

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

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*Due to the AACT and MBTA Forum on Transit Accessibility there
was no Board of Directors Meeting.*

AACT Membership Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Notables

The AACT Executive Board will meet from 10 AM to noon and the Membership meeting will be conducted from 1:00 PM to 3 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 Chairman James White by contacting the AACT Coordinator, Ms. Janie Guion, at 617-973-7507 (voice); 617-973-7089 (TTY); 617-973-8855 (fax); AACT@ctps.org (email); or at c/o CTPS, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, MA 02116 (mail).

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.

Meeting opened at 1:03 PM

Reading of the Agenda

Introductions

Attendees:

James White, Ian Perrault, Beverly Ann Rock, Mary Ann Murray, Lisa Weber, Richard F. Mahoney, Allen M. Karon, Nancy J. Miller, Angela Manerson, Thomas Gilbert, Deanne Sisco, Nancy Murray, Liam Flanagan, Matthew Castiglione

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Also Penny Shaw, Theresa Casey, Theadora Fisher, David Chia, Reed Cochran, John Dale, and Matthew Bander

MBTA Staff:

Michael Lambert, Larry Haile, Carol Joyce-Harrington, Mike Hulak, Frank Oglesby, Jim Nihan, and Rashaad Lyn, SWA intern

Vendor Staff:

Victor Herrera, National Express-Joint Venture of Thompson Transit; Jacquelyn J. Reynolds and Randy Hendrickson, Greater Lynn Senior Services; John Tuttle, Veterans Transportation

MPO Staff:

Janie Guion and Matt Archer

Approval of Minutes

Chairman White asked for a motion to approve the minutes for the meetings of September 25, 2013 and October 23, 2013. A motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Chairman's Report

The Chair stated the following:

- Chairman White and Vice Chair Morin participated in THE RIDE Selection Committee meetings. He stated the meetings have been extremely informative.
- Chairman White and Vice Chairman Morin were invited to an in-person advocate training program at THE RIDE Eligibility Center, to learn how to advocate for someone who may have been denied use of THE RIDE program or received conditional coverage.
- The AACT – MBTA Forum had a tremendous turnout. He acknowledged the hard work of the AACT Forum Planning Committee Members.

Michael Lambert, Assistant to the General Manager and Deputy Administrator for MassDOT Rail and Transit, Mr. Lambert, standing in for Aniko Laszlo, stated the following:

- He wants to regularly come back to AACT to give updates on Executive Order 530 (EO 530) as needed.
- Work is proceeding in three major areas led by MassDOT. 1) Looking at how members of the Statewide Coordinating Council on Community Transportation (SCCCT) are working together,

implementing what their priorities will be, and what they can do to help the most people in the EO 530 recommendations. 2) Forming the Regional Coordination Councils (RCC), which were envisioned by the EO 530 Commission as being the entities where coordinating and collaborating work will take place. The state is being divided into six regions without set borders. The first RCC meeting will be in December on the Cape, and the second will be in the Berkshires; he noted these are milestone meetings. 3) Working closely with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) to divide up responsibility for the EO 530 recommendations, and ensure that there are clear milestones and responsibilities assigned to each recommendation; he stated these would be available.

- Members of the Statewide Travel Training Network met on November 13 to draft a strategic plan for travel training; Mr. Lambert has set aside money from MassDOT to fund this. Currently, based on the findings of the network, the following organizations offer travel training: the MBTA, Worcester Regional Transit Authority (RTA), MetroWest RTA, Greater Attleboro RTA, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority in Springfield, and Brockton Area Transit. He noted that the travel training programs all differ, both in their breadth and their depth, and

they MassDOT Rail and Transit wants a statewide standard. From there, a statewide curriculum will be created, and they will make sure trainings are offered on a regular basis. The next SCCCT meeting will be on January 24, 2014 at 10:00 am, at Ten Park Plaza. He added that the MBTA is working with Somerville- Cambridge-Medford (SCM) Transportation to bring travel training services to the T's ridership.

He then asked for questions.

R. Cochran noted that people can also work with Larry Haile of System-Wide Accessibility, and added that SCM has two travel trainers on staff to provide individualized instruction.

T. Gilbert expressed concerns about Lowell RTA lacking audio announcements on buses and the placement of bus stop signs.

M. Lambert stated both Transportation Secretary Davey and General Manager Scott have clearly made transit outside of the Boston area a priority, and Governor Patrick has supported this by making funding for regional transit a major component of the Way Forward; in return for this increased funding, the Secretary is seeking a greater role in oversight regarding RTAs. He added that the Secretary is requiring a comprehensive service analysis for the fifteen RTAs in

Massachusetts; this will entail having an outside consultant do an evaluation of their services, including paratransit and accessibility.

A. Karon noted similar problems in the Canton area.

M. Lambert stated he would follow up on these issues.

M. Castiglione stated that in addition to audio announcements, people with hearing impairments need visual services.

T. Gilbert stated that audio systems on the older Red Line cars are frequently difficult to hear clearly.

Chairman White asked if there has been discussion about universal standards of training for paratransit.

M. Lambert stated that one of the recommendations from EO 530 is to establish statewide standards for paratransit service provision.

MA Murray asked for more information about the SCCCT meeting on January 24.

M. Lambert stated that the SCCCT is the official body that came out of the EO 530 recommendations; it consists of about 22 individuals representing various consumer groups, and the state agencies that have a piece of community transportation. The group meets quarterly to review progress and provide input to MassDOT and EOHHS. He

noted that the January 24 meeting is open to the public. He added that there will be a meeting to discuss a proposed No-Show and Late Cancellation Policy on December 17, from 4 PM to 6 PM.

MA Murray asked if information could be better disseminated.

M. Lambert stated that they put information in THE RIDE vehicles, and they email all of their partners, advocates, and agencies. He added that they give recordings to THE RIDE vendors, which is played through the phone system.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Lambert for his update on the EO 530 Commission recommendations and their implementations.

MBTA System-Wide Accessibility Department (SWA)/Fixed Route Services, Larry Haile, SWA Coordinator, distributed his report and stated that he had no further updates.

He then asked for questions.

P. Shaw expressed concerns about people parking their strollers in the places for the wheelchairs on buses.

L. Haile stated that people can ask the bus operator to ask that the strollers be moved, but they cannot force a person to move out of that area; if the operator cannot get the person to move, T policy dictates

that they call dispatch to let them know the situation, and tell the person how they are going to accommodate them.

BA Rock stated she has noticed an increased number of bicycles on trains during rush hour.

L. Haile stated that bikes are generally allowed on the trains, but they are not usually allowed during rush hour. He noted that while T officials may be able to catch some people with bikes on the trains during rush hour, they will not be able to catch everyone. He added that Green Line operators should be making sure that bikes are not on Green Line trains.

A. Manerson stated that the 89 bus nearly passed her the other day, and a witness helped her. She commended the witness for assisting in the situation.

L. Haile stated SWA has drafted procedures regarding what operators are supposed to do in terms of stopping, and there are disciplinary measures when operators are found to not stop. He suggested that in similar situations where there is another person observing, the person get the coach number, which should then be given to customer service; he added that also having a witness call can provide “strength in numbers.” He stated that people should not feel as though these situations are their own fault.

T. Gilbert asked for an update regarding disciplinary measures for bus operators who pass people, specifically regarding bus stops that are on multiple bus routes.

L. Haile stated that he could supply this information in his next AACT report.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Haile for his report.

MBTA Office for Transportation Access (OTA) – THE RIDE Program, Frank Oglesby, Manager of Paratransit Contract Operations, submitted the OTA report, and noted that THE RIDE service will be operating on a holiday schedule on Thanksgiving. He then asked for questions.

N. Miller asked if THE RIDE would cost an extra dollar on Thanksgiving, due to certain buses not running.

F. Oglesby stated that there would be a premium, which applies when the trip origin and/or destination is greater than 3/4 miles from MBTA bus or subway service and outside of the core areas. When THE RIDE runs on a Holiday schedule, it is actually mirroring a fixed route Saturday than a Sunday, better benefitting a good majority of our RIDE customers.

A. Manerson stated that she hoped when drafting their No-Show Policy, OTA would consider that some people are delayed during medical appointments.

Chairman White stated there is a provision in the ADA for those situations, and stated that a person needs to exceed seven No-Shows in one month before the number of no-shows is considered a problem.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Oglesby for his report.

Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)

Jackie Reynolds distributed her report and announced Passenger Assistance Training (PAT) classes.

She then asked for questions. There were no questions.

Chairman White thanked Ms. Reynolds for her report.

National Express and the Joint Venture of Thompson Transit and YCN Transportation (JV), Victor Herrera, General Manager, distributed his report and stated that he had no further updates.

He then asked for questions.

P. Shaw stated that she has been getting some small reimbursements to her THE RIDE account, and she is having difficulty

knowing what her balance is. She asked if there is a way to see when a deposit has been made online.

F. Oglesby stated account balances can be determined when utilizing the contractor reservation line or by accessing the contractor's webpage and viewing the MMT, Manage My Trip module. Both these options offer the current available balance only. An available balance takes into consideration trips in reserve as well. For more in-dept fare history (all credits and debits to an account) a request can be made thru the Office for Transportation Access for a Fare History report. OTA staff will take your request by calling 617-222-5123 or emailing theride@mbta.com. The report can be US mailed or emailed.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Herrera for his report.

Veterans Transportation (VT)

John Tuttle, Operations Manager, distributed his report and stated that he had no further updates.

He then asked for questions.

A Consumer asked if there was a staffing challenge at VT in terms of having enough staff to cover the dispatch and driving.

J. Tuttle stated that VT is fully staffed in all departments. He noted that while there may occasionally be some delay during peak hours,

VT maintains the contractually required less than two-minute wait average for calls on hold. He stated that if a pickup is more than fifteen-minutes late, consumers should call dispatch.

A. Manerson stated that she heard VT's server was down, and asked if it was back up.

J. Tuttle stated the problem has been resolved. He apologized for any inconvenience.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Tuttle for his report.

Open Discussion

MA Murray suggested distributing the AACT calendar containing the AACT meeting dates for the year in all of the vans, busses, and trains one time a year, as opposed to having monthly updates.

Chairman White asked Mr. Oglesby if the approval would go through him.

F. Oglesby stated that it should.

Chairman White suggested that this issue should be discussed during the December Board of Directors meeting.

T. Gilbert suggested that Jeff Gonneville from MBTA Engineering & Maintenance be invited to speak at an AACT meeting. He stated that he has encountered maintenance issues such as lack of disabled seating and broken grab bars.

Chairman White asked Mr. Haile if there is a physical count of hand straps during circle checks.

L. Haile stated that he is not sure, but he will check to make sure that checking hand straps, grab bars, and seats are part of the circle check.

Meeting adjourned early at 2:41pm.