

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

December 18, 2002

NOTABLES

RIDE tickets are available at all AACT meetings.
All meetings are equipped with Assistive Listening Devices.
Handouts should be distributed at least 15 minutes before the beginning of meetings.

ATTENDANCE

AACT Members:

Cheryl Ravalli, Lillian Haynes, April Maselli, Ken Smyth, Kathy Mooney, Betty J. King, Barbara Taubenhau, Marilyn MacNab, Gloria Murray, Betsy Downton, Jeff Grant, Ricardo Barreto, Concitta Ferrara, and Jeannine DuSombre.

CTPS Staff Support:

Janie Guion and Kate Wall.

MBTA Representatives:

Bob Rizzo, Michael Festa, Kathy Cox, Carol Joyce-Harrington, Carl Merrick, Ron Mariani, Matthew Haney, Paul Fitzgerald, Mike Hulak, and Alexander Murkinson.

Vendor Representatives:

Albert Maldonado—Joint Venture; Maria Colameta and Jacquelyn J. Hunt—GLSS; M. Claire DiPillo—Kiessling Transit; Jack Tuttle and Carol Fraizer—Veterans Transportation Services; Ben Haynes and Phil Beaulieu —B. Haynes Consultants.

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 PM.

Chairman James Oliver was not in attendance at the meeting due to family concerns. He sent his regrets and wished everyone a safe and happy holiday. In his absence, board member Cheryl Ravalli chaired the meeting.

Ms. Ravalli opened the meeting with greetings, introductions, and a reading of the agenda. Motions for the acceptance of the October and November minutes were approved unanimously.

AACT Chairman's Report:

AACT's Coordinator, Janie Guion, read the report and highlighted the following items. (Please see the attached handout.)

- Thanks for a successful 25th Anniversary Dinner.
- The production of a driver training video.
- A summary of focus group meetings due in mid-January.
- Meetings ongoing with the OTA paratransit staff; more details in January.
- Ways to improve meeting attendance.

No questions were asked. The report was accepted.

MBTA/OTA Fixed Route Access Report

Kathy Cox, Manager of Fixed-Route Services for the MBTA's Office of Transportation Access, read from the attached report and then made additional comments on the following topics:

- The return of low-floor Green Line cars
- The Travel Training Program
- The Stop Announcement Program
- Update on new vehicle purchase
- FTA denial of Cubic Transportation System's (CTS) complaint. CTS is taking their case to court.
- Seeking AACT's support of the new 60-foot CNG bus, the standard CNG bus, and a pilot trackless trolley vehicle.
- AACT will be reviewing a prototype of the new fare collection equipment.

Ms. Cox also followed up on a question the Vice-Chair asked about the new trackless trolley cars for the Arborway at the last meeting. Her research revealed that the 100 low-floor Green Line cars on order would be used once the restoration is complete on the Arborway Line.

In addition, Ms. Cox informed members that raising the platforms at Park Street on the Green Line would disrupt service of both elevators. Disruption will last a month or two. Passengers will be directed across the tracks on the upper level by MBTA flag personnel. This change will be publicized. If you have ideas on how this could work more effectively, please call 617-222-5976. Ms. Cox asked if there were any questions.

P. Beaulieu: Have there been any problems during testing of the Green Line low-floor cars?

K. Cox: None.

K. Mooney: What is the number of users per year for the Travel Training Program?

K. Cox: The current contract allows for up to 90 participants per year.

M. MacNab: According to the article in the Boston Sunday Globe there are problems with the LED signs at some commuter rail stations. Are there any plans to have the LED signs moved to the Red Line?

K. Cox: I'm very skeptical about articles in the media. This requires some research. Mike Festa will also look into the issue.

B. Haynes: Is the MBTA considering any other safety precautions at the grade crossing other than the person directing passengers at Park Street station?

K. Cox: I don't know all the details. MBTA personnel would be involved.

G. Murray: I am from the Mattapan Community Development Corporation. I have a letter for General Manager Michael Mulhern. Is this the appropriate place to bring up concerns on accessibility issues?

C. Ravalli: Your letter will be delivered today.

M. MacNab: How will the automated fare collection system work?

K. Cox: There will no longer be collectors in the booths. There will be some customer service agents on the platforms assisting consumers.

K. Mooney: Are you aware that the MBTA's Travel Training Program is being presented as a program for persons with mental problems by many human service agencies and advisory councils?

K. Cox: I'd like to meet with you and notify the consultants at the Kennedy Center.

B. Haynes: Persons must be MBTA paratransit eligible for this program.

K. Cox: Yes, a registered user of THE RIDE Program.

The report was accepted.

AACT Fixed Route Access Coordinator Report

The report was tabled because Lynda Hoffman, the presenter, was absent.

MBTA/OTA Paratransit Operations Report

Bob Rizzo, Manager of Paratransit Contract Operations for the MBTA, reported on the following activities of OTA for November (see attached handout):

- Thanked AACT for including OTA in their of 25th year celebration.
- Monthly MIDAS Users Group Meeting.
- Unannounced facility visits and road observation of all contractors to monitor performance and compliance.
- Seminars sponsored by the Middlesex District Attorney and the Disabled Persons Protection Commission on Reporting and Investigation of Crimes against Persons with Disabilities.
- Monthly RIDE safety meeting hosted by GLSS at their Peabody facility at which time the AACT Chair and a RIDE consumer assisted in the production of a passenger safety video for future training programs.
- Inspection visit to the proposed Joint Venture facility located in Hyde Park. This would replace their Dorchester facility.
- The Dodge Division of Chrysler will no longer make RIDE-type vans. OTA will continue to look for an alternative van manufacturer.
- Waiting for delivery of 11 new vans.
- Briefing to AACT Board on next procurement of THE RIDE contract for 2004.
- Flyers posted in all RIDE vehicles about special accommodations for First Night.

THE RIDE services statistics:

- Ridership up 2.4 percent over last November and year-to-date is up 4.7 percent.
- November NA rate continues to be lower than years past at 0.13 percent.
- Complaints have decreased, with a significant improvement YTD of 38.1 percent.

- Improvement in on-time performance (within 30 minutes of scheduled pickup time).
- Vendor vehicle accidents are down for the third month in a row.

Mr. Rizzo answered questions.

C. Ferrara: Are operators required to ride the lift when a passenger is disembarking the vehicle?

B. Rizzo: Yes.

C. Ferrara: Are you sure that all persons are willing to file complaints?

B. Rizzo: Not with certainty. Many consumers are using the email directed to the MBTA. My office is also doing a random phone survey for feedback of RIDE consumers.

K. Mooney: Will Chrysler offer another vehicle alternative?

B. Rizzo: Perhaps.

J. Grant: I sent an email, but received no response from the MBTA.

B. Rizzo: That is unfortunate. If it were addressed to me, you would have received an answer.

J. Grant: It was a fixed-route issue.

A. Maselli: What is the policy on THE RIDE drivers using cellular phones while driving?

B. Rizzo: There are Nextel phones that function as cellular phones, but are only to be used to communicate with dispatch. No personal calls are allowed while on duty.

C. Ferrara: I have seen a fare increase in RIDE tickets. Consumers need to be encouraged to file complaints by having vendors place forms and flyers in RIDE vehicles.

B. Haynes: More consumers need to read THE RIDE manual.

The report was accepted.

AACT Paratransit Coordinator Report

The report was tabled because Jim White, the presenter, was absent.

Vendor's Reports

Kiessling Transit, Inc.:

Claire DiPillo, Manager of the South Shore Division, read from the attached report. She then asked if there were any questions. No questions were asked.

The report was accepted.

Veterans Transportation Service:

John Tuttle, Operations Manager for THE RIDE, read from the attached report for the month of November. Then he asked if there were any questions.

B. Taubehaus: What principal factors do you consider when scheduling THE RIDE?

J. Tuttle: The primary goal is to move as many people as possible in the time frame established by the MBTA's contract.

B. Haynes: Why does your company change the subscription pickup times on a trip?

J. Tuttle: We do move the trips depending on the day's schedule. That is allowed in the contract.

K. Mooney: Why do you have so many complaints?

J. Tuttle: We are not proud of it. Our goal is zero complaints.

The report was accepted.

Joint Venture (TTI/YCN):

Albert Maldonado read from the attached report and then asked if there were any questions. Additionally, Mr. Maldonado informed the group about Joint Venture's acquisition of a new garage facility in the Hyde Park area. However, this will be done in stages. This facility will replace the Boston and Norwood facilities. The facility has been approved by the MBTA.

J. Grant: A comment for Veterans Services. Many of the vehicles have different markings. All MBTA vehicles need to have consistent markings.

B. Rizzo: In the new van specs, each vendor area will have a new and unique color scheme. All vans will be white.

A. Maldonado: Clarification: The Joint Venture presently uses the same colors as the MBTA with the exception of six vans.

B. Taubehaus: What are the principal factors considered when scheduling THE RIDE?

A. Maldonado: The needs of the consumer, your time of service, and how we can accommodate your needs.

B. Haynes: Did you say that your Framingham and Norwood facilities would be combined in the Boston area?

A. Maldonado: Clarification: Norwood and Dorchester garages will be combined in the new Hyde Park facility. We will continue to have a garage in Framingham. At some point, all personnel will be moved into the Hyde Park facility.

M. MacNab: My community supports the move to the new facility. The Dorchester garage has had a negative impact on the MBTA.

A. Maldonado: The move will be in the next month.

B. Haynes: The location of each vendor facility is very important to the area they serve according to the contract. Has there been a change in the contract?

B. Rizzo: The contract requirement remains the same. The Boston location is acceptable. Boston is a part of the Southwest area.

The report was accepted.

GLSS Transportation:

Jacquelyn Hunt read from the attached report and then asked if there were any questions.

B. Taubehaus: What are the principal factors considered when scheduling THE RIDE?

J. Hunt: We try hard to accommodate every rider on a daily basis. This is also a shared ride service.

B. Haynes: Do you have a list of no-show passengers or is this just a part of a consumer's RIDE history?

J. Hunt: Yes, it is a part of THE RIDE history.

C. Ferrara: Is the number of complaints on your drivers rather high?

J. Hunt: I don't have any previous numbers to compare it to.

B. King: What is done if a reservation is logged incorrectly?

J. Hunt: The dispatcher should make all the necessary corrections, relaying it to the driver.

The report was accepted.

MBTA Police Report

Officer Matthew Haney began his report with a response to a request for a report on public safety features planned at Dorchester Red Line Stations (Shawmut, Fields Corner, and Ashmont). The Savin Hill station is still under review.

Station Safety Features

Shawmut Station

- Two callboxes by the public lobby and one at the elevator
- Two cameras, one on each side of the entrance
- Two different entrances
- Four cameras on the platform, two at each end
- Two callboxes at the top level of the head house, emergency stair exit

Fields Corner

- Callbox at each entrance in the busway area
- (Geneva Avenue, and Dorchester Avenue, also a call box on the access ramp, and camera facing the access ramp)
- Four cameras in the public lobby, with one callbox
- One camera on the outside of the elevators on the platform level and a callbox

Ashmont Station

- A callbox on the Dorchester Avenue entrance, and the Beale Street entrance, an upgraded call box on Bradford Lane.
- Four cameras on each platform and two call boxes
- Additional cameras at the police kiosk.

Mr. Haney asked if there were any questions.

J. Grant: Will the cameras be monitored or are they purely for gathering historical data after the fact?

M. Haney: There will be live feedback cameras and some will be for review purposes. There is a move to have all cameras in the system live feedback by 2004.

C. Ferrara: How will someone who is hearing and visually impaired locate and operate the call box?

M. Haney: There is a blue light that brings attention to the callbox. The sound on the callbox is very loud. The best alternative is to dial 911 on a pay phone. Just stay by the phone.

M. Festa: The call boxes will have raised Braille and raised enlarged letters.

MBTA Design and Construction Report

Michael Festa, of Design and Construction, gave his report (via interpreter) on the current key station plan. (Please see the attached handout.) Mr. Festa asked for questions.

B. Downton: Why were these stations not made accessible during the construction? Why is this rebuilding happening now?

M. Festa: What station are you speaking of, in particular?

B. Downton: Community College and Malden Center. Weren't they new with the Orange Line extension?

M. Festa: The purpose is to make those renovations and modifications to make both stations fully accessible.

B. King: Did you mention the World Trade Center Station (WTCS) in your presentation?

M. Festa: I overlooked that one in my report. The WTCS is 96% complete with a target construction date of 2004. The other two are South Station and Court House Station whose openings will be coordinated so that they occur at the same time.

K. Mooney: How many parking spaces will the new Salem garage have?

M. Festa: The Salem garage is still under discussion.

The report was accepted.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 PM.