



Access Advisory Committee

to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, MA 02116-3968 • (617) 973-7100
Fax: (617) 973-8855 • TDD: (617) 973-7089 • E-mail: AACT@ctps.org

Wednesday, June 27, 2012

AACT Meeting Minutes

NOTABLES

- Comments and questions concerning AACT should be directed to Interim Chairman James White by contacting the AACT Coordinator, Ms. Janie Guion, at 617-973-7507 (voice); 617-973-7089 (TTY); 617-973-8855 (fax); or at AACT@ctps.org (e-mail).
- Members needing service information or wanting to inquire about MBTA services should do so through the MBTA Marketing and Communications Department at 617-222-3200 or 800-392-6100, TTY 617-222-5146, Monday through Friday 6:30 AM to 8:00 PM and Sat/Sun from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM, or the MBTA website at www.mbta.com/customer_support/feedback/.
- AACT has a page on the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's website at www.bostonmpo.org; click on AACT. Links can be found there for the following items: agendas, upcoming meetings, past meeting minutes, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MBTA and AACT, and the AACT bylaws, the AACT brochure, and ADA regulations. There are also links to the MPO's newsletter, *TRANSREPORT*, the

MBTA's Office for Transportation Access, and the
AACT Coordinator.

- The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meetings are conducted in accessible locations, and materials can be provided in accessible formats and in languages other than English. If you would like accessibility or language accommodation, please contact the MPO at 617-973-7100 (voice), 617-973-8855 (fax), 617-973-7089 (TTY), or publicinformation@bostonmpo.org (email).
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- Please sign in at all meetings.
- Announcements are always welcome. Please be prepared to give as many details as possible: date, time, location, contact person, and phone number. A written notice is appreciated.

ATTENDANCE

Jim Oliver, Ian Perrault, Mary Ann Murray, James White, Rick Morin, Nancy Miller, Tammy Perrault, Kathy Devin, Don Summerfield, Reggie Clark, Richard Nurt, Gail and Malvin Weinstein, Allen Karan, Angela Manerson, Mary Dennesen, Margrette Crowdis, Viola Thacker, Jonathan Gale, Thomas Gilbert, John Thompson, John Robinson and Tyler Terrisi

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)

Daniel Amstutz and Janie Guion

MassDOT - MBTA Representatives

Jesse Viera, Kathy Cox, Frank Oglesby, Mike Hulak, Carol Joyce-Harrington, Larry Haile, Phil Balcom, and Timothy Davis

Vendor Representatives

Kevin MacDonald – Veterans Transportation, LLC

Jacquelyn Dunlop and Jack Callinan– Greater Lynn Senior Services

Claire DiPillo – The Joint Venture of Thompson Transit and YCN, LLC

Coordinator's correction to the May 23, 2012 meeting minutes:

Page 12, line 1, V. Thatcher surname was misspelled; it should be V. Thacker

MEETING

- Interim Chair James White called the meeting to order at 1:10 PM; he asked for a moment of silence in memory of Philip Beaulieu. He then read the agenda; informed the members that systemic issues with THE RIDE or fixed route will be addressed during the open discussion; and that personal complaints for THE RIDE or fixed route services will not be addressed during the meeting.
- Members, friends and guests introduced themselves

Meeting Minutes for May 23, were presented and unanimously approved

Chairman's Report

The Interim Chair, James White, reported the following:

- On June 4th, he attended the MassDOT (MBTA) Board of Directors meeting and read a four-page letter regarding the MBTA fare increase explaining how devastating it would be for persons' with disabilities and those who are on a fixed income.
- He also sent a letter from AACT to Governor Patrick in support of the Governor's signing the funding bill for the MBTA.
- On June 11th, he attended two meetings and a Transportation Summit at South Station. His first meeting was with the with Acting General Manager Davis and addressed the following issues:

- The MBTA's compliance with the MBTA/AACT Memorandum of Understanding
- Failure to notify AACT on policy changes
- The new in-house assessment program
- Improved contact with MBTA officials since meeting with General Manager Davis
- Judge Patrick King held a public meeting at 10 Park Plaza
 - IC White was invited to participate by providing feedback on the MBTA's progress toward ADA compliance
- Transportation Summit
 - IC White attended the Summit at South, Station which featured state and local officials discussing ways to fund public transportation
- He also attended three Passenger Assistance Trainings at the Joint Venture.

IC White apologized for not being able to get more information on services for Philip Beaulieu. Mr. Beaulieu's daughter in-law was in charge of the arrangements and did not contact anyone. He concluded by saying that he would like AACT to have some type of observance for both Philip Beaulieu and Ben Haynes in the future.

He then asked for questions. None were presented.

Replacement of Officers

IC White briefed the AACT members on the AACT Bylaws pertaining to officer replacement; he read *Replacement of Officers*, Article IV. Section 6, Board of Directors

No further discussion took place on this topic.

Article IV. Board of Directors

Section 6. Replacement of Officers

a) If the Chair becomes vacant, the Vice-Chairperson shall become Interim Chairperson until such time as an interim election or the annual election fills the chair. When the Vice-Chairperson assumes the duties of the Chairperson, no vacancy is created in the Vice-Chairperson's position. Upon election of a new Chair, the Interim-Chair will return to their vacated position of Vice-Chair for the remainder, if any, of their two-year term. Time spent as Interim-Chair will be considered as part of their two-year term as Vice-Chair.

b) If any other elected office becomes vacant the Chairperson, with the approval of the Board of Directors, may appoint an interim officer from among the voting members of the AACT until such time as the vacancy is filled by an interim election or the annual election. If elected, they will be eligible to run again for two consecutive full terms of their own.

Presentation

IC White introduced Judge Patrick King, court appointed independent monitor for the settlement agreement between the Massachusetts Bay Transportation

Authority (MBTA) and the Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL) plaintiffs.

Judge King thanked IC White for the opportunity to give an update on the 2006 settlement agreement.

He discussed the following:

- The lawsuit by BCIL against the MBTA that alleged violations of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). The agreement between the MBTA and BCIL was settled in April 2006.
- His appointment as monitor in February 2007 by the Federal District Court.
- His responsibility, which is to oversee the compliance with the settlement agreement and report in public hearings twice a year as to how the settlement agreement is working.

He made the following statements:

- The MBTA has made significant progress over the last five years in compliance with the settlement agreement
- His job as the independent monitor will continue until the MBTA is in substantial compliance with the provisions of the settlement agreement.
- The settlement agreement is designed to create a situation where the MBTA is responsible for complying with all the obligations of the settlement agreement. For that reason a new department of System-Wide Accessibility was created with the Assistant General Manager for System-Wide Accessibility reporting directly to the General Manager.

He then asked for questions.

D. Summerfield is concerned with an on-going issue of the ramps at Kenmore Station being out of compliance. He has been waiting for two years for the ramps to be repaired.

Judge King stated that no one at the MBTA has been overseeing the plans sufficiently since the Assistant General Manager for System-Wide Accessibility Gary Talbot went to Amtrak.

G. Weinstein stated that she is concerned about the closing of Government Center Station (GCS) during the modernization.

Judge King explained that the station is due to be closed for two years. He reminded everyone that GCS is inaccessible. He is not sure if there are plans to shuttle people to other nearby stations. He also said that the Green Line and Blue Line trains will continue to go through GCS but stops will not be made there.

K. Cox stated that GCS has had several designs and is well overdue for accessibility.

T. Gilbert asked if there are further efforts to make the Transit Master more accurate. He stated that when he presses the stop button, he often misses his stop on Routes #88 and #89.

Judge King stated that the Transit Master announcer may assume the bus is going at a certain speed. He suggested that complaints should be made to Customer Communication at 617-222-3200.

IC White asked if the Delta Study would continue to be used. **Judge King** explained that the Delta Study and the MBTA internal studies are working properly and they are showing the same results. He explained that there is no need to spend money on expensive Delta services if the

internal monitoring is working properly. He said there will probably be some periodic study by the Delta group.

J. Gale stated his concern with a very dangerous situation at Riverside Station for the visually impaired with guide dogs and persons with mobility devices crossing the tracks. He also stated that the path-of-travel for persons with guide dogs at Government Center Station can be very narrow.

Judge King stated that he cannot comment on the situation at Riverside. He agreed that Government Center station has a narrow space. The renovation will need to be done in compliance with adaptable codes and widths that deal with necessary passageways. He stated that the footprint of the station is not going to be enlarged but he sees the problem for persons who are impaired. He said that GCS is such a busy station and that there should always be a customer service agent on hand.

IC White thanked Judge King for his presentation.

Frank Oglesby, MBTA Deputy Director of Paratransit Operations – The Office of Transportation Access (OTA), THE RIDE (reports attached)

There were no further updates since the report was updated.

He then asked for questions.

IC White stated that he is very concerned with the flimsy transport chairs that consumers are using as wheelchairs. He stated that a test was done on one by Joint Venture and the chair fell apart. He also explained that the MBTA has no policy regarding these chairs and that a person is free to use that type of chair, but he sees this as an accident waiting to happen. He also states that AACT will be writing a letter of

concern. He did warn anyone who is using that type of chair that they are risking injury.

M.A. Murray asked how users of THE RIDE are to be notified about the premium service change.

C.J. Harrington explained that there will be a mailing to all subscribers in September. She also said that users can call 617-222-3200 to check if they are in the three-quarter mile service area.

J. Oliver asked if THE RIDE services the Walpole commuter rail station.

F. Oglesby stated that yes, THE RIDE services Walpole.

IC White thanked Mr. Oglesby for his report.

Vendor Reports

Veterans Transportation (VT)

Kevin MacDonald, Project Manager, distributed his report and read the listing of the Passenger Assistance Training (PAT) class dates. (Please see the attached report)

He then asked for questions. None were asked.

IC White thanked Mr. MacDonald for his report.

Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)

Jackie Dunlop, Operations Manager, distributed her report and read the listing of the Passenger Assistance Training (PAT) class dates. (Please see the attached report)

She then asked for questions. None were asked.

IC White thanked Ms. Dunlop for her report.

***The Joint Venture of Thompson Transit and YCN
Transportation (JV)***

Claire Dipillo, Manager, distributed her report and read a partial listing of the Passenger Assistance Training (PAT) class dates. (Please see the attached report)

She then asked for questions.

J. Oliver is concerned that his trips to JV trainings are not direct. He stated that he has always been refused a direct trip.

C. Dipillo stated that she will do research.

IC White thanked Ms. Dunlop for her report.

***Larry Haile, Coordinator for the MBTA System-Wide
Accessibility Department (SWA)/Fixed Route Services
(see attached)***

He distributed his report and gave an update on the July 10th Recertification Training Class. He noted that the class has been postponed until August 15th due to elevator issues.

He then asked for questions.

A Consumer is concerned that passengers are crowding the entrance of the Route #32 bus. He states that the operators are doing their best to get passengers to remain behind the yellow line.

L. Haile explained that the operator is to ensure that passengers remain behind the yellow line which separates the front of the bus from the passengers. He also said that the operators should remind passengers to step behind the yellow line for safety. He stated that if passengers are getting on at subway stations supervisors should ensure those passengers are behind the yellow line. Members were told to always report this type of complaint to Marketing and Communications at 617-222-3200 or System-Wide Accessibility.

M.A. Murray asked what options operators have when passengers become unruly.

L. Haile explained that the operator could call Central Control to have someone remove the person from the bus.

T. Davis stated that operators are trained to make sure passengers are seated before they proceed. He also said that operators are caught in the situation of perhaps passing stops because of an overcrowded vehicle. There is no easy answer; but federal law states you must stand behind the yellow line for passenger and operator safety.

IC White asked about the SWA accessible booklet regarding AACT.

L. Haile stated that information regarding how to contact AACT and get involved is included.

M. A. Murray asked how this booklet will be distributed to consumers.

L. Haile stated that initially the booklet will go to human service agencies, agencies for senior citizens, subscribers of THE RIDE, and other organizations. The goal is to target persons who have not used fixed route service for some time.

R. Morin asked to have more information regarding Travel Training.

L. Haile explained that the program is a free orientation of the system. He also stated that it is a brief overview of how the system works, such as trip planning, and addresses safety issues, among other things. He also mentioned that there will be hands-on experience with the buses and trains.

J. White thanked Mr. Haile for his report.

G. Weinstein asked if bus schedules were on-line.

L. Haile stated schedules can be found on-line at www.mbta.com; they are updated four times a year.

Open Discussion Part One:

T. Gilbert commented that for the most part the Red Line Bardia cars' public address system (PAS) sound is clear. He says there is a problem with the #217 cars' public address system, which appear to make a rumbling noise. He asked if the #217 cars would be addressed in the same fashion as the Bardia cars' PAS.

L. Haile stated that he has been working with customer service on this issue. He also stated that a letter has been drafted to Operations asking someone to attend the meeting to address these issues.

IC White asked if there was an update the CEO of Hyundai Rotem on the status of delivery for the commuter rail coach procurement.

L. Haile stated that he had no information.

A. Manerson asked why the fare was being raised twice on THE RIDE. She also stated that she too has an issue with drivers holding conversations with passengers at the

entrance of the bus, making it impossible for her and others to get on the bus safely.

C.J. Harrington noted the following: (1) the Office for Transportation Access is installing new software which will help customers understand the three quarter mile zone and the difference in cost of the trip, (2) to give passengers the opportunity to get accustomed to the four dollar fare and (3) the MBTA Board of Directors decided it would be best that the passengers be given the extra time to become familiar with the new premium fare.

J. Robison stated that he was a regular user of the MBTA; should he be thinking about “travel training”?

L. Haile explained that travel training is for people who have not taken the system in a while or those who are new.

A Consumer stated that operators on the Route #32 are very chatty with passengers at the entrance of the bus which interferes with others trying to get on safely. He also thinks it is a good idea to have plainclothes officers on buses; this would help with the unruly passengers.

IC White said that operators are taught in the recertification classes about the safety of passengers. He also noted that there are plainclothes officers on buses during the school session.

M. A. Murray commented that passengers with complaints should contact the Transit Police by telephoning MBTA Customer Service at 617-222-3200.

M. Crowdis suggested that Salem Depot get a restroom. She wanted to know if AACT has any influence. She also commented that she was told an elevator would be installed at the Depot. She would prefer to see a ramp going in a downward direction.

L. Haile stated that if there are others making the same complaint that Salem Depot needs a restroom it may happen. He said that there is strength in numbers. This may help the situation.

T. Gilbert commented that, in many of the towns serviced by the MBTA, bus stops are not equally spaced along the route.

L. Haile stated he is willing to look into the problem.

No announcements were presented.

Interim Chairman White thanked Daniel Amstutz for helping with the microphone today.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.