

***Access Advisory Committee to the Massachusetts
Bay Transportation Authority***

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Members Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 25, 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, Lisa Weber, Rick Morin, Debbie Weathers, Jim Tozza, Rhoda Gibson, Reggie Clark, Angela Manerson, Rob Dias, Gail and Marvin Weinstein, David Ryles, Jeffery Magnet, Dee Whittlesey, Mary Dennesen, Veronica Surrell, Lynn Surrel, Nancy Houghton, Bob Hachey Joanne D. Daniels-Finegold, Esther Minor, Michelle Mitchell, Nancy Miller, Bill Corcoran, Olivia Richards, Mary Ann Murray, Angela Francis, and Tom Gilbert

MBTA Staff:

Mike Hulak, Carol J. Harrington, Rob Sampson, Jessica Podesva, Ithai Larsen, and Frank Oglesby

Vendor Staff:

Selena Walckner, Steve Epps, John Tuttle, and Kevin MacDonald

Other:

Scott and Linda S. Salzer, Ellie Spring

MPO Staff:

Matt Archer and Jennifer Rowe

Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the meeting minutes of April 27, 2016 was made by M. Murray, and seconded by R. Morin. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

Chairman White's Report

Chairman White stated the following:

- He attended a transportation summit at Holy Cross College in Worcester, MA. The MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) transportation provided round-trip travel. He made contacts with representatives of Uber, Lyft, and the police department.

He attended the MBTA's Fiscal Management and Control Board (FMCB) meeting where he spoke on behalf of the Access Advisory Board to the MBTA and as a member of the Authority's Selection Committee in favor of the award to Global Contact Services (GCS) for the Centralized Call and Control Center (CCCC) project. He noted that Michael Lambert, the MBTA's Deputy Administrator-Transit, gave a presentation to the FMCB highlighting how the CCCC will improve RIDE service and save money. Mr. Lambert also detailed for the FMCB as to why GCS was recommended for the award of the contract. The Chair then asked for questions. No questions were asked.

Ed Carr, Administrator of the MWRTA, discussed how the transfer of paratransit service from the MBTA to the MWRTA for several MetroWest area communities would proceed. As of July 1, MWRTA will assume direct responsibility for providing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-required paratransit service to the towns of Dover, Weston and Wellesley. Customers wishing to travel between the MBTA and MWRTA service areas will now transfer at the Green Line's Riverside Station. The old transfer point at Wellesley Farm Commuter Rail Station has ceased to be a transfer point.

The MBTA has notified some 850 people who use THE RIDE in Wellesley, Weston, and Dover of the transition. Ms. Lisa Long MWRTA staff was introduced as the direct contact on this issue. New applicants can continue to apply through the MBTA for dual coverage.

Fares for the MWRTA paratransit service will continue to be \$2.00 and the fare amount is unlikely to change. Customer's that were paying \$5.00 for premium service will pay only \$3.15 to the MBTA and \$2.00 to the MWRTA. MBTA and MWRTA are working on a system where riders traveling west to east will receive a free Charlie Card with access to Riverside Station (RS), which is an accessible station. Service hours will be 5:00 AM to 1:00 AM, seven days a week for existing MBTA users, but new applicants will need to conform to MWRTA hours. MWRTA does not currently have Sunday service and limited Saturday service. The MWRTA's service area is Framingham, Natick, Wellesley, and Dover, and portions of Wayland, Southborough, Marlborough, Ashland, Allston, and Hopkinton. There will be direct trips into Newton, Needham, and Waltham for customers in Wellesley, Weston, and Dover.

Note: Since this presentation Weston was not included in the 7/1 transfer to MWRTA. A later date is being discussed by MassDOT and the town.

A consumer asked if his ride service from Hyde Park to Wellesley will be direct. *M. Hulak from the MBTA* said that after July 1, there will be a transfer at Riverside Station, although there is a small portion of Wellesley still within the $\frac{3}{4}$ mi. When making a reservation, a reservationist would be able to tell customers if a transfer would be required.

T. Gilbert asked about paratransit services in to Worcester from MetroWest. *E. Carr* stated that direct trips are shared, but not many trips are requested.

A. Manerson commented about signing the MWRTA release form. *E. Carr* noted that the MBTA cannot handover her personal information without that person's prior approval. He noted that she should contact Lisa Long for further details.

A. Manerson asked about the elimination of same-day request service. *M. Hulak* responded by saying that same-day requests have become very difficult to accommodate. The ADA does not require the accommodation of same-day requests, but the MBTA has provided them for several years. The MBTA stopped allowing them last week and notice to the public is being given at this meeting. He noted that a notice to all RIDE customers will be mailed out in the next few days about this and other RIDE changes.

R. Dais asked about eligibility and recertification. *M. Hulak* noted that a signed letter authorizing the MBTA to share a customer's records with MWRTA is required. *E. Carr* stated that when a customer's certification expires, the customer's eligibility will be automatically renewed with the MWRTA and the customer will become a visitor to the MBTA's RIDE program.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Carr for his presentation.

MBTA and Vendor Reports

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

Rob Sampson, Manager for System-Wide Accessibility, distributed his report and reported the following.

Beginning June 1, the Park Street elevator at the corner of Winter and Tremont Streets will be closed down for approximately a year. The elevator will be replaced and the shaft must be reconstructed. The replacement will have a full glass enclosure. There is another elevator across the street in the Boston Common and one at Winter and Washington Streets that goes to the Orange Line and via a concourse to the Red Line. More elevator advisory updates will be on www.mbta.com.

He then asked for questions.

T. Gilbert asked if the new elevator will have a surveillance camera. *R. Sampson* will research the question.

J. Magnet asked about signs in the area of the elevator directing people elsewhere and if they would be in Spanish. *R. Sampson* said that there are plans to post signs to direct the public. He offered to check on whether the signs would be in other languages.

B. Hachey commented that he is pleased that the elevator outages have been at a minimum. *R. Sampson* noted that the contractor is doing a very good job with maintenance.

T. Gilbert asked about updates with the Davis Square elevator intercom system. *R. Sampson* indicated that it was restored today at 8:46 A.M.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Sampson for his report.

Keolis Commuter Services

Selena Walckner, Title VI Manager, commented that last Monday was an official schedule change day. Everyone had ample time to prepare. Copies of the new schedule are available and Keolis is accepting feedback from customers and conducting new passenger counts in the fall.

T. Gilbert said that his friend who is hearing and visually impaired has had trouble with the variable message system (VMS) LED displays on the commuter rail cars. *S. Walckner* mentioned that she can speak to the Engineering Department about an audit, and customers should contact the customer service department.

R. Clark asked for confirmation that two new stations were adding to the Fitchburg Line. *S. Walckner* said she would look into it.

A. Francis noted that she should be getting a reduced fare rate and that she is overcharged when she rides the commuter rail. *S. Walckner* explained how she could get a Transportation Access Pass.

Chairman White thanked Ms. Walckner.

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

Mike Hulak, Manager Paratransit Operations, in for Frank Oglesby, Deputy Director, submitted the OTA report.

He also mentioned that the information about the same-day service changes on the mass mailer was incorrect. He corrected the statement to clarify that same-day requests are not guaranteed, but if possible would be provided at a Premium non-ADA fare rate.

He then asked for questions.

A consumer asked about premium fare prices in Beverly when the buses are not running on Saturday and Sunday but still being charged. *M. Hulak* said that the commuter rail and express buses are not included in the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile rule. She also asked if there could be printed notes placed on RIDE vehicles dashboard requesting occupants to be “fragrance free.” *M. Hulak* noted that this issue has been addressed many times. He noted that he would take her suggestion under advisement. He also reminded her that there is nothing that can be done about passengers who choose to wear fragrances.

N. Miller asked for an explanation regarding minimum balance in THE RIDE account. *M. Hulak* noted that you always need to have funds to cover your trip; for persons on subscription service or someone who uses THE RIDE multiple times in a week this now reduces the amount of funds that you would need in your account.

M. Hulak reminded THE RIDE users that the information about the same-day request is on all vendors' telephone systems.

R. Gibson commented that same-day service is being eliminated, are other options for persons in mobility devices to contact.

C. J. Harrington responded that a joint letter was prepared between the MBTA and Health and Human Services that recommends few options for folks using THE RIDE such as MassHealth's Human Service Transportation if eligible. She also commented that a joint task force with members from AACT (Jim and Rick); Boston Center for Independent Living, Bay State Council for the Blind, Massachusetts Senior Action Council, to name a few, assisted in the creation of the letter. *M. Hulak* noted that some riders have the option to use the City of Boston's Mayor's Shuttle that can accommodate some riders. Others should contact their city or town's Council on Aging to see what transportation they could provide. He noted that those who need immediate transportation service should not hesitate to dial 911 in an emergency.

Chairman White thanked Ms. Joyce-Harrington and Mr. Hulak for the report.

Veterans Transportation (VT)

Kevin MacDonald, Project Manager, distributed his report and announced that the passenger assistance training (PAT) class will be held in June.

A consumer asked how to be involved in the training. *K. MacDonald* stated that participants to the training are always welcomed. It is a learning experience for his drivers with their participation. *Chairman White* commented that anyone who would like to participate should contact Janie Guion, the AACT Coordinator, at 857-702-3658.

J. Magnet asked how the PAT classes are scheduled considering driver's work various hours. *K. MacDonald* noted that all new drivers attend and experienced drivers attend for a refresher.

Chairman White thanked Mr. MacDonald for his report.

Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)

Steve Epps, Director of Transportation, distributed his report and stated the following. He invited everyone to attend the upcoming passenger assistance training on Friday, at 330 Lynnway in Lynn. *Chairman White* said that the MBTA covers the transportation cost for participants who stay for the complete training. He also noted they would like more visually impaired participants to attend.

E. Minor commented that she witnessed a driver from Veterans who did not assist a visually impaired passenger from door-to-door. She noted that the driver claimed it was a communication problem.

A consumer commented that a driver was unruly and was very disrespectful.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Epps for his report.

National Express Transit (NEXT)

John Tuttle distributed his report and had no further updates. He then asked for questions.

There were none.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Tuttle for his attendance.

Open Discussion:

M. Mitchell asked if there was a way to add better directions to her file as her home is in an apartment complex with a confusing numbering scheme. *M. Hulak* of OTA was available to assist her.

Old Business

None was presented.

New Business

None were presented.

Open Discussion

Announcements

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.

The MPO complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other federal and state non-discrimination statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. The MPO does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, English proficiency, income, religious creed, ancestry, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or military service. Any person who believes her or himself or any specific class of persons has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI, ADA, or other non-discrimination statute or regulations may, her or himself or via a representative, file a written complaint with the MPO. A complaint must be filed no later than 180 calendar days after the date on which the

person believes the discrimination occurred. A complaint form and additional information can be obtained by contacting the MPO (see above) or at www.bostonmpo.org.

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.