



Access Advisory Committee

to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

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AACT Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, February 26, 2008

NOTABLES

- The February 26 meeting minutes have been updated. Please see the additions to page five lines 14 and page seven line one.
- Comments and questions concerning AACT should be directed to the Chairman.
- Members are reminded that when a complaint is filed only the information concerning the complaint is shared with AACT. There is no personal information shared. Only the details of the complaint.
- Chairman Haynes recommends that AACT members needing information, or to inquire about MBTA services due so through the new Customer Support Service Center at 617 – 222-3200 or log on to their Web Site at www.mbta.com/customer_support/feedback/
- Judge Patrick King, the court-appointed independent monitor for the MBTA and Boston Center for Independent Living settlement agreement, asked that he be contacted with members' thoughts, comments, and questions. He can be reached by phone at 617-228-9125 or by e-mail at MBTAMonitor@gmail.com. He promises to answer as quickly as possible.
- 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 would be appreciated.

ATTENDANCE:

Dorothy Carter, Esther Miner, Don Summerfield, Thomas Gilbert, Elizabeth Salazar, Ben Haynes, Richard Mahoney, Lillian Haynes, Cheryl Ravalli, John Marshall, James Oliver, Frank Taverna, John Kane, Thomas Gilbert, and April Maselli,

MBTA Representatives:

Bob Stoetzel, Tangela Burgess, Mike Festa, Carol Joyce-Harrington, Annette Griffith, Philip Balcom, Robert Rizzo, Kathy Cox, and Mike Hulak

Vendor Representatives:

Joint Venture of Thompson Transit and YCN – Carlton Jones and JoAnne Thompson
Greater Lynn Senior Services, Inc. – John Soucy, George Lorden, Brant Frampton, and Ron Airey
Kiessling Transit, Inc. – Claire DiPillo and Roger Kiessling
Veteran Transportation Services – John Tuttle and Bob Kelly

Agency Representatives

Sharon Harrison – Massachusetts Commission Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Richard Chapman – Massachusetts Commission for the Blind
Walter Bennett and Janie Guion– Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization staff

The AACT Chairman opened the meeting at 1:10 PM with a welcome to everyone.

Agenda

Self-introduction of the members, friends and guests

Agenda read by J. Guion

December 19 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

January 29 minutes were mailed late due to inclement weather and will not be available for membership approval.

Chairman' s Update

The Chairman noted the following (see the attached):

- On February 19-21 Veterans Transportation was the host for a vendor representative training class on methods of investigating consumer complaints.
- The vendor responses to same-day trip request service are being checked and monitored.
- Monitoring has revealed irregularities that have been addressed with the vendors
- He is concerned that calls to several MBTA departments have gone unanswered
- John Kane and April Maselli are the newly appointed members of the AACT Executive Board

He asked for questions.

No questions were raised.

The report was accepted.

MBTA Railroad Operations Department

At the February 26 meeting, Robert Stoezel, the Chief Transportation Officer for the MBTA Railroad Operations discussed concerns about the service provided by the Massachusetts Bay Commuter Rail (MBCR), the operator of the MBTA's commuter rail service, particularly regarding overall on-time performance. The MBTA also monitors MBCR to ensure the service is ADA compliant.

AACT members were also briefed on the MBTA Station Enhancement Program, through which MBTA commuter rail stations will be upgraded with features such as new tactile strips, LED signage, audible boards and bicycle racks. The MBTA also will be resurfacing nine mini-high platforms on the system. Members were forewarned that during installation, those platforms would not be accessible for five days.

Finally, the MBTA Board of Directors voted to purchase 185 new commuter rail coaches. This will help alleviate crowded conditions on many trains.

He took questions during the presentations.

T. Gilbert: Is MBCR required to have working public address (PA) systems on all trains?

R. Stoezel: MBCR is required to have a working PA system on every train. Spare parts are available if the PA is broken; it should be fixed in 24-hours.

J. Marshall: I have been hearing that the south side of the Chelsea commuter rail station is not accessible. How long will it be before this station is modernized?

R. Stoezel: This station was opened only as a pilot program. The station may be relocated.

D. Summerfield: Even after I reported that the doors on the commuter rail trains continue to be opened on moving and waiting trains this problem continues.

R. Stoezel: Both of these concerns have been highlighted as a major safety concern for visually impaired customers as well as those with limited mobility. I do monitor this problem. Specific lines cited for this ongoing concern are the Franklin Line, the Greenbush Line, the Haverhill Line, the Middleboro Line, the Newburyport/Rockport Line, and the Plymouth/Kingston Line. On the Needham line the door is kept open between Needham Heights and Needham since the next stop is a short distance. Crews who break the rules have been disciplined.

J. Kane: Will I find the documents on the web site?

R. Stoezel: Yes, www.mbta.com.

S. Harrison: Where are the LED signs? Oftentimes I am not aware when the train leaves the station.

R. Stoezel: The MBTA is working on LED and audible equipment for all commuter rail stations. The program is a three-year program with one and a half years completed.

J. Marshall: You have reported that a number of stations are not in full ADA compliance. When will all stations meet ADA standards?

R. Stoezel: Stations that have low ridership are not key stations. Only stations that have been identified as key stations will meet compliance.

J. Marshall: What is the timeline for the Chelsea Station to become ADA compliant?

R. Stoezel: This station is not part of the MBTA “key station “ plan.

J. Marshall said that this was not an answer to his question and insisted Mr. Stoezel answer the question regarding the “timeline” for compliance. Chairman Haynes interrupted and said he had asked his question and received an answer. JM insisted that he and the AACT members deserved to know when stations would be ADA compliant. He kept insisting. Chairman Haynes was unable to persuade him to end his questions; the meeting went into recess. The Transit Police were called to escort Mr. Marshall from the meeting. The meeting was resumed after a 20-minute delay.

Consumer: Train crews are not aware of the recent introduction of the pilot program that offers THE RIDE eligible customers unprecedented free access to fixed-route services whenever they want to travel.

R. Stoezel: I will need to do research.

MBTA Office for System-Wide Accessibility Department (SWA)

Kathy Cox from SWA presented the following updates on the community concerns for the Four Corners Commuter Rail Station and also concerns regarding passenger pickup at bus stops from the January meeting.

She discussed the following concerns at the Four Corners Commuter Rail Station (see attached letter):

- The canopy design is being reviewed by the design consultant
- The canopy length is based on ridership projections
- The covered walkway will meet standards set at other MBTA commuter rail stations.
- Heated and enclosed waiting areas are discouraged due to the problems of passenger security and loitering.
- Elevators are not currently installed at MBTA commuter rail stations.

She also discussed the concerns for pickups at bus stops:

Operators are instructed to stop in the forward location in the boarding zone three to five feet before the first foremost bus stop sign. The operator can pull forward 10 feet.

She asked for questions.

R. Chapman: How can persons who are visually impaired know information before going to the MBTA station?

K. Cox: You can call the Customer Support Service Center (CSSC) 617-222-3200 or log on to the www.mbta.com.

E. Miner: What is being done to prevent vehicles from blocking bus stops?

K. Cox: All operators are being retrained. The new training will advise operators.

Transit Police: Arrived and spoke with the Chairman and then tried to escort Mr. Marshall from the meeting. He refused to leave. The Officer approached the Chairman and informed him that Mr. Marshall was not willing to leave. The officer suggested that the meeting be adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM.