

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

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Members Meeting Minutes

Meeting opened at 1:01 PM

Wednesday, September 28, 2016

Board of Directors:

Chairman - James F. White

Vice Chairman - Rick E. Morin

Executive Board

Mary Ann Murray

Ian Perrault

Beverly Ann Rock

Lisa Weber

Reading of the Agenda

Introductions

Attendees:

James White, Lisa Weber, Thomas Gilbert, Christine Daniels, Debbie Weathers, Kevin Wilson, Reggie Clark, Angela Manerson, Gail and Marvin Weinstein, Robert Dias, Richard Mahoney, Ian Perrault, Lora Brynaro, Betsaida Gutierrez, Steve Juknis, Nadine Jones, Gina Russo, Dee Whittlesey, Esther Minor, Nancy Miller, Bill Corcoran, and Olivia Richards

MBTA Staff:

Chief Ken Green, Mike Hulak, Carol J. Harrington, Rob Sampson, Ithai Larsen, Paul Fitzgerald, and Alex Murkinson,

Vendor Staff:

Victor Herrera, Mike Rushin, Paul Crowley, Steve Epps, Kevin MacDonald, Chris Woznac, Bryan Cashman, Greg Alcorn, and Antoinette Cerie

Other:

Patricia Mendez, Jessica Podesva, Theresa Casey, Rob Dias, June Scott, Rachel Conan, Janet Maloof

MPO Staff:

Matt Archer

Approval of Meeting Minutes

May 25, 2016 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Chairman White's Report

Chairman White stated the following:

- On September 29 he will attend the ADA training at Charlestown garage for bus operators. He noted that ADA training is mandatory for all bus operators.
- On September 27 he attended on the Plan for Accessible Infrastructure. (See attached)
 - - He received an invitation from the MBTA to represent AACT and give input on updating key policies on transportation equity and to help define standards for conducting equity analysis. The meeting was held at Northeastern University at Northeastern Crossing. He invited the two attend an AACT meeting to get members input.
- On September 21 he was invited to the Perkins School for the Blind to witness the partnership and the signing of the contract between the MBTA and Uber which will give THE RIDE passengers more travel options.
- Gerald Francis is named the head of Keolis North America.

No questions were asked.

Global Contact Services (GCS)

Greg Alcorn, CEO, GCS gave an overview to AACT and other stakeholders. He stated that they are pleased to have been selected to manage the MBTA's call center now THE RIDE Access Center (TRAC). He explained that his staff brings over 15 years of experience

with success at organizing call centers across the nation. He stated that he is accompanied by six management staff members to address their role in the organization. He as invited AACT to come the TRAC facilities located in Medford. He noted that GCS is working with the three RIDE service providers on the action plan and that the mobilization process is on task, on-time, and on budget. He also is looking forward to learning more about AACT and the needs of the group. He is looking to make sure that GCS can be a good partner and be transparent. TRAC staff will be responsible for all reservations, complaints, scheduling, and dispatch.

He then asked for questions.

E. Minar asked about how transfer to MetroWest would be handled. *G. Alcorn* stated that they would be able to arrange her trip.

A consumer asked how diverse the staff be to meet the needs of persons with a second language. *G. Alcorn* stated that they would be hiring an advocate to handle language requests.

A. Manerson commented that she is concerned about the level of sensitivity with the phone staff. *G. Alcorn* stated that they are aware of this issue.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Alcorn for his presentation.

MBTA and Vendor Reports

MBTA System-Wide Accessibility Department (SWA)/Fixed Route Services

Rob Sampson, Manager for System-Wide Accessibility, distributed his report and reported the following.

- Operating hours for CharlieCard Store (CCS) at Downtown Crossing has been changed to Monday-Friday 8:30 AM to

5:00 PM and closed holidays. In addition CCS will no longer process transactions that can be done by you at fare vending machines such as adding value or purchasing cards.

- Franklin Street head house at Downtown Crossing has now reopened with a new elevator and escalator.

T. Gilbert asked why a public announcement was not made and AACT members were never notified that the MBTA customer service office hours had changed. *R. Sampson* had no answer and noted that he would look into his concerns.

A consumer is concerned that station elevators are always in use with mobility devices and able body people with luggage taking up space. How vested is the MBTA at adding more elevators to stations? *R. Sampson* explained that the MBTA traditionally install escalators when there is a new or modernized station.

A. Manerson stated that she has heard that the customer service line would be discontinued in October. *R. Sampson* noted that there is no truth to the rumor. The customer service number is here to stay. He also noted that he would need to confirm the hours of the customer service office.

E. Minar asked that lights in stations be brighter, if there is any way to brighten the lights in the station. *R. Sampson* noted that he would look into the matter.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Sampson for his report.

MBTA Office for Transportation Access (OTA)

Manager, Paratransit Contract Operations-The RIDE

M. Hulak submitted his report and noted that he would be making the reports now that Mr. Oglesby has retired.

He then asked for questions.

G. Weinstein asked if Uber drivers were replacing THE RIDE Program. ***M. Hulak*** explained that THE RIDE Paratransit Program will remain in place. He noted that Uber drivers are just another added option for passengers. He advised her to sign up for Uber at the www.mbta.com-www.mbta.com/paratransitpilot to utilize that service.

O. Richards noted that she was denied service by an Uber driver. She asked how that would work if the MBTA was using federal funds for Uber service. ***M. Hulak*** noted that the MBTA is not using federal funds the service is not ADA accessible. He explained that if she was denied service by either vendor she would need to address the carrier. The MBTA would not have any say as it is not an ADA accessible program.

A consumer noted that she is a customer of both Uber and Lyft. She explained that she has had good experiences with Uber being accommodating.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Hulak for his report.

MBTA Transit Police Department

Chief Kenneth Green noted that he had nothing to report but would take questions. He then asked for questions.

R. Clark noted that he is having problems with vehicles blocking the bus stop at Harvard Ave and Cambridge Street. Chief Green noted that he would do some research.

T. Gilbert asked how the data from the Block Bus Stop was being processed. Chief Green noted that he would get him a copy of the report.

Chairman White thanked Chief Green for his comments.

National Express Transit (NEXT)

Victor Herrera distributed his report and gave a warm welcome to the management team of Global Contact Services. He noted that he is looking forward to working with the staff from Global Contact Services. He also noted that the summer was good for on-time performance. September is here and traffic will be delayed with school in session with added vehicles on the road. He commented that he is the editor of a staff newsletter. In a newsletter he reminds his staff that the success of THE RIDE Access Center is also their success.

Chairman White recognized a familiar face from NEXT's corporate office, Mike Rushin, Chief Operating Officer-COO. Rushin commented that NEXT offices are throughout the nation with Boston being his most important. He acknowledged his working relationship with the MBTA and Mr. Herrera. He also noted he hopes that his staff is providing the best service that THE RIDE passengers can expect.

He then asked for questions. There were none.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Herrera for his update.

Veterans Transportation (VT)

Kevin MacDonald, Project Manager, distributed his report and announced the passenger assistance training for October.

He then asked for questions.

K. Wilson asked why drivers were not taking a more direct route to his work destination; he noted that drivers have told him that it is a company policy. *K. MacDonald* commented that what he was saying didn't make sense and that there is no such company restriction. He will look information on the issue.

Chairman White thanked Mr. MacDonald for his report.

Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)

Steve Epps, Director of Transportation, distributed his report and introduced Paul Crowley, Executive Director of GLSS. He echoed the sentiment of Mr. Herrera that the added traffic on the roads will definitely cause problems with on-time performance but his drivers are getting the job done.

He then asked for questions.

A consumer offered a compliment for the drivers who are on-time. *S. Epps* noted that less traffic and construction makes all the difference.

K. Wilson noted that he has had problems transporting his ice cooler to a function. *S. Epps* noted that as long as the item can be secured.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Epps for his report.

City of Boston Election Department

Kyron Owens, Boston Election Commission spokesperson gave an overview of the accessible early voting process. He explained that early voting for Boston is a first. He explained that Boston residents have a choice of three ways for early voting: mail option, absentee, and the early voting locations at any location that is listed. He noted that persons with disabilities or those who need extra time have the opportunity to vote early without feeling rushed or waiting in long lines. He noted to the audience that many towns have their own

process for early voting. At which time he advised people outside the city to contact their local town government. He also explained that the Boston Election Department will train poll workers on how to assist persons with disabilities.

He then asked for questions.

Mr. Owens was asked many questions about the election process. He gave advice to all who have concerns about early voting to contact their local city or town clerk.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Owen for his presentation.

UBER Representative

Rachel Conan, Operational Logistics Manager, thanked the Chairman for the invitation. She stated that she is working on the Wheelchair Accessible Transportation in partnership with THE RIDE.

She then asked for questions.

O. Richards stated an Uber driver denied her a ride due to her mobility device being soiled. **R. Colon** stated that when they hear of these types complaints, action against the driver is taken immediately. She noted that communication will be issued to their entire driver fleet which addresses drivers' denying service. She also noted that with training and information she feels that they can do better.

A consumer is concerned that not enough information is getting to consumers. She would like to see more information through other methods. She is concerned about organizations that advocate for transit accessibility. Chairman White explained that he was instrumental in initiating the Paratransit Task Force approved by MBTA. He named the stakeholders of the Task Force as AACT, the Massachusetts Senior Action Committee, Disability Consortium, Boston Center for Independent Living, Bay State Council for the Blind, and the

MBTA Office for Transportation Access. He noted that the group meets once a month. He commented that if anyone has questions or concerns to contact the AACT Coordinator, Janie Guion at AACT@ctps.org or by telephone at 857-702-3658.

L. Weber asked that drivers be informed to get a Transponder for their vehicles. *R. C.* noted that they are aware of the change and are alerting drivers to get a Transponder.

Chairman White thanked Ms. Conan for her comments.

Old Business

None was presented.

New Business

None were presented.

Announcements

Chairman White announced that:

- Ian Perrault has resigned from the Executive Board to take a job and pursue other interest. Chairman White noted that Ian is a big contributor to AACT and that his presence will be missed. He commented that AACT is losing a very good member, but he is very happy that he is moving on in his life. He wished him the very best and all the good fortune in his new endeavors.
- Lisa Weber has been appointed to Chair the annual Summit on Transit Accessibility spring 2017.
- That AACT is seeking members in good standings to consider becoming a member of the Executive Board. He

noted that if anyone is interested to see the AACT Coordinator.

- That Patricia Mendez will be representing the City of Boston Disability Commission at AACT meetings monthly.

Meeting adjourned at 3:02 P.M.

Notables

The AACT Executive Board 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.

Notices of AACT meetings are posted on the website of the MBTA at http://www.mbta.com/about_the_mbta/public_meetings/. Visit the MPO's calendar page at

<http://www.bostonmpo.org/calendar/month> to find AACT agendas, meeting minutes, and past meeting minutes. For more on AACT, see the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MBTA and AACT, the AACT Bylaws, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations at <http://www.mbta.com/aact> .

For more information on accessibility at the MBTA, please visit www.mbta.com/accessibility.

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/relay), 617.570.9193 (TTY), AACT@ctps.org (email), or c/o CTPS, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, MA 02116 (US 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 857.702.3700; 617.570.9192; (TTY) 617.570.9193 (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 her or himself or any specific class of persons has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI, ADA, or other non-discrimination statute or regulations may, her or 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 Customer Support Services. *This office is only available Monday through Friday 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM; there are no weekend or holiday hours.* Please call (617) 222-3200 for support, or for our Deaf or Hard of Hearing: customers TTY (617) 222-5146, or find specific contact information below or the MBTA website at

www.mbta.com/customer_support/feedback/.

Please sign in at all meetings.