

**Access Advisory Committee to the Massachusetts Bay
Transportation Authority**

10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, MA. 02116-3968

Voice: 617-973-7100, Fax: 617-973-8855, TDD: 671-973-7089,

E-mail: AACT@ctps.org

Executive Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 26, 2013

Notables

AACT Executive Board will meet from 10:00 AM to Noon and the Membership meeting will be held from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM on the fourth Wednesday of the month, except when noted.

AACT has a page on the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) website at www.bostonmpo.org; click on "Get Involved" then scroll down to "Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA." 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, and ADA regulations. There are also links to the MPO's newsletter, *TRANSREPORT*, and information on accessibility at the MBTA. This page includes the contact information for the AACT Coordinator.

Comments and questions concerning AACT should be directed to the Interim Chairman James White by contacting the AACT Coordinator, Ms. Janie Guion, see the above information.

The AACT meeting location is accessible to people with disabilities and is near public transportation. Upon request (preferably two weeks in advance of the meeting), every effort will be made to provide accommodations such as assistive listening devices, materials in accessible formats and in languages other than English, and interpreters in American Sign Language and other languages. Please contact the MPO staff at 617.973.7100 (voice), 617.973.7089 (TTY), 617.973.8855 (fax), or publicinformation@ctps.org.

The MPO complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other federal and state non-discrimination statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. The MPO does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, English proficiency, income, religious creed, ancestry, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or military service. Any person who believes herself/himself or any specific class of persons has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI, ADA, or other non-discrimination statute or regulation may, herself/himself or via a representative, file a written complaint with the MPO. A complaint must be filed no later than 180 calendar days after the date on which the person believes the discrimination occurred. A complaint form and additional information can be obtained by contacting the MPO (see above) or at www.bostonmpo.org.

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/.

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 always appreciated.

The meeting opened at 1:05 P.M.

Reading of the Agenda

Introductions

Attendees:

James White, Rick Morin, Ian Perrault, Mary Ann Murray, Beverly Ann Rock, and Alan Karon

MPO Staff:

Matt Archer and Janie Guion

MassDOT/MBTA Staff:

Carol Joyce-Harrington and Michael Lambert

Other:

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission: Lisa Weber

Boston's Higher Ground: Mossik Hacobian

Approval AACT Executive Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the May 22, 2013 meeting minutes was made and seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Chairman's Report

IC White commented on the following:

On June 5th, he and Board Member Beverly Ann Rock met with MBTA General Manager Beverly A. Scott and with her staff: Catherine Lynds, Chief of Staff; Michael Lambert, Special Assistant; and Carol Joyce-Harrington, Assistant Manager of Administration from the Office of Transportation Access.

Three main issues were discussed:

- 1) a lack of communication on policy decisions;
- 2) Innovative Paradigms/In-Person Assessment representative attendance at AACT meetings, just as other contractors of THE RIDE; and
- 3) reimbursement for travel the AACT Board of Directors on meeting day.
 - Dr. Scott noted that AACT is a recognized ADA group working with the MBTA

- She will discuss the IPA representative with her staff
- He also discussed that he read in the local newspaper that the Key Bus Stop Improvement is complete. He stated that when AACT was presented with the information, members were told that a draft would be presented before implementation. He contacted Dr. Scott with his concern that a major policy change has been implemented without AACT's knowledge. He has heard from Dr. Scott who was very apologetic and said she would be reviewing the issue.
- Dr. Scott contacted him to inform him that more cooperation with AACT would be forthcoming. She named the Assistant General Manager, Marie Trottier, from the System-Wide Accessibility Department to be more involved in assisting AACT on policy issues and projects.
- He stated that he had heard from Ms. Trottier and noted that she is still learning and would be more involved.
- Finally, he discussed the MBTA's decision to not provide service to the disability community to attend the Fourth of July event on the Esplanade.

He then asked for questions. No questions were asked.

PowerPoint Presentation

Michael Lambert, Assistant to the General Manager and Deputy Administrator for Rail and Transit noted that he was happy to have the opportunity provide an overview of THE RIDE Eligibility Center (TREC) and address the Board and answer questions.

He stated that THE RIDE is an Americans with Disability Act (ADA) mandated complementary paratransit service that is designed to provide an alternative to fixed route buses, light rail, subway, and offers door-to-door safety net service.

Here are a few highlights:

- THE RIDE service is made available to persons with disabilities who are unable to board fixed route services, get to stops or stations independently or navigate the system
- THE RIDE has changed from a paper based application to an in-person interview designed to enhance customer service and improve accuracy of determination
- There is a new Medical Necessity Program (MNP) which offers short-time eligibility to new customers with major changes in their lives. The MBTA will be able to offer instant access to THE RIDE until the customer can come for a more formal interview
- TREC staff has completed some 5,000 determinations.
-

He then asked for questions.

R. Morin asked about the number of appeals requested and the outcomes.

M. Lambert/CJ Harrington stated that in all there have been four that did not meet the criteria.

IC White commented that a consumer shared her positive experience about the MNS which had to be extended for additional time due to medical complications.

BA Rock asked for more information on the System-Wide Travel Orientation.

M. Lambert stated that he attended the pilot program. The training is very informative to those who travel on the MBTA. The training explains all the accessible improvements that have been made over the last five years. The trainer takes the class to a waiting bus and explains how the accessibility features work on the bus.

CJ Harrington commented that the information regarding this program can be found on the MBTA's website under Accessible Services.

R. Morin asked for the status of the Orientation Mobility Specialist staff.

M. Lambert stated that the contract requires orientation mobility people who are trained in the field to be on staff as needed.

IC White stated that he has been in contact with the Brigham and Women's and Faulkner hospitals; he found that only department heads had been notified about the MNP. He stated that there are independent professionals such as orthopedic and oncology specialists, to name a few, who are not aware of the program.

M. Lambert stated that the MBTA has done excellent outreach to the medical community about the program. He also commented that these professionals can also contact the MBTA for information.

MA Murray commented that no matter how much the information is publicized it is never enough.

M. Lambert stated that he was directing his comments on outreach toward the professionals and noted that for the consumer there can never be enough outreach.

IC White thanked Mr. Lambert for his presentation.

Committee Updates

IC White thanked both BA Rock and R Morin for their coordinating the recent presentation on comments to the draft No-Show/Cancellation policy. He then asked for their comments.

R. Morin had no comments.

BA Rock acknowledged the input by others and that their focus was making sure that persons with disabilities are not penalized for situations that may be beyond their control.

IC White stated that Ms. Dullea's cooperation in providing AACT the draft for review on the upcoming policy decisions is how these matters should work. He noted that she was pleased to receive the comments.

MA Murray stated that she attended the RTAC meeting and discussed transportation issues.

I. Perrault stated that the members of the Rider Oversight Committee discussed the idea of the MBTA providing the local colleges and universities with a discounted fee based on special passes for students. The Chicago Transit Authority offers this type of program to colleges. The pass would be part of a student's tuition.

IC White discussed his attendance at one of the largest MBTA classes for new bus operators. While there he participated in mobility device tie-down and he emphasized to the operators the need to be aware of people needing pre-boarding access on the platform at stations.

He discussed that images captured on camera on MBTA buses are only kept for 72 hours. He shared this information with Judge Patrick King who was also not aware of the limited time videos are retained.

He also stated that on four different occasions he has been denied access to buses by the operators who refuse to let a person with a mobility devices board the vehicle before other passengers. He noted that not enough is being done to assure consumers that operators are being penalized for not servicing persons with mobility devices. He is going to speak with Marie Trottier, the Assistant General Manager for the System-Wide Accessibility Department on this issue.

BA Rock asked that operators during their training be taught that they do not reserve the accessible seating in anticipation of someone getting on the bus with a baby carriage or mobility device. She stated that it becomes a safety issue and that a consumer should not have to lower the seat on a moving bus. Another concern communicated is

that the elderly should not have to request that the operator lower the bus.

IC White commented that the operator will only kneel the bus when it is away from the curb; otherwise a request to lower the bus should be made. He suggested that all members attend the operator training to see and learn about the in-depth training.

BA Rock stated that she did not attend the May MBTA Board of Directors meeting due to a conflict with the AACT Membership meeting.

Open Discussion

IC White discussed the upcoming Americans with Disabilities Act event at Boston City Hall on July 25th. He asked that members volunteer to staff a table concerning AACT.

He expressed disappointment that Tyler Terrasi has stepped down due to other commitments, but wished him well. He will discuss his replacement at the next meeting July 24th.

He stated that it would be helpful to invite Ms. Pam Wolfe, MPO staff, to give a presentation to find out what kind type of public input they are seeking for the revision to the Draft FFYs 2014-17 Transportation Improvement Program and proposed Draft Amendment Two of the Long-Range Transportation Plan.

He informed the Board Members that he received a call from Michael Lambert advising him that Dr. Scott has agreed to honor the request of the Board to give complimentary rides to AACT meetings. He

noted that a list of Board Member names will be forwarded to Ms. Harrington of the Office for Transportation Access who will then confirm the details with the vendors for the complimentary fare. Also, a representative from the vendor will call the Board Member informing them that your fare is waved for a complimentary ride on the day in question.

IC White discussed that a fall event for disability month is being planned. He noted that a Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 16 from 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM to discuss location, time, date, and many other details.

R. Morin stated that in order to have a successful event the General Manager's name needs to be involved.

IC White stated that the event's main focus is to have leaders and supervisors of agencies, groups, and organizations involved in policy decisions attend; to name a few that would be invited are the Boston Center for Independent Living, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission and Bay State Council for the Blind.

Motion

R. Morin made a motion that the AACT Board of Directors meet specifically for a planning session for the October event where all aspects of the session pertain to the (agenda, invitation, and logistics of the event) will be discussed. The motion was seconded.

IC White presented the motion and took the vote as follows: 4-in favor, 0-Opposed, 0-Abstension

The motion passed unanimously.

IC White noted that the planning session will be on Tuesday, July 16 from 3:30 to 5:30 PM at the Central Transportation Planning Staff.

L. Weber asked for more clarification about the fall event.

IC White stated the idea started with a suggestion from Michael Lambert as an opportunity to bring as many organizations and groups together at the same time and location to have a dialogue with the MBTA's department heads and those that are in policy making positions. He noted that in the past individual groups would hold private meetings with the General Manager; decisions would be made and no one would ever discuss the meetings outcome. Policy changes were made and AACT was never informed; according to the MOU between the MBTA and AACT all policy changes should be discussed with AACT.

R. Morin commented that he hopes that AACT will gain creditability with the outcome. It will show that we can all work together on issues.

IC White hopes this will strengthen AACT's position as the premier ADA group to the MBTA.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM.