

**ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
State Transportation Building**

May 23, 2001

Notables:

All AACT meetings are held the fourth Wednesday during 2001.
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.

Corrections from the April minutes in the Paratransit Contract Operations report on pages 3 and 4: A key word was inadvertently left out of Mr. Rizzo's comments to Mr. Haynes. The revised sentence is " Mr. Rizzo went on to say that no other chairperson has been **more** sincere an advocate for accessible transportation for the disability community".

ATTENDANCE

Chairman: P. Beaulieu, Board Members: Elizabeth Dillard, Jeff Grant, Lillian Haynes, and Ben Haynes Ex Officio member B. King, B. Taubenhau, M. Kalashian, A. Maselli, J. Lorusso, K. Mooney, C. Ravalli , T. Perrault. L. Hoffman, P. Lyons M. Warshawsky and J. DuSombre

MBTA Representatives

K. Cox, R. Mariani, D. Winn, J. Bugbee, B. Rizzo, A. Murkinson, M. Festa, C. Merrick, M. Hulik and D. Smith

Consultants

A. Krockmalinc and J. Gonzalez

Vendor Representatives

VTS - Dan MacInnis and Kevin McDonald,
J V - Albert Maldonado
KTI- Roger Keissling
GLSS - Tom Muskgrove

The meeting was called to order shortly after 1:00 PM

Chairman's Report-Ben Haynes

(Please see the attached meeting handout. The following additional comments were made at the meeting.)

Mr. Haynes began his final report for the April activities of AACT. Mr. Haynes discussed his meeting with managers from Bus Operations and Fixed Route Services with issues concerning improved accessibility with regard to the Stop Announcement Monitoring Program (SAMP).

Mr. Haynes noted strong concerns that the SAMP program is now entering into its third year with a compliance rate still at a "bare minimum." Mr. Haynes went on to say that AACT needs to look at what has been successful in the past to make it work once again.

In addition, Mr. Haynes was pleased to report that Ms. Barbara Boylan, Deputy Director of the MBTA's Design and Construction had spoken with him after the April AACT meeting to clarify issues concerning the automatic gate release and the path-of-travel at Government Center Station.

Mr. Haynes noted that consumer complaints are at an all time high for all vendors. Mr. Haynes is baffled that the efforts to have staff names appear on complaints have been ignored and that the MBTA contract administrator is not enforcing this policy.

Mr. Haynes also stated that MBTA contract administrators should do a better job of reviewing customer response letters from vendors since he has found that vendors' responses to consumers' complaints in many instances do little to address the complaint issue.

Mr. Haynes asked for questions.

M. Kalasian: How will you proceed if consumer complaints are not handled in a timely manner?

B. Haynes: AACT has met with both the vendors and OTA to bring our many issues forth. Both have made efforts to make changes. I have found they are more likely to respond to service issues than to customer complaints, but each issue should be taken seriously.

The report was then accepted as presented.

OTA Fixed Route Update - K. Cox, Manager, Fixed Route Services:

(Please see attached meeting handout. The following additional comments were made at the meeting.)

Ms. Cox reported on the following issues: the Framingham Station, bus stop signage, South Station elevators, National Transportation Week, water transit, the Travel Training Program, new vehicle purchase, the lift-bus mechanics, the Stop Announcements Program, purchase of automatic stop announcement equipment, low-floor Green Line cars, the Massport Shuttle, and the MGH Shuttle.

Ms. Cox asked for questions.

L. Hoffman: Why is the northbound elevator no longer in service?

K. Cox/MBTA: We may have forgotten that detail. South Station prior to all this construction had a complicated path-of-travel. There are three elevators to get to the streets, not counting the elevator that's inactive. The elevators at this station are extremely challenging.

J. DuSombre: A recent newspaper article indicated that there would be an option at South Station available for a shuttle from downtown to an accessible station. *This is due to the broken elevator at South Station.*

K. Cox/MBTA: You cannot connect between street level and Red Line at South Station.

B. Haynes: Are you aware of the Massport accessible shuttle that goes from South Station? A consumer was stranded at South Station for some four hours attempting to get to the Logan Hilton.

K. Cox/MBTA: Actually the shuttle goes from Woodlawn Station to the airport.

B. Haynes: Does Massport operate this shuttle?

K. Cox/MBTA: Yes.

B. Haynes: Was this shuttle approved by the MBTA? Does the MBTA have any authority in the operation of the shuttle service?

K. Cox/MBTA: We have absolutely no authority. Certainly I will file a complaint on her behalf to Massport.

M. Warshawsky: Is there a mobile platform at Fenway Station in operation now?

K. Cox/MBTA: Yes, the mobile platforms are at Fenway and Newton Center Stations.

J. Grant: There are still problems at the Quincy Center Station with lack of stop announcements. There is also a chronic problem with double stopping and pick up.

K. Cox/MBTA: The stop announcements are required. I will inform Bus Operations that a special order should go out to the Quincy garage.

B. Haynes: There are two signs in front of the State Transportation Building identifying a particular area for boarding and unloading persons with disabilities to enter this building. Who is responsible for policing the boarding area and alerting the police that the MBTA vehicles and tour bus companies are violating those signs?

K. Cox/MBTA: I am not sure who is responsible. I can pass it on to building security. I know there are times when problems are drawn to our attention and we do inform the building security.

The report was then accepted as presented.

Fixed Route Coordinator–Lynda Hoffman:

Ms. Hoffman began her report on the following issues: the South Station shuttle service, transfers at Downtown Crossing, elevators on the Orange and Red Lines, more public seating in stations, announcing elevator outages sooner on trains, more inspectors visible when elevators are disabled. The group was also informed of the E-Line construction now underway.

Ms. Hoffman asked for questions.

D. Smith/MBTA: Mr. Smith, responding to a question, said that as a result of a recent problem with the Fixed Route Coordinator’s shuttle ride from South Station, a visit was made to the area. An experienced driver was there to accompany Mr. Smith and show him the most direct route to the next station. The driver stated that he offered the customer, who appeared to be less than satisfied, an extended trip to the station of her destination.

Mr. Smith also stated that he is confident that the passenger shuttle will continue as long as the elevator is not operational. Mr. Smith will continue to work closely with the Fixed Route Coordinator to come up with a substitute route before removing the shuttle service.

The report was then accepted as presented.

MBTA □/OTA Report - Bob Rizzo, Paratransit Contract Manager

Mr. Rizzo discussed the following topics: a meeting with the retirement community in Hingham, a Midas user meeting, and an unannounced visit to several contractors. In addition, a visit to GLSS was conducted to observe the impact of a software problem on scheduling. A meeting was held with each of the contractors and representatives from Multisystems and Securicor.

Mr. Rizzo asked for questions.

B. Taubenhau: Are there any new ideas for having separate lines for the dispatch and reservation numbers to reduce the delay in waiting on-line?

B. Rizzo: No. I am not certain that the present phone system with each vendor is adequate. This is an item that will be reviewed with each vendor.

B. Haynes: When there is a mistake in scheduling the problem is taken care of at once. Each vendor has said, "If we make an error in scheduling, we will correct the problem immediately." But it has come to my attention that dispatchers don't have the authority or will not try to solve the problem. What can you do to improve this situation?

B. Rizzo/MBTA: It is an issue that must be handled by each vendor. There needs to be better communication among the vendor staff.

J. Lorusso: Will I be reimbursed for a "no show" by a Kiessling vehicle on April 13th at South Station? I was waiting in the designated area for The RIDE to pick me up. They apparently were at the Stone & Webster building.

B. Rizzo/MBTA: The South Station bus terminal roof was designed with The RIDE in mind for easy access. Each vendor is well aware that the bus terminal roof is a focal point for pick-up and drop-off. We do not reimburse cab fare. You are entitled to the cost of The RIDE fare. Please meet with the vendor to discuss this before you leave today.

The report was then accepted as presented.

The Paratransit Coordinator Report - Philip Beaulieu:

Mr. Beaulieu began his report with comments from RIDE consumers who have issues but are unwilling to file complaints. Many feel they are ignored and that, when they complain, no action is taken against drivers. Their complaints range from drivers having abrasive and

hostile attitudes, to having wheelchairs and scooters improperly secured.

Mr. P. Beaulieu said that Mr. Ben Haynes has volunteered to fill in as the RIDE coordinator until that position is filled. Ms. Lynda Hoffman will continue to serve in the Fixed Route Coordinator position. Ms. Lillian Haynes will be the AACT representative to the Joint Regional Transportation Committee (JRTC).

Mr. Beaulieu asked for questions.

L. Hoffman: Please don't forget you are also looking for a Water Transportation representative.

P. Bealieu: Thank you. Ms. Hoffman is the representative until we can find a replacement.

The report was then accepted as presented.

Vendor Reports:

Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS) by Tom Musgrove:

(Please see the attached MBTA meeting handouts. The following comments were made at the meeting.)

A. Maselli: Were there any passengers on board during the at-fault accident?

T. Muskgrove: Yes, but no injuries were reported. There was another accident reported, but no one was on board.

B. Hachey: Is it true that out of 79 complaints you have only responded to or investigated 19?

T. Muskgrove: We have actually responded to 179. About 25 are still in investigation.

L. Hoffman: When passengers don't have tickets, how long is it before they are billed?

T. Muskgrove: Bills are sent to passengers at the end of the month.

The report was accepted as presented.

The Joint Venture (JV) by Albert Maldonado:

(Please see attached MBTA meeting handouts. The following comments were made at the meeting.)

L. Hoffman: When passengers don't have tickets, how long is it before they are billed?

A. Maldonado: Normally bills are sent out every month. We do keep very good records.

The report was accepted as presented.

Kiessling Transit Inc. (KTI) by Roger Kiessling:

(Please see attached MBTA meeting handouts. The following comments were made at the meeting.)

L. Hoffman: How often are passengers billed when they do not have tickets?

R. Kiessling: Bills are sent out to customers once a week.

J. Lorusso: During training are your drivers shown notable landmarks?

R. Kiessling: Yes, we have a two-week driver-training course with a road supervisor.

The report was accepted as presented.

Veterans Transportation Services (VTS) by Kevin McDonald:

(Please see attached MBTA meeting handouts. The following comments were made at the meeting.)

L. Hoffman: How often are passengers billed when they do not have tickets?

K. McDonald: Bills are sent out once a month.

B. Taubehaus: Where is the pickup for Logan Airport?

K. McDonald: It varies by terminal and certain time of the day. We encourage people to use the limousine service area for pickup.

B. Rizzo: OTA is thinking of the possibility of suspending people who have a deficit of \$200 in tickets owed to the vendor. Vendors have turned in to the MBTA the names of persons who have been delinquent.

The report was accepted as presented.

State Street Station (Blue Line) presentation by the architectural firm of Domenech Hicks & Krockmalnic

(Please see attached meeting handouts. The following comments were made at the meeting.)

Mr. Arnold Krockmalnic accompanied by John Gonzalez gave a presentation on the Blue Line's State Street station, located near the intersection of State and Congress near the Old State House. Construction is due to begin by the end of 2004.

J. Grant: Will the elevator referenced in your presentation have multiple doors?

A. Krockmalnic/Consultant: No, this elevator will only have a door on one side. There are other elevators that will have multiple doors.

M. Warshawsky: What is going to be the alternative for the Blue Line outbound elevator access?

A. Krockmalnic/Consultant: A new accessible ramp will be built alongside the inbound platform that will connect the Blue Line inbound platform with the Orange Line outbound platform.

B. King: There is no inbound elevator on the Orange Line. Will there be elevators on the inbound as well as on the outbound side?

A. Krockmalinc/Consultant: This construction will deal with only the Blue Line portion of State Street Station.

J. Grant: Can you get more details on the elevator?

A. Krockmalinc/Consultant: Yes. The MBTA coordinator will distribute the information.

B. Haynes: If I have my fare, why should I bypass the train level?

A. Krockmalinc/Consultant: The path-of-travel is the same whether you have your fare or not.

B. Haynes: Is the elevator the only way to access the train, or is there a gate that can be used to get to the train platform? Will persons who have limited mobility or who cannot use their hands be able to get through the gate?

A. Krockmalinc/Consultant: There is an open platform.

B. King: Why not work on both the Orange and the Blue Lines to make them both accessible?

A. Krockmalinc/Consultant: Perhaps this station is considered to be accessible.

M. Festa through interpreter: I don't have that information with me but will report back at the June 27 meeting.

L. Hoffman: Are you saying that if you are going inbound or outbound the elevators are on opposite sides of the street?

A. Krockmalinc/Consultant: There will be ramps for easy access.

B. Haynes: Is the Orange Line one of stations identified in the Key Station plan? If so why not start construction for accessibility at the same time as the Blue Line?

M. Festa through interpreter: Both the Orange and the Blue Lines are key stations. There are different dates for construction accessibility -the Blue Line in 2004 and the Orange Line, I believe, in 2005.

The report was accepted as presented. The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 PM.