

# COLUMBUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ISSUES

Minutes of the Meeting March 28, 2019  
State Library of Ohio

## ATTENDANCE

Tricia Kovacs	member, chair
David Cameron	member, co-secretary
Bob Roehm	member
Deb Wood	member
Paul Walker	member
Nick Popa, City of Cols. Public Services	ex officio
Katie White, Age-Friendly Columbus	guest
Marisa Sheldon, Age-Friendly Columbus	guest
Sharon Rigsby, Franklin Co. Board of Elections	guest
Ann Kemble, Franklin Co. Board of Elections	guest

**CALL TO ORDER.** Chair Tricia Kovacs called the meeting to order at 1:07 by asking everyone to introduce themselves. She then introduced our two guest presenters from the Franklin County Board of Elections, Ann Kemble and Sharon Rigsby, and noted that ADA Coordinator Zane Jones would not be attending because he was taking his new baby to a medical appointment.

**PRESENTATION.** Members Deb Wood and Paul Walker took the floor to describe and demonstrate their mastery of smartphone technology. Deb began by talking about VoiceOver, a screen reader that is not add-on software but is built into all Apple devices. Simple finger sweeps—up/down, left/right—move the screen between applications. She even connected to the Internet while we watched. Interfacing with Siri facilitates entering individual letters, as in a password.

Paul commented that most blind people use iPhones because Apple gives great support. Moving on, he reminded us about the Aria (pronounced “eye-rah”) glasses with a built-in camera that he wore to a meeting last year while he was testing it. A remote agent sees and/or reads whatever the camera is viewing, making, for instance, signage or travel landmarks

available to the blind wearer. He didn't subscribe because it's pricey, ranging from \$90/month to \$330 for unlimited minutes. If he lived alone he almost certainly would subscribe at some level. Free usage is available in an increasing number of airports and some retail stores (Walgreens) and on some college campuses. In his opinion, Aria is a remarkable service with a virtually unlimited ceiling.

Deb then demonstrated the Seeing AI app, which is a talking camera for blind users. She had it read the information in the bar code of a grocery item, identifying the product but also providing the quantity and listing the ingredients. It can read a business card and handwriting. It can describe a photograph and even a person's face!

Next, Paul talked about the KNFB Reader app that takes a phone picture of any print document and then reads it out making virtually anything in print accessible to a blind reader. It includes all the usual navigation tools and variable speed. Voice Dream Reader is another screen reading tool with comprehensive navigation controls, including even deleting ads and other Web interruptions.

Deb also uses the BARD ( Braille and Audio Reading) Mobile app for access to thousands of braille and encrypted audio books magazines and musical scores from National Library Service for the blind and physically handicapped. Paul uses the TuneIn Radio app for access to over 100,000 radio stations and more than 5 million podcasts.

Their presentation was comprehensive and altogether fascinating, revealing how much is available now that didn't even exist not that long ago.

With a significant shifting of gears, Chair Tricia then welcomed our guests from Franklin County Board of Elections. Sharon and Ann provided a thorough look at the new voting machines that are replacing the county's 13-year-old machines. Four of them were on display. These are hybrids, offering the choice of touchscreen or paper ballot, with a paper backup.

The machines are accessible to headphones, offer a keypad for screen navigation, and have input for sip-and-puff control. Even with such complete accessibility features, the presenters noted that any voter can bring another individual to provide assistance in the voting booth.

Importantly, the new machines are *not* online, thus they are not “hackable.”

**ANNOUNCEMENTS.** Katie White of Age-Friendly Columbus told us that her agency will host voter education meetings in the fall at dates and times to be announced. Also, on another subject, she will be recruiting people over age 65 to test a navigation system.

Tricia also made quick announcements of other meetings and events coming up soon. You have already received some of them from her via email and others will be sent in a subsequent message after this meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT.** Tricia adjourned the very full and excellent meeting at 3:25!

Submitted by:  
David Cameron, Co-Secretary

Next meeting: April 25, 2019, at State Library of Ohio