

Access Advisory Committee to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (AACT)

AACT Board of Director Minutes

Wednesday, June 24, 2015

Meeting opened at 10:15 AM

Reading of the Agenda

Introductions

Attendees: James White, Rick Morin, Ian Perrault, Lisa Weber

MPO Staff:

Janie Guion

Approval of Meeting Minutes

None were presented.

Chairman's Report

The Chair stated the following:

- On June 23 Vice Chairman Rick Morin attended the Keolis Commuter Services ADA developing training session with System-Wide Accessibility

- On June 15 and June 3 he attended a means testing
- On June 10 he attended the MBTA Policy meeting
- On June 2 he attended a passenger assistant training class
- On May 28 he attended the White House Conference on Aging Forum held at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute (EMKI) in Boston. He was accompanied by Pam Wolfe, MPO staff and AACT advisor.

He then asked for questions. None were asked.

R. Morin commented that he was told that EMKI is not really accessible to persons who are visually impaired.

Treasury Report

Chairman White noted that Ms. Woodman was sent a letter explaining why the check donated by her brother was returned.

Reports by Board Members

MBTA's Rider Oversight Committee (ROC)

Lisa Weber, AACT Board of Directors and representative to the ROC reported on the meeting and noted that MBTA General Manager, Frank DePaola, and Carla Howe, Director of Customer Communication were their guest.

- The MBTA would like better lines of communication for the coming winter
- The MBTA is considering implementing a snow emergency schedule for commuter rail service to ease passenger stress in inclement weather
- The MBTA will be winterizing all the exposed third rails,
- MBTA update on Government Center Accessibility and the Silver Line extension into Chelsea

She asked for questions or comments. There were none.

Judge Patrick King Quarterly Update

Ian Perrault, AACT Board Member reported on the Judge King public meeting. He stated that Judge King stated that the settlement is progressing well. He also noted that that the MBTA is looking to go beyond what is required of them in the area of accessibility in the settlement agreement.

R. Morin also noted that attendees at the meeting were sharing complaints that the Department of System-Wide Accessibility (SWA) was not aware. SWA was unable to address since they were not aware of the issues.

Chairman White noted that station preboarding of wheeled-mobility devices was a problem. *R. Morin* stated that it is still problem.

L. Weber stated that she has been having problems with the MBTA website for ordering a Charlie Card. She would like to have the Technology Office

attend another AACT Board meeting to address the issue. She is also concerned about once a complaint has been filed you have no idea if the problem investigated.

He asked for questions or comments.

Open Discussion

- MBTA website needs a long overdue upgrade for easy access; online purchasing of a Charlie Card is inadequate. More money and resources invested for improvements
- Station pre-boarding of wheel-mobility devices: Bus operators still lack the courtesy of boarding a wheel-mobility device before loading bus.
- Station official lack the courtesy of being more observant of consumers in wheel-mobility devices
- Chairman White is concerned that the MBTA's RIDE program is being impacted by RIDE contractor drivers who are claiming personal hardship of a disability preventing them from performing their duties as assigned. He noted that THE RIDE contractors are under a contract and cannot exempt drivers from providing door to door service with reasonable accommodations A RIDE driver who can no longer fully perform his/her duty as noted in their job description, in a safe manner, should not be on the job. Chairman White is asking that a letter be provided that will protect the need

for MBTA to put the safety of persons with disabilities first. Rick Morin motioned that a letter be sent to the MassDOT board of directors to address AACT's concerns. The motion was seconded by Ian Perrault and unanimously approved.

- A conversation ensued regarding the idea that baby carriages are not equal to wheel-mobility devices. Carriages are more easily mobile and can be exited through the rear door of the vehicle.
- A request to extend a meeting invitation to Technology and Automated Fare Collection was made
- R. Morin stated that *L. Brelsford* asked his opinion of Judge King's meeting. He advised her that the monitor reports are of marginal value. Noting that they don't breakdown what happens during rush or non-rush hour period not addressing peak hours.
- Chairman White noted that there is a big problem with preboarding of wheeled mobility devices. *R. Morin* believes that pre-boarding in stations can only be successful if there is a separate area for preboarding.
- R. Morin stated that *L. Brelsford* announced the 85 Accessibility Initiatives at the Judge King public meeting. R. Morin was surprised to hear that announcement since AACT had no input in the development of the initiatives. A meeting to address the issue with Ms. Brelsford is being planned.

- Chairman White will address AACTS concerns over the MBTA door-to-door policy, brought up by RIDE driver union officials at the upcoming MassDOT Board of Directors meeting. *R. Morin* stated that he objects to union using the word “reasonable accommodations” for someone who is not disabled. *Chairman White* stated that reasonable accommodations is not meant for someone in a job who is not disabled who thinks he can use the term where it does not apply.
- L. Weber is concerned that complaints addressed to System-Wide Accessibility are not addressed soon enough. She noted that the data does not give a clear picture of if complaints are really being addressed. *Chairman White* noted that he too is concerned since there is no way to know what kind of penalty is being assessed for violations. He would like to know if violators are offered retraining, given suspension, or are they being terminated. He would like to this information provided as part of the monthly data.
- Chairman White noted that he has been waiting about two years for the new American with Disabilities Act compliance circle check cards to be used by bus operators. *R Morin* noted how no one knows if there complaint has been addressed.
- R. Morin asked how the invitation to Secretary Pollack was going. He was told that her office had not responded. He noted that he

would seek help from M. Lambert, MassDOT Transit Administrator for guidance.

- Chairman White explained that he was informed that the MBTA and their contractors will not be attending the July AACT meeting so that they may provide service at the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act Celebration. A motion was made by Rick Morin to cancel the AACT July 22 meeting and notify members to attend the celebration on the Boston Common. The motion was seconded by Lisa Weber and unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 11:59 AM.

Notables

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

AACT can be found on the MBTA website at www.mbta.com/aact.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MBTA and AACT; the AACT Bylaws; ADA Regulations, as well as agendas, calendar items, upcoming meetings, and past meeting minutes can be obtained by accessing those highlighted links on AACT's web page.

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 see contact information below.

Comments and questions concerning AACT should be directed to Chairman James White by contacting the AACT Coordinator, Ms. Janie Guion, at 857.702.3658 (voice); 617.570.9193 (TTY); 617.570.9192 (fax); AACT@ctps.org (email); or c/o CTPS, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, MA 02116 (mail).

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 at 857.702.3700 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 Saturday/Sunday from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM, or the MBTA website at www.mbta.com/customer_support/feedback/.

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.

Please sign in at all meetings.