

City of Columbia, Missouri

*701 E. Broadway
Columbia, Missouri*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Thursday, September 12, 2024

3:00 PM

Regular

**City Hall
Council Chambers
701 East Broadway
Disabilities Commission
Columbia, Missouri**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Jonathan Asher called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

(Kieta Clay, Hazel Fields appeared virtually)

Staff Present: Adam Kruse, Michael Sokoff

Members of the public appeared in person. No members of the public appeared virtually.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Statement by Chair on Virtual Participation

Jonathan Asher makes a statement on virtual participation and reminds participants to keep cameras on.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ann Marie Gortmaker made a motion to approve the agenda. Vera Elwood seconded the motion. All in favor; motion approved.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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Patrika Brown made a motion to approve the minutes. Ann Marie Gortmaker seconded the motion. Motion approved. Vera Elwood abstains from voting.

V. SPECIAL ITEMS

Presentation by Michael Sokoff, Parking and Transit Manager for the City's Public Works Department, to provide a general update on transit and a discussion on accessibility and transit

Michael Sokoff presented to the Commission. He discussed the topic of Bird Scooters. He said that the University of Missouri, the City and Bird are finalizing a contract. The operation times for the scooters in Columbia will be 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM, and the payments by Bird to the City will be an amount for each trip taken rather than for each unit in the city limits. If a member of the public has a concern about a Bird Scooter obstructing a sidewalk, the member can report it through the website or to pubw@como.gov <<mailto:pubw@como.gov>>. Michael Sokoff discussed the issue of fare free transit. He stated that the City's budget reflects that 2025 will be fare free. He said that this issue is frequently discussed and it will be up to decision makers if that changes in 2025. If it does, it would still take time for Transit to implement the fares so there will be no abrupt changes. He discussed Tiger Line Shuttles, that the University may have plans to expand the Tiger Line Shuttles. He said that the City's priorities are its own fixed route and paratransit services, the City will assist the University where it can but a Tiger Line's expansion will not result in reduced fixed route or paratransit services. He discussed Paratransit services including driver shortages. He said that bus driver shortages is a national issue, and not necessarily unique to the GoCOMO. The City has had compensation studies, it has raised its wages and benefits to more competitive levels. The City has new paratransit buses that should be here soon. These are gas powered buses. Many communities are prioritizing electric buses, including Columbia. It is very high demand and low supply for those buses right now. Michael Sokoff discussed the ongoing consultant's study for fixed routes. Transit understands that many in the community would like to see expanded routes, expanded hours, and improved frequency for the fixed route buses. There has been an increase in federal and state grant funding

recently, so there is optimism for expansion in that respect. But a reliable and sustainable funding source is always one of the biggest challenges for transit systems.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Disability Caravan at Boone County Family Resources

Rene Powell and Adam Kruse discussed their experience of attending the Disability Caravan at BCFR on August 12.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Disability Issues Candidate Forum on October 28

The Commission discussed an upcoming candidate forum on disability-related issues that will be held at Boone County Family Resources on October 28.

VIII. REPORTS

Future Agenda Items

Commission members discussed inviting Brianna Lennon, Boone County Clerk to the October meeting, including an agenda item for the MU ADA Coordinator's Office that can be discussed by Ann Marie Gortmaker, and inviting someone from Services for Independent Living to the next meeting. Members also discussed inviting the City's Director of Housing to the November meeting as well as having Commission Elections that month. And in December, the Commission discussed inviting Trudy Hayes who works with Burrell, to attend.

Chair

No report.

Staff Report

Adam Kruse reports that he is unable to attend the Active & Aging Fair scheduled for tomorrow, that the Commission has received an application for the vacancy, and Commission members discussed the CATSO feedback meeting and Council's presentation in August of the Senator Chuck Graham Disability and Advocacy Award.

Public Transit Advisory Commission

No report.

MU Chancellor's Committee on Persons with Disabilities

Ann Marie Gortmaker reports that the Committee has met and discussed nominations for the Lee Henson Access award.

Vision Zero Working Group

No report.

Airport Steering Committee

No report.

IX. GENERAL COMMENTS BY PUBLIC, MEMBERS AND STAFF

Cathy Dolles commented that Cathy would like to see the Commission have business cards and flyers to promote the Commission's work. Adam Kruse says that he is working on that.

Ann Marie Gortmaker commented that she is happy to know the City's budget includes

fare-free transit for the next fiscal year.

Vera Elwood commented that the new event coordinator at Tiger Hotel is prioritizing accessibility and that Vera was very happy to hear that news.

X. NEXT MEETING DATE

October 10, 2024

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Cathy Dolles made a motion to adjourn. Patrika Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 4:37 PM.