

**The ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
State Transportation Building
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116**

APRIL 25, 2002

NOTABLES:

RIDE Tickets are available at all AACT meetings.

All meetings are equipped with Assistive Listening Devices.

Persons making presentations should submit written/BRAILLE copies to the AACT coordinator at the above address 24 hours before the meeting.

AACT would like to thank the CTPS Traffic Analysis and Design Group for taking charge of the election.

Corrections March Minutes:

OTA Paratransit Report

Page 3, Question 1, the response should have read: **B. Rizzo:** Trips should be honored within one hour of the times desired by the customer.

Old Business:

Page 6, the response should have read: **J. White:** According to my Community Monitoring Manual, the 128 Commuter Rail Station is in compliance with the required number of accessible parking spaces.

ATTENDANCE:

Phil Beaulieu, Ben Haynes, Lillian Haynes, Jeff Grant, Lynda Hoffman, Ken Smith, Mark Kalashian, Kathy Mooney, Marilyn MacNab, Mattie Akrod, Mark Lurensky, Jim Oliver, James White, Betty King, Ven Srinivasan, Cheryl Ravalli, Elizabeth Dillard, Pat Lydon Sybil Feldman, and Tammy Perrault.

CTPS:

Alicia Wilson, Bob Sievert, Mary McShane, Chen-Yuan Wang, Omega Cottrell, and Janie Guion

MBTA Representatives:

Kathy Cox, Michael Festa, Bob Rizzo, Alexander Murkinson, and Ron Mariani.

Vendor Representatives:

A. Maldonado - JV, M. Colameta - GLSS, N. Claire Dipillo-KTI
K. McDonald, and C. Fraizer - VTS.

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 PM.

The newly elected AACT officers for May 1, 2002-April 30, 2003 are:

Chairman	Executive Officers:
Jim Oliver	James White
Vice-Chair	Elizabeth Dillard
Lynda Hoffman	Cheryl Ravalli

AACT Chairman's report by Philip Beaulieu (Please see the attached handout).

Chairman Beaulieu commented on the following April's activities: his participation in two driver training sessions, the MBTA 25th Anniversary of The RIDE; the recognition of long time drivers, as well as the outstanding driver who risked life and limb to rescue passengers in a burning van. In addition, responses to complaints remain unacceptable. The Chairman recommended that the newly elected AACT Board act on this issue and address it promptly.

Last, but not least, the Chair expressed his sincere thanks and stated that "he would like to think that they accomplished some good work." He wishes the newly elected board good luck and best wishes for the upcoming year. Mr. Beaulieu asked for questions. There were none. **The report was then accepted.**

OTA Fixed Route - K. Cox, Manager, Fixed Route Services, and Ron Mariani with the Fixed Route complaint Report. (Please see the attached meeting handouts for both reports). Ms. Cox began her report with the following comments: a meeting with Amtrak and the MBTA's Railroad Operations; Green Line construction update on the Boston College (B Line); Travel Training Program; Stop Announcement Monitoring Program; low-floor Green Line cars; the status of new vehicle purchases; the status of the hydraulic mobile lifts; and the automatic fare collection equipment. Ms. Cox and Mr. Mariani asked for questions.

J. White: Can you explain how a driver can leave the garage without a key for operating the wheelchair lift? Is there anything that can be done to ensure this will not happen again?

K. Cox: It is company policy that all drivers have a key. We have done research on this issue so there is no reason why this should happen again.

L. Hoffman: When will construction begin at Kenmore?

K. Cox: I will have to research the information.

B. Haynes: Why did the MBTA approve \$93 Million for the new low-floor Green Line cars? If the MBTA low-floor cars are in a test mode why are they spending money?

K. Cox: The money has to be approved in advance. I will research this for you.

J. Grant: Several years ago when I was involved in the training program buses could not start if the lift key was not attached. Has that policy changed?

K. Cox: I'm not sure with the new buses. I will research this for you.

The reports were then accepted.

Fixed Route Coordinator's Report - Lynda Hoffman

Ms. Hoffman began her report with the following comments: improved RIDE services; problems on the Green Line; bus drivers' insensitivity; the continued elevator outages and improper use of tie-downs by drivers. Ms. Hoffman asked for questions. There were none. **The reports were then accepted.**

MBTA/OTA Report Bob Rizzo, Paratransit Contract Manager

Mr. Rizzo began with an introduction of Bianca Tucker, the granddaughter of Ms. Helen Santos. Helen is an administrator dealing with The RIDE complaint reports for OTA and AACT. Bianca took part in the MBTA's participation of the annual national "Take our Daughters to Work Day" event.

Mr. Rizzo continued his report with the following comments: OTA staff and Bus Operations, along with VTS, inspected the van which was destroyed by fire; unannounced visits to Joint Venture, VTS, and GLSS to observe for contract compliance; the monthly RIDE safety committee for safety and security awareness; the 25th Anniversary celebration of The RIDE; the regular Midas User meeting; staff performed road observation for driver safety and performance; and the negotiations with Joint Venture regarding service and contractual issues.

Mr. Rizzo reported that ridership is up 10.2% over last March and 4.6% YTD. Also noted was the decrease in complaints at 54.3%. In addition, the on-time performance has shown a significant improvement with trips within 30 minutes of the scheduled pick-up time. Mr. Rizzo asked for questions. There were none.

The report was then accepted.

Paratransit Coordinator's Report - B. Haynes (Please see the attached meeting handout). Mr. Haynes' final report was brief and to the point. He began by commenting on the following: he is reasonably satisfied with the overall report given by the OTA Paratransit Manager; he expressed disappointment with the continued problems of cancellation and the no-show rates; and problems with vendor staff are on the increase with phone etiquette and driver behavior.

He reminded the group that AACT is a citizens' committee that acts as a liaison between the disability committee and the MBTA. The AACT Bylaws are internal governing rules that AACT abides by in conducting its elections, nominations, and the behavior of its elected officials. All questions should be directed to the Chair.

Mr. Haynes thanked the group for their continued support over the years. In addition, he is looking forward to working with them in another capacity.

Mr. Haynes asked for questions. There were none. **The report was then accepted.**

Vendor's Report:

Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS) Maria Colameta: (Please see the attached MBTA meeting handouts). **Ms. Colameta asked for questions.**

K. Mooney: Explain the trips greater than 60 minutes and trips over 30 minutes?

M. Colameta: If there is a no show we do not cancel. We still respond to the second part of the trip that can often make the driver run late.

J. Oliver: Why do you have so many cancellations?

M. Colameta: Often consumers cancel.

J. White: Why are you showing so many not available trips?

M. Colameta: During the second week of March, we did not have enough drivers.

J. Grant: How many of your complaints are still outstanding?

M. Colameta: At this time, we have only two.

B. Haynes: Can you give an overview of your investigative techniques on customer complaints?

M. Colameta: Yes, attempts to speak with the passenger to gather more information are made. I'll speak with the Operations Manager to assist, or I'll speak with the driver. We investigate as completely as possible.

M. McNabb: There is some confusion about The RIDE vehicles when several appear at the same location. Is there anything to make this less confusing for the consumer?

M. Colameta: I will look into this for you.

J. White: When investigating complaints, are other consumers questioned about the incident?

M. Colameta: Yes.

B. Haynes: This is in response to Ms. McNabb. A senior does not necessarily have ride privileges unless they have a disability. The staff at GLSS is well aware of this. Each consumer with The RIDE is registered with OTA. There can be no mix up and no double booking can occur.

J. Grant: This is an issue from last month about the phone system. Your system does not identify which contractor was leaving the message. Have these issues been resolved?

M. Colameta: No. We have not resolved the issue with the carrier. Kevin knows all about the callback system. He will be helping with a new program to implement for the system.

I. McDonald: Can you tell me why your company is not concerned with why a person cancels a trip?

M. Colameta: It is not a requirement.

The report was then accepted.

Veterans Transportation Services - Kevin McDonald (Please see the attached meeting handout). Mr. McDonald asked for questions.

L. Hoffman: I cancelled my trip. Can you tell me why the van was at my door? My concern is whether or not I'm logged as a no show or cancellation.

K. McDonald: It depends whether you cancelled in advance of an hour before. If you want to be sure, speak with the dispatcher if it is less than an hour.

J. White: If you had so many not availables, how can you have the add-ons? Can you explain?

K. McDonald: This figure is for the month. We only cancel trips when a transfer cannot be negotiated.

B. Haynes: How many of the accidents identified involved passengers and not vehicles?

K. McDonald: I cannot answer that.

B. King: Please explain to me why your drivers can drop a passenger off at a location and on the return trip the driver gets lost for hours getting back to that same location?

K. McDonald: I can't answer that. Perhaps something happened on the trip.

B. Rizzo Clarification: During March, VTS reported 13 vehicle accidents, and zero passenger accidents. Year-to-date (fiscal) only 114 vehicles and 28 passenger accidents have occurred.

K. Mooney: Are drivers being retrained to ensure that fewer accidents will occur?

K. McDonald: We have a standard of driver proficiency that the insurance company will accept. If a driver has too many accidents, the insurance company will no longer cover that driver and we cannot employ that driver any further.

B. Haynes: Why are cab drivers not given the same investigative handling as the regular RIDE driver?

K. McDonald: It is under discussion.

The report was then accepted.

The Joint Venture (JV) by Albert Maldonado: (Please see the attached MBTA meeting handouts). Mr. Maldonado asked for questions.

J. White: My mobility device is listed as crutches and canes? Can you tell me how this happened?

A. Maldonado: This is an error within my office that will be adjusted.

The report was accepted.

Kiessling Transit Inc. (KTI) by N. Claire Dipillo: (Please see the attached MBTA meeting handout). Ms. Dipillo asked for questions.

B. Haynes: What did you mean by condition of vehicle?

C. Dipillo: It was the air conditioning unit.

The report was accepted.

Presentations from the MBTA's Design and Construction

Chinatown South (The Orange Line) by Mike Festa: (Please see the MBTA attached handout). Mr. Festa began his report by describing the station, which is at 60% completion. This station will have the following new accessible features: a new elevator and passageway; new head house; and new closed circuit television cameras.

Mr. Festa asked for questions. There were none. **The report was then accepted.**

Arborway Rail Restoration Project by Barbara Boylan, Project Director: The presentation was an added bonus for the group. Ms. Boylan discussed the \$10 Million project, which is part of the MBTA's Green (E) Line. The next meeting will be the third week in May. Studies are available on the MBTA's website, www.mbta.com. The restoration hotline is 617-222-3085 for questions or concerns. The Arborway Restoration Rail Project Advisory Committee members have not been finalized. The group will be composed of 10 members appointed by the legislature or city councilors for any area. There will be six technical components of the EMT, Fire, Police, MBTA, BTB, and other

citizens from residents or businesses. Ms. Boylan asked the members of AACT if they would like to have a designee appointed to serve on the public advisory committee. This will be a two to three year commitment.

Ms. Boylan asked for questions.

B. Haynes: Are there key stations on the E- Line? Where are they located? How will the MBTA plan to build mini-high platforms for users, or will wayside lifts be in place to get passengers on and off the trains safely?

B. Boylan: There has been no service there since 1989. All stations will be built accessible, with no need for wayside lifts. The problem will be enforcing parking, eliminating parking, making sure fire equipment can get down the street. I'm not sure about the number of stops, perhaps ten.

S. Feldman: Can you name the current key stations on Huntington Avenue?

B. Boylan: There are five key stations on that line. Currently under construction are Northeastern, Longwood Medical, Museum of Fine Arts, Brigham Circle, and Heath Street. If you have noticed, lifts are there because there are no Type-8 cars on the line. Type-8 cars should be back in service by September 2002. There will be extensive rail replacement on Huntington Avenue, which began last weekend.

The report was accepted.

Old Business: There were none.

New Business: There were none.

Announcements:

Jim Oliver: Mr. Oliver thanked the out going Chairman and board at which time he stated that would like their continued support.

Ben Haynes: In your old or new RIDE Manual, vendors identify, in conjunction with the MBTA, that they will arrive five minutes prior to your scheduled pickup time if possible. They may alert you that they have arrived. However, you are not obligated to come out before your scheduled pickup time. Should the driver arrive 15 minutes later than your scheduled pick up time, he/she is considered late. If a vendor shows up at your residence before they mark you a no-show, they should give you a call. This is to determine whether you are still going, may have taken ill, or are in the elevator on your way down. If you wish not to be called, please indicate this when you make your trip request.

Phil Beaulieu: Ladies and Gentleman, it has been my distinct honor to serve you as Chair and previously Vice-Chair. I would like to wish the newly elected board good luck and best wishes. Also thanks to the consumers and MBTA officers that I have had the privilege to work with.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.

