

Access Advisory Committee to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

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Members Meeting Minutes Wednesday, July 27, 2016 Board of Directors:

Chairman - James F. White
Vice Chairman - Rick E. Morin

Executive Board

Mary Ann Murray
Ian Perrault
Beverly Ann Rock
Lisa Weber

Meeting opened at 1:05 PM

Reading of the Agenda

Introductions

Attendees: James White, Ian Perrault, Lisa Weber, Mary Ann Murray, Rick Morin, Debbie Weathers, Thomas Gilbert, Audrey M. Christine Daniels, Angela Manerson, Nancy Miller, Janet Weathers, Richard Mahoney, Esther Minar, Reggie Clark, and Dee Whittlesey

MBTA Staff:

Mike Hulak, Carol Joyce-Harrington, Rob Sampson, Ithai Larsen, and Frank Oglesby

Vendor Staff:

Selena Walckner, Steve Epps, Victor Herrera, and Kevin MacDonald, Mike Rushin, Judith B., and Lynn

Other:

Linda S. Salzer and June Scott

MPO Staff:

Matt Archer

Chairman Report

Chairman White stated the following:

On July 13th he attended several events:

- The ADA Celebration on Boston City Hall Plaza (BCHP) where a ribbon cutting ceremony was held in honor of the accessible path of travel from Government Center to BCHP
- He announced that Laura Brelsford, Assistant General Manager of the Department of System-Wide Accessibility

(SWA) arranged for a prototype bus during the celebration for public viewing on BChP

- He attended the MassDOT Focus 40 meeting held in the Seaport District looking at transportation in the future

He asked for questions.

T. Gilbert asked what model was the bus that was on display. *L. Brelsford* stated that the pilot bus on display at the ADA celebration was a New Flyer XDE40.

Department of System-Wide Accessibility (SWA) (Please see the attached)

Laura Brelsford, Assistant General Manager, SWA gave an updated overview of the PATI 85-Initiatives. She explained that the Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI) is a living document that SWA will be updated every six months. She announced that the MBTA 2017-2021 Capital Investment Plan (CIP) list \$200 Million for improvements, modernization in accessibility and compliance of stations. Here is a list of a few stations that are due for modernization; Natick Center, Symphony, and with Downtown Crossing-modernization an elevator connection. Stations that are to be made fully accessible are Wollaston, Newton Highlands, Winchester, and Auburndale. Stations with significant upgrades are Ruggles - new elevator to busway and replacement of five existing elevators, Oak Grove - installation of additional elevators, and replacement of two existing elevators, and Forest Hills - address all Massachusetts Architectural Access Board compliance issues throughout the station.

She then asked for questions.

Chairman White commented that he served on the vehicle committee and helped with the interior layout for the new buses which was carefully designed with more accessibility improvements.

T. Gilbert asked about the new layout for accessible seating on the new buses. *L. Brelsford* explained that the new layout is for easier accessibility.

A. Weathers asked about the sharing of space between carriages and mobility devices. *L. Brelsford* assured her that the layout would work for everyone. *Chairman White* asked that a photo of the interior of the new bus be shared with the membership so that they may get a better understanding of the layout.

R. Clark asked was the safety of operators taken into consideration with the new bus purchase. *L. Brelsford* stated that the MBTA is actively looking into operator safety.

L. Shepard asked if the rollout of the new bus fleet could coincide with an educational campaign for customers. *L. Brelsford* noted that making the public aware of new fleet is under review.

E. Minar concerned that the accessible seating area in the new bus fleet. She asked if there would be more than one way to alert the operator to exit. *L. Brelsford* noted that in the past the button was often broken. She explained that the button has now been made more secure.

Chairman White thanked Ms. Brelsford for her presentation.

MBTA Office for Transportation Access (OTA)-THE RIDE Program

Frank Oglesby, Deputy Director, submitted the OTA report and announced his retirement after 29 years with the MBTA. He read a brief parting statement addressed to AACT members. Please see the attached. There were no questions.

He then thanked Mr. Oglesby.

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

Rob Sampson, Manager for System-Wide Accessibility, noted that the presentation from Ms. Brelsford would have been much of his report. He did comment on the Capital Investment Plan, and also he noted that the ADA celebration was well attended by many.

He then asked for questions.

M. A. Murray asked is there a timeline for buses to remain in service once they have maintenance issues. *R. Sampson* noted that the length of time a bus with a maintenance issue remains in service depends upon the nature of the issue. Bus equipment defects with certain safety implications may prevent a bus from entering service or require immediate removal from service, where less serious defects may be repaired the next time the bus is being serviced for something else. In regards to accessibility equipment on buses, any defect that would prevent a person from boarding, such as a broken lift or ramp that fails to mechanically or manually deploy, will be removed from service either immediately or at the end of a run. Defective accessibility equipment such as stop announcement equipment or kneeler is typically repaired at the end of service, but could potentially be delayed for an additional albeit brief length of time if there's a shortage of buses.

SWA and Bus Ops is currently working on a policy that will outline every piece of accessibility equipment and the length of time a bus can remain in service when that specific piece of equipment is malfunctioning. This new policy is included in our list of accessibility initiatives and should be completed by December.

E. Minar asked for a timeline for elevator replacement at Park Street station. *R. Sampson* noted that the elevators are due for replacement but no timeline was given.

A. Weathers asked why the ramps at commuter rail stations so long and angled so high. She noted that people in mobility devices would have no problem. She is concerned about person not in the best of health walking a long ramp. *R. Sampson* ...

R. Clark asked why at rush hour Green Line trains all doors are opened. *R. Sampson* noted that it improves access for customers.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Sampson for his report.

Keolis Commuter Services

Selena Walckner, Title VI Manager, commented that she did not have any updates to share but was available to take questions and comments.

R. Clark inquired about the completion of track work on the Fitchburg line. *S. Walckner* noted that she would need to do research.

M. A. Murray commented that signage is no longer a problem at the Lynn commuter rail station/Downtown Crossing. *S. Walckner* thanked her for sharing positive feedback.

Chairman White thanked Ms. Walckner.

National Express Transit (NEXT)

Victor Herrera, General Manager, distributed his report and acknowledged Frank Oglesby for his many years of service and wished him well. He also announced that NEXT passenger assistance training on August 17 and 18.

He introduced the visiting executive staff members Judith Crawford, Chief Executive Officer for Transit, National Express Corp, Ruth Harrison-Wood; Marketing Director for National Express Corporation-Group.

He then asked for questions.

E. Minar noted that a RIDE driver arrived at her pickup site and failed to confirm who he was transporting leaving her behind. *M. Hulak* noted that drivers are not following company protocol. She was encouraged to file a complaint.

D. Weathers expressed concern that drivers do not ring her door bell. *M. Hulak* noted that a doorbell must be on the exterior door. Drivers are not allowed to enter closed in areas and explained that there may be mitigating circumstances.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Herrera for his report.

Veterans Transportation (VT)

Kevin MacDonald, Project Manager, distributed his report and announced a passenger assistant training class on August 11th and 12th.

He then asked for questions.

M.A. Murray noted that she was a passenger in a vehicle with a stalled lift. *M. Hulak* noted that she was in no danger and that the vehicle should have been pulled out of service.

Chairman White thanked Mr. MacDonald for his report.

Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)

Steve Epps, Director of Transportation, distributed his report and announced that a passenger assistance training class on Friday, July

29 at the Lynn headquarters. He noted that all AACT members are invited to attend the training classes.

He then asked for questions.

M.A. Murray was concerned that the seating in vans is very uncomfortable and limited for mobility devices. She was encouraged to take a seat that is near the double-seating.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Epps for his report.

Open Discussion

T. Gilbert made several suggestions for an electric lift for future procurements. *M. Hulak* noted that they are pleased with the vehicles they have procured.

Chairman White discussed that THE RIDE “no-show policy” is being violated by drivers. He noted that drivers are leaving the passenger pickup location without contacting dispatch for clearance to leave. He discussed in length that contractors revisit the procedure with all their drivers. He noted that he is speaking from experience. He explained that AACT endorsed the policy a year ago. *M. Hulak* noted that under no circumstances should drivers “no-show” a customer without contacting dispatch. *He* stated that he would do research to see how many consumers may have been affected. Also discussed is the new pilot program that OTA is working on that will notify a consumer when THE RIDE vehicle is nearing the pick-up location. He noted that they are still working out a few minor details before it is fully operational.

Chairman White discussed the significance of early voting especially for persons with disabilities. He encouraged those who may need that extra time to vote to consider early voting, where there is no waiting.

Old Business

None was presented.

New Business

None was presented.

Announcements

Chairman White took a brief moment to acknowledge Mr. Oglesby retirement. As he approached the podium for one last time as Director of the Office for Transportation Access (OTA). The Chairman congratulated him and commended him for his work with THE RIDE Program. He thanked him for his support and work with AACT. He noted that his presence would be greatly missed and he wished him well.

Chairman White announced that during the ADA Celebration on Boston City Hall Plaza Laura Brelsford, Assistant General Manager of SWA, and her staff were recognized with a proclamation by Boston Mayor Martin Walsh and Commissioner Kristen McCosh for SWA's work on fixed route transit accessibility.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Notables

The AACT Executive Board will meet from 10:00 AM to noon 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.

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/relay), 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. Please contact the MPO staff at 857.702.3700; 617.570.9192; (TTY) 617.570.9193 (fax); or publicinformation@ctps.org.

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age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or military service.

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Members needing service information or wanting to inquire about MBTA services should do so through the MBTA Marketing and Communications Department at 617.222.3200 or 800.392.6100, TTY 617.222.5146, Monday through Friday 6:30 AM to 8:00 PM and Saturday and Sunday from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM, or the MBTA website at www.mbta.com/customer_support/feedback/.

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 is always appreciated.