

Access Advisory Committee to the Massachusetts

Bay Transportation Authority (AACT)

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

Voice: 857.702.3658, Fax: 617.570.9192

TDD: 617. 570.9193, E-mail: AACT@ctps.org

Members Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 28, 2017

Board of Directors:

Chairman – James F. White

Vice Chairman – Lisa Weber

Executive Board

Nadine Jones

Mary Ann Murray

Beverly Ann Rock

James Tozza

Lisa Weber

Meeting opened at 1:02 PM.

Reading of the Agenda

Introductions

Attendees:

Jim White, Lisa Weber, Jim Tozza, Beverly Ann Rock, Martha Sullivan, Nancy Martain, Mary Davis, Steve Jukins, Dee Whittlesy, Mary Ann Murray, Nancy Miller, Debbie Weathers, Reggie Clark, Bill Corcoran, Kevin Wilson, Janet Weathers, Nadine Jones, David Vieira, Elizabeth Crocker, Richard Mahoney, Elaine Pinches, Linda Sinclair, Juanita Bradshaw, and Jennifer Workman

MBTA/MassDOT Staff:

Carol Joyce-Harrington, Dana Nye, Tejus Sharkar, John Lozada, Ammie Rogers, Mike Hulak, Aniko Laszlo,

Vendor Staff:

Elizabeth Hickey, Kevin Morrissey, Kevin MacDonald, and Steve Epps

Other:

Jessica Podesva and Jorge Ledesma

Approval of Meeting Minutes

May 25, 2017 and April 26, 2017

All meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Chairman White's Report

He stated the following:

- He attended a Passenger Assistance Training class.
- He attended an MBTA ADA Training Program for bus operators.
- He announced that Michael Lambert is leaving OTA and he recognized and thanked him for his support to AACT over the years. He noted that it has been an honor to have worked with Mr. Lambert.

No questions were asked.

Michael Lambert, MassDOT's Regional Transit Deputy Administrator, bids Farewell to AACT Members and Friends

Mr. Lambert greeted members and friends with news of his departure from the Office for Transportation Access (OTA) Paratransit Operations THE RIDE.

He discussed his first week here at the MBTA some five years ago. He noted that Richard Davey was named the Secretary of Transportation and that Jonathan Davis was the MBTA Acting General Manager.

He explained that then the Acting General Manager had given him and the OTA staff recommendations to insure the sustainability of THE RIDE. He is pleased that he and OTA staff have almost completed implementing all forms.

Mr. Lambert expressed how very proud he is that OTA has been able to implement all forms while maintaining a high level of service. He noted that last year the MBTA conducted an easy ride survey of THE RIDE customers. He was pleased that the customers gave THE RIDE service a very high level of satisfaction. He attributes the results of the survey to the OTA staff, AACT, and contractors who provided the service directly.

He commented that he has enjoyed working with THE RIDE community. He thanked AACT for their contributions as well as participating in recent procurements.

"I know whatever form the new community engagement group takes, it will be just as valuable and just as important for those voices to be heard at the T. Thank you very much."

Chairman White thanked him for his kind words.

John Lozada, Manager of Federal Programs and MassDOT Diversity and Civil Rights & Ammie Rogers, MassDOT Project Development and Project Manager

ADA Section 504 Transition Plan for the Right of Way and Municipal ADA Initiatives (Please see the attached documents.)

MassDOT's John Lozada and Ammie Rogers greeted members and friends with their introductions. Mr. Lozada, of MassDOT Diversity and Civil Rights is involved in soliciting all realms of public spacing. Nondiscrimination disability laws are enforced with the exception of the work that System-Wide Accessibility does for the MBTA. He noted that he has co-chaired the Plan for several years. He is here to give an update to AACT from an earlier presentation.

Ms. Rogers from MassDOT's Project Development and the Project Manager for the ADA Transition Plan explained that she manages the Plan throughout the Commonwealth. She notes now it will be a challenge to assess and prioritize the 26,000 curb ramps. She also expressed her gratitude to be working on this project since her mom is a paraplegic.

Mr. Lozada explained that the MassDOT Interim Plan created in 2013, long-term Plan was drafted in 2017, identifying barriers and setting timetables for eliminating barriers to access. He gave an update on the progress of ADA Transition Plan for Curb Ramps that are being located throughout the whole Commonwealth. He noted that a key requirement involves Curb Ramp assessment and prioritization. MassDOT has assessed some 25,675 ramps and 6,289 failed or missing ramps identified. She noted that the process of figuring out which areas should get priority is an overwhelming task.

Both presenters answered questions.

D. J. Vieira inquired about the cost of a ramp. J. Lozada/A. Rogers stated that several years earlier that a ramp then was about \$6,000 and as of today a ramp is about \$12,250 and noted that there may also be mitigating factors.

A consumer asked if her Dorchester community will be getting new curb ramps. J. Lozada/A. Rogers state that Boston has done a study that has identified over 20, 000 curb ramps in the city. He suggested that she check with the Boston Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities.

A consumer noted that she has contacted the Mayor's office regarding curb ramps. She has been told that the curb ramp is not city property. J. Lozada/A. Rogers noted that they will be working on a chart that would be shared with cities and towns showing who is responsible for curb ramps. She also is concerned that construction in her neighborhood is without a temporary ramp. J. Lozada/A. Rogers stated that any concerns in your neighborhood contact your local city or town hall.

A consumer asked that an explanation be given on how will they prioritize curb ramps. J. Lozada/A. Rogers explain MassDOT staff will meet and discuss work with the Federal Highway, and local government will partner together to work out the issue. He noted that areas like Chelsea, Worcester, and Boston tend to be high on the list because of their diversity.

Chairman White thanked both Ms. Rogers and Mr. Lozada for their presentation.

Tejus Sharkar, MBTA Office for Transportation Access (OTA)

He gave an overview of the new THE RIDE Taxi Pilot V2.0 he explained it is not to be confused with the Taxi Pilot 1.0.

He stated the following:

- The Taxi Pilot V2.0 will build off the experiences of the Pilot 1.
- The goal is equality and accessibility.
- The Pilot 2.0 will benefit greatly due to more wheelchair accessibility.
- The MBTA is working with the City of Boston to provide more accessible wheelchair vehicles.
- The Pilot 2.0 offers the option of booking trips through email and paying cash for service.
- The fares will start at \$2.00 and the MBTA will subsidize the balance.
- Drivers will attend a passenger assistant training classes.

He then took questions.

B. Cochran asked about the rate of the fare. T. Sharkar explained that the distance of an average six-mile trip would average \$2.00 with the balance paid for by the MBTA.

A consumer asked would there be access to wheelchair vehicles. T. Sharkar state with this taxi program there will be plenty of accessible vehicles.

D. Vieira asked how much the MBTA would cover a taxi ride. He also asked will the Boston Senior discount coupons be accepted as cash. He asked would he make that discount happen. T. Sharkar explained that the MBTA will cover around \$15. He noted that he would need to do research on the discounted coupon.

C.J. Harrington explained that the Taxi Pilot Program is technology driven; there is no telephone number to enroll, and that you must be in THE RIDE program. She noted that you can sign up at the MBTA website at www.mbta.com/paratransitpilot.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Sharkar for his report.

MBTA and Vendor Reports

OTA/THE RIDE Program

Mike Hulak, Manager of Paratransit Contract Operations, submitted his report and shared the following:

- On July 4th concert on the Esplanade with the Boston Pops will have limited shuttle service from Mass Eye & Ear parking lot beginning at 3:00 PM.
 - MBTA fares on all modes will be waived from 9:30 PM until the end of business.
- On July 25 the annual ADA Celebration will take place on Boston City Hall Plaza hosted by the Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities.

He then asked for questions.

A consumer asked how the vendor paid if a person is dropped off but did not complete the return trip. M. Hulak explained that payment for a completed trip happens when the driver schedules pickup because payment is by revenue hour. If there is no scheduled pickup, there is no payment.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Hulak for his report.

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

Aniko Laszlo, Director of Coordinated Mobility presented the SWA update in the absence of Mr. Sampson.

She reported that the Commonwealth Ave/BU Bridge Replacement Project will begin the evening of Wednesday, July 26, the bridge will be partially closed for three weeks to allow for the demolition and reconstruction of the eastbound section of the bridge. During this period several MBTA modes of transportation will experience service diversions. (Please see the attached report for further details.)

No questions were presented.

Chairman White thanked Ms. Laszlo for her report.

Dana Nye, MBTA Transit Police, Community Outreach Coordinator had no updates but took questions.

L. Weber asked for an update on vehicles that block bus stops. D. Nye noted that the list for June has not been generated. She assured everyone that the list is carefully reviewed and that dispatch is notified to have units monitor those areas with high a number of reported stops in bus stops blocked.

J. Workman explained her concern for safety at the Ashmont Station. She noted the fear of the number of young people loitering around. She asked if more Transit patrols could be made available for the area. D. Nye noted that there is at least one on duty at the station.

A consumer asked about contacting the transit police when a user of THE RIDE is forgotten. D. Nye noted that Transit police do not have the capability to transport for THE RIDE. She noted that they would do what they could to contact THE RIDE in an emergency. M. Hulak noted that this should be done only when it is absolutely necessary in an emergency.

National Express Transit (NEXT)

Kevin Morrissey, Assistant General Manager, presented the update in the absence of Victor Herrera, General Manager, who is away at a conference. He stated that the next passenger assistance training (PAT) would take place on July 12th.

He then asked for questions.

A consumer stated that a trip from Beacon Hill to Quincy was delayed by three hours due to a driver shortage. She was told that a lack of drivers made her late for a very important event. K. Morrissey apologized for the inconvenience. He acknowledged that there is a problem at times with drivers who call-out. He commented that there are replacement drivers to help.

A consumer noted that she was told that often times there are add-ons to a driver's schedule which probably has to do with Global. K. Morrissey commented that his staff works very closely with their partner Global to advise when a driver is out.

A consumer asked that drivers be given more authority to help passengers' who may ask for assistance with other drivers. She would like to see this as part of driver sensitivity training. I'd like for them to have guidance on how to handle situations that may arise. M. Hulak noted that this type of suggestion would be for Global to handle now that they have taken over NEXT.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Morrissey for his update.

Keolis Commuter Services, LLC

Elizabeth Hickey, Manager and Title VI/ADA Enforcer, stated the following accessibility updates:

- She noted that the Blue Hill Avenue Project on the Fairmont Line will run for two years. Busing will be every weekend beginning July 3, from Morton Street Station to Readville Station excluding holidays and special events. Please check the MBTA website at www.mbta.com.
- She noted that the Commonwealth/BU Bridge construction project is due to begin on July 26. And that there will be no weekday disruption to service.
- She noted that busing between Wellesley Farms and Riverside will begin at the end of July 29 and the beginning of August 5 weekends.
- She noted that Keolis is in planning mode for the pilot program to set up fare gates at north station at the end of August. More details will be forthcoming.

She then asked for questions.

D. Vieira explained that he filed a complaint about the location of the restroom on the commuter rail car. He stated that the distance between the cars are not very accommodating to persons with disabilities or parents with young children. He also objected to receiving his response without a proper name.

M. A. Murray asked will shuttle service be provided to commuters when there is no commuter rail service from Salem - Beverly. Ms. She noted ultimately the shuttle service is the responsibility of the MBTA and that to Keolis is only the contractor.

Chairman White thanked Ms. Hickey for her update.

Global Contact Services (GCS), LLC (THE RIDE Access Center (TRAC))

Brian Overcash, Chief Operating Officer in for Christine Woznac, general manager, was unable to attend. He submitted his report and stated the following:

- GCS transition of GLSS on May 20 to TRAC tripled call volumes.
- GCS noted the following:
 - -A lack of Customer Advocates on staff during the transition.
 - A lack of experienced staff members created a problem
 - -Hired 30 more staff members to accommodate customers.
 - -Calls are now being answered more quickly.
 - -Training of 15 more staffer members.
- GSC has hired an experienced trainer to train dispatchers and dispatchers' assistants.
- GCS as Strata Gen on site for a hands on training for everyone on the ADAPT software.
- GSC has hired Chris McMahon, former of NEXT and GLSS for the evening shift to oversee dispatch.
- GSC noted that a key factor is making sure vendors provide enough drivers.

He then asked for questions.

J. Bradshaw explained that she called TRAC at 9:00 PM to check on her return trip and no one answered. B. Overcash explained that should never happen.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Overcash for his update.

Veterans Transportation (VT)

Kevin MacDonald, Project Manager distributed his report and announced PAT classes on July 20th.

He then asked for questions.

A consumer asked about a trip to MetroWest. Chairman White advised her to speak directly to the vendor after the meeting.

B. Cochran commented that he has many problems booking a trip for this meeting. Chairman White advised her to speak directly to the vendor after the meeting.

Chairman White thanked Mr. McDonald for his report.

Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)

Steve Epps, Director of Transportation, submitted his report and stated the following:

- He announced that PAT class will take place on July 3 at the Lynnway from 8:00 AM-4:00 PM.
- He explained to everyone that as the Director of Transportation his only responsibility is to furnish the drivers, train the drivers, and supply vehicles. He noted that when the vehicles leave the garage drivers are under the direction of TRAC.

He then asked for questions.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Epps for his report.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Notables

AACT Executive Board will meet from 10:00 AM to 12:00PM 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>.

Also, find articles about topics discussed at AACT meetings in the MPO's newsletter, TRANSREPORT, at <http://www.bostonmpo.org/transreport>. For more information on accessibility at the MBTA, please visit www.mbta.com/accessibility.

The MBTA Customer Call Center is NO longer located at 10 Park Plaza to receive walk in customer comments, concerns and inquiries. Please visit the MBTA website at www.mbta.com to submit your comments, concerns and inquiries. You may also call to speak with a Customer Service Representative.

6:30 a.m. – 8 p.m. Monday – Friday

8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday/Sunday

(617) 222 – 3200

(800) 392 – 6100

TTY (617) 222 – 5146

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), 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.

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.

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.