



Access Advisory Committee to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

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Wednesday, February 23, 2011

AACT Meeting Minutes

NOTABLES

- Chairman Haynes announced that Vice-Chairman John Kane died suddenly on January 31; he will be sorely missed
- Ms. Marylou Rizzo, wife of the late Bob Rizzo, addressed the AACT members and friends. She said she was pleased to be in attendance. She spoke of the passion and dedication Mr. Rizzo had in making THE RIDE the most successful paratransit service possible and that his expertise was sought nationally. She thanked the OTA staff and consumers for their kindnesses. She read the prayer "I Have a Mission" by Cardinal Newman that signified the way he lived his life. *(Copies of the prayer are available by contacting the AACT Coordinator at 617-973-7507)*

- *AACT Nominations*

Board Members:

Mary Maury	(accepted)
Beverly Rock	(accepted)
Reggie Clark	(accepted)
Donald Summerfield	(declined)

Chairman:

Philip Beaulieu	(accepted)
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Vice-Chairman:

James (Jim) White	(accepted)
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- Chairman Haynes closed nominations for the Executive Board until March 23
- AACT Coordinator reported incorrectly in the November 17 minutes on the Segway. The MBTA Assistant General Manager Gary Talbot, System-Wide Accessibility also provided further information on the ownership and status of the Segway Company (see pages 4&5).
- Comments and questions concerning AACT should be directed to Chairman Haynes by contacting the AACT Coordinator, Ms. Janie Guion, at 617-973-7507 (voice), 617-973-7089 (TTY), 617-973-8855 (fax), or at AACT@ctps.org (e-mail).
- Chairman Haynes recommends that members needing service information or wanting to inquire about MBTA services, do so through the MBTA Customer Communications and Marketing Department at 617-222-3200 (voice), 800-392-6100 (voice, toll-free), 617-222-5146 (TTY), or the MBTA website at www.mbta.com/customer_support/feedback/
- AACT has a page on the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's website at www.bostonmpo.org. Links can be found there for the following items: agendas, upcoming meetings, past meeting minutes, the memorandum of understanding between the MBTA and AACT, and the AACT bylaws, the AACT brochure, and ADA regulations. There are also links to the MPO's newsletter, *TRANSREPORT*, the MBTA's Office for Transportation Access, and the AACT Coordinator.
- The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meetings, including the AACT meeting are conducted in accessible locations, and materials can be provided in accessible formats and in languages other than English. If you would like accessibility or language accommodation, please contact the MPO at (617) 973-7100 (voice), (617) 973-8855 (fax), (617) 973-7089 (TTY), or publicinformation@bostonmpo.org (e-mail).
- The MPO fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related 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, or military service. Any person who believes herself/himself or any specific class of persons has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI or related statutes or regulations may herself/himself, or via a representative, file a written complaint with the MPO. A complaint must be filed no later than 30 calendar days after the date on which the person believes the discrimination occurred.

- 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 would be appreciated.

Attendance:

Members

Ben Haynes, Lillian Haynes, Phil Beaulieu, Paul Barresi, MaryAnn Murray, James White, Beverly Rock, Cheryl Ravalli, Angela Manerson, Reggie Clark, Marilyn MacNab, Kathryn Piccard, Barbara Garlington, John Cappuccio, Esther Minor, Gloria Savory, Richard Mahoney, Bob Carr, Bernadine Joslin, Georgia Feronberg, Joe Belotti, and Joan Cathy

MassDOT - MBTA Representatives

Frank Oglesby, Kathy Cox, Carol Joyce-Harrington, Mike Festa, and Mike Hulak

Vendor Representatives

Jackie Dunlop – Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)
Victor Herrera – Joint Venture of Thompson Transit Inc. and YCN
Kevin MacDonald – Veterans Transportation, LLC

Others:

Marylou Rizzo-Widow of Bob Rizzo
Kathy Devin—Massachusetts Office on Disability

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)/ Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)

Walter Bennett and Janie Guion

Meeting:

Chairman Haynes called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM

- The group observed a moment of silence for the sudden passing of the AACT's Vice-Chairman John Kane and to observe the two-year anniversary of Robert (Bob) Rizzo's passing
- Members, friends, and guests introduced themselves
- The agenda was read by the AACT Coordinator

Approval of the AACT Meeting Minutes:

- The AACT minutes from the November 17 meeting were approved, with corrections and with one abstention

Corrections to a reporting error:

- ~~The Segway cannot be taken into grocery stores because they run on fossil fuel.~~ The Coordinator was mistaken in reporting that the Segways are not allowed in grocery stores. What should have been reported is that golf carts are not allowed. Segways do not run on fossil fuel and should be welcomed in grocery stores since it is described by the Department of Justice as another wheeled mobility device. Segways are to be treated

the same as a wheeled mobility device unless they cannot be accommodated (very rarely if ever)

- Dean Kamen is the inventor of the Segway and he is alive. The person who bought the Segway Company from Mr. Kamen, Mr. Jimi Heselden, died in an accident using the Segway

Board Member Reports *(No written reports were submitted)*

- **Newly appointed Vice-Chairman Philip Beaulieu**

His primary function is to review THE RIDE complaints and responses from vendors. He makes sure that the responses are answered adequately. He has established a tracking database to monitor the various consumer issues and to make sure that there are no obvious patterns. He also attends passenger assistance training (PAT).

- **Paul Barresi**

As the AACT monitor for paratransit he visits the different vendor facilities to attend PAT classes. This winter he has been hampered by the severe weather conditions. He is looking forward to attending more PAT classes in the spring. During his observance he recently noticed management taking the keys from a driver for not following lessons learned in the PAT class.

Chairman's Reports *(No written report was submitted)*

He reported the following:

- Chairman Haynes attended a meeting with the Office for Transportation Access staff, MBTA vendors and a representative from General Manager Davey's office
 - the Chair is to be the liaison between the GM and membership

-the Chair is to conduct a training class of OTA and MBTA vendors

- Some vendor drivers lack skills learned in passenger assistant training
- Vendors are to train their staff to proficiency
- Members should report health and safety related complaints and violations by drivers; vendors can only resolve issues if you file complaints

The Board then took questions.

A. Manerson: Are drivers who arrive early at your home required to wait?

Chairman Haynes: Yes, for five minutes beyond pickup time.

K. Piccard: You indicated that the complaint database which you created is nameless. Are THE RIDE identification numbers listed?

P. Beaulieu: No, the database is anonymous.

J. Cathy: I have noticed that drivers sometimes arrive very late at destinations. Why is this? There are just some places where you need to be on time. Are consumers allowed to give drivers help with directions?

Chairman Haynes: Yes, you can give directions.

Thank you.

Kathy Cox, MBTA Manager for Fixed Route Services and System-Wide Accessibility (report attached)

She reported the following:

- The MBTA Board of Directors approved funding for the addition of a 2nd card target on the inner, right-side panel on accessible fare gates throughout the MBTA system. A 2nd card target was

requested by the plaintiffs to make it possible for customers with limited reach range to more easily travel through the fare gate.

She then asked for questions.

D. Summerfield: Can you give a report on my complaint from the Green Line?

K. Cox: I will do research with the MBTA Customer Communications & Marketing Department (CC&MD). You may also check the status of your complaint with the MBTA's CC&MD at 617-222-3200.

J. White: Is there a number for customers to use to call the safety field team to report stops that may need shoveling?

K. Cox: Actually the MBTA Customer Communications & Marketing Department at 617-222-3200 is the place to call to report stops that need shoveling.

D. Summerfield: I will not be calling customer service.

K. Cox: I encourage all customers to contact the Customer Communications & Marketing Department for all complaints. The complaint process continues to improve and MBTA General Manager Davey has set a high goal that 95 percent of all complaints be responded to within five days. One of the new improvements being implemented will allow the various areas within the T that investigate complaints direct access to the complaint database to record the results of their investigation. An internal meeting to launch the effort to meet the new goal has been scheduled for next week.

J. White: Is Route 32 part of the key bus stop improvement program?

K. Cox: Yes, you can locate meeting dates at www.mbta.com.

Chairman Haynes: Thank you Ms. Cox, for your report.

Frank Oglesby, MBTA Deputy Director of Paratransit Operations – The Office of Transportation Access (OTA), THE RIDE (reports attached)

He reported the following:

- On Wednesday, March 2, at the MBTA's Board of Directors meeting, General Manager Davey acknowledged the late John Kane's work with accessible service, noting his important work and advice
- Departing staff members: On January 19, Paul Strobis, Jr., resigned to take a paratransit management job in Florida with the Broward County Transit Division and on March 28, Maureen Kelly was honored with a reception after 23 years of service
- On February 9 THE RIDE broke the record for registered daily passenger trips of 8,173 breaking the previous record of 8,040 trips provided
- Kudos to Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS), Veterans Transportation, LLC (VT), and the Joint Venture of Thompson Transit and YCN (JV) for the good service by their drivers working during the worst weather conditions
- During the roof collapse GLSS continued to work at 90 percent the day following the incident and with help from the other vendors, two days later they were operating at 100 percent.
- Kudos to all the vendors who unselfishly pooled their resources to help each other
- He then encouraged all AACT members to contact the OTA with complaints at 617-222-5123 to start the investigative process with the vendors

He then asked for questions.

K. Devin: What can you tell us about the men who were trapped in the roof collapse at GLSS?

J. Dunlop: One has returned to work; there is one who is still out.

D. Summerfield: There should be some type of commendation for drivers who went out of their way to help passengers during the inclement weather.

J. Belforti: What is THE RIDE percentage of complaints and praises?

Chairman Haynes: You can contact Mr. Olgesby or his staff at the OTA office at 617-222-5123 for those statistics.

P. Barresi: Would you explain how the refund from the “On-time Service Guarantee” is processed?

C.J. Harrington: The cards don’t come directly to OTA. The cards for all modes of transportation (THE RIDE, Silver Line, Blue Line, Red Line, Green Line, Orange Line, and Commuter Rail) are sent to a central location then sent to the various departments. The investigation for THE RIDE is done using the technical equipment in vehicles.

G. Savory: I have had problems booking with THE RIDE for same-day service. When I call I’m told to call back during the evening. I call back and continue to get no action. I have also encountered THE RIDE not coming on time due to a lack of correct information regarding the address at 200 Seaport Blvd. I called for an update on the status of the arrival of THE RIDE and would just get the run around. I was told THE RIDE was at 164 Northern Avenue. The building had closed I had to wait in the cold for hours.

V. Herrera: There are days when we are unable to provide same-day service. I will need to speak with you to get more information and do research.

Chairman Haynes: I would like an explanation of the combination of errors she has just described. She is not the only one that has raised these issues.

V. Herrera: This was very unfortunate. It sounds like there was some confusion. I will need more information.

Chairman Haynes: At the March 23, 2011 meeting, I've asked to hear from a representative of each vendor to explain: "What actions do you take to correct this type of situation?" What should the customer do in order to bring attention to these issues and get them resolved?

M. MacNab: Consumers should be aware that the "on-time guarantee" refund does not pay a round-trip fare anymore. The refund is now a one-way fare. I am suggesting that you all monitor your accounts carefully. Due to the MBTA's financial woes this program may be discontinued. The address for 200 Seaport Blvd is the World Trade Center. The address was a problem a year ago, but the error should have been corrected.

E. Minor: I request a trip to travel to church at 85 Bacon Street in Natick once a year. The call taker will respond with "Why can't you people go to church nearby?" This statement has been made to others and I feel it is very unprofessional and should not be said. I don't believe any other religious group is being told where they should worship. This is being said to those of us who are Jehovah Witnesses and is very serious. I don't believe the call taker realizes that the call is being recorded. I have been ridiculed at least three times and I want this issue looked into.

V. Herrera: That is very unacceptable and intolerable. You must let us know. You can call me directly or call the MTBA.

C.J. Harrington: Victor is correct; if we don't know about it we can't fix it. It is important to make a mental checklist regarding your experience. Was it a man; woman; their name; time of day; or anything that may help management when reviewing the tapes? Anything you can possibly remember will be helpful.

B. Garlington: Has anyone else had this experience. When THE RIDE is late that the time was set differently from the time you were given during the callback? I know that the time they recorded is not what I wrote down.

G. Savory: Yes, it has happened to me.

Chairman Haynes: This is not the place to file complaints. If you have filed your complaint and it has not been resolved you can resolve it through AACT. Complaints are not to be filed at the AACT meeting. The investigative tools are with OTA and the vendors.

K. Piccard: Checking my pickup times through automation revealed the information of another user. I found this very startling and did not try the same method again.

K. MacDonald: I would like to speak with you.

Chairman Haynes: Thank you Mr. Oglesby, for your report.

Open Discussions:

Chairman Haynes: Asked members if they were experiencing problems with THE RIDE in the areas of the reservations, the dispatch and the timeliness-of-service. We cannot address an issue unless the consumer has filed a complaint to have it corrected.

C.J. Harrington: To file you don't need to write your complaint. You can phone them into the office and the staff will write them. We ask that you give us as much information as you can to help in the investigation of the complaint for a complete response. You can call them in at 617-222-5123, www.mbta.com, or the Customer Communications & Marketing Department at 617-222-3200.

Other:

K. Piccard: Passengers who are seated directly behind THE RIDE van driver often will reach out and grab his/her shoulder. Giving a shake or poke to the driver while the vehicle is in motion could

endanger the other passengers and the public. I would like to have a re-evaluation of the earlier practice that the vehicles be equipped with a clear plastic safety shield. The shield should be high enough behind the driver so that it does not interfere with their ability to adjust the seat or interfere with the passengers' mandated kneeler. An example of this is the clear plastic shield at the front of the lift. To whom should I submit my proposal?

Chairman Haynes: Please submit your proposal to Mr. Oglesby. This is the type of issue that AACT and OTA will work in conjunction with each other to approve changes and other conditions that will improve THE RIDE vehicle.

F. Oglesby: I will be in contact with you as well as other MBTA staff regarding this issue.

Announcements:

A. Manerson: On Friday, February 25, 2011, public health hearings will begin to be held around the state.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.