussion of adding truncated domes that would lead the person from the sidewalk to the bus stop for the whole path of travel. They are currently looking to install these types of bus stops in downtown Silver Spring. There is limited design guidance and Nancy has raised concerns regarding accessibility with DOT. In the meantime, they are working with the US Access Board as well as some transit users who are blind, mobility trainers, and engineers as part of the design process to look at options for improving navigation. Commissioners can send suggestions to Nancy who will pass them on to DOT. [Nancy.Greene@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Nancy.Greene@montgomerycountymd.gov)

Charlie Butler, Department of Recreation (DR), reported that the [Winter Guide 2017 – 2018](#) is now available. There is a new Aqua Spin class available where participants can spin their wheels on a stationary bike in the water. DR recently awarded volunteers that work as companions or at therapeutic recreation camps. You can view the story on DR's Facebook page.

Susan Smith, Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC), reported that HOC distributed between 400 and 500 vouchers in August and September prior to the end of the fiscal year. HOC is continue to renovate several properties.

Susan is also the liaison to the Mental Health Advisory Committee (MHAC). At a recent meeting Uma Ahluwalia, Director, Health and Human Services, discussed budget and policy priorities. MHAC has several new committees for the upcoming year include an Access to Services Committee, a Legislative Committee that works closely with the State Mental Health Association, and an Aversion Committee. Susan noted that the Mental Health Court will be receiving an

additional \$190,000 in funding. MHAC will also have two workgroups this year, one of which will focus on care coordination and will be reviewing outpatient treatment programs being used in Baltimore.

Rita Gale, Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL), reported that in January 2018, MCPL will be introducing in a six-month pilot program titled Books at Home that will provide select library materials to Montgomery County residents who cannot get to a library because of a physical disability, health issue, or frailty, and who have no one who can pick up and deliver books for them. There are currently 24 individuals interested in the program. Rita also reported that three libraries are currently closed for renovations. The Quince Orchard Library is scheduled to reopen mid-December and the Bethesda and White Oak Libraries are scheduled to open in Spring 2018. The Library Accessibility Advisory Committee continues to visit libraries and prepare reports on ADA recommendations. The Committee visited the Potomac Library in October and will next visit the Chevy Chase Library.

Susan Hartung, Developmental Disability Advisory Committee (DDAC), reported that the County Council voted last night to raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour on July 1, 2021 for large employers with 51 or more employees. Mid-sized employers with between 11 and 50 employees must raise wages to at least \$15 per hour on July 1, 2023. Small employers with 10 or fewer employees must pay workers \$15 per hour on July 1, 2024. Non-profit organizations with 501(c)(3) designations and eligible service providers must raise wages to \$15 per hour by July 1, 2023, unless they are considered a small employer. [Bill 28-17 – Human Rights and Civil Liberties – County Minimum Wage – Amount – Annual Adjustment](#) will go into effect July 1, 2018. There is a hearing on the bill tentatively scheduled on November 28<sup>th</sup>. Inter-ACC/DD has advocated that Direct Support Professionals who provide services to adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities be paid 125% above the new proposed minimum wage. Larry Bram, DDAC Co-Chair, reported that a meeting with Betsy Luecking, Staff, Avner Shapiro, Commissioner, and staff from the Infants and Toddlers Program was held to discuss early identification of developmental and other disabilities in children and referring them into services.

Seth announced that Benjamin DuGoff, Commissioner, is now the liaison to the Countywide Recreation and Park Advisory Board. Betsy e-mailed out on Ben's behalf a PowerPoint from the last meeting on Montgomery Parks' Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan. Seth encouraged other Commissioners to become liaisons to other Boards, Committees or Commissions that they are interested in.

**Announcements:** None.

**Next Full Commission Meeting:** Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 – 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, December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017 – Health & Human Service, 401 Hungerford Drive, Conference Rooms 1A/1B, Rockville, MD 20850

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

