

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

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***AACT Membership Meeting Minutes***

***Wednesday, February 26, 2014***

***Notables***

The AACT Executive Board will meet from 10 AM to noon and the Membership meeting will be conducted from 1:00 PM to 3 PM on the fourth Wednesday of the month, except when noted.

AACT has a page on the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) website at [www.bostonmpo.org](http://www.bostonmpo.org); click on "Get Involved" then scroll down to "Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA." Links can be found there for the following items: agendas, upcoming meetings, past meeting minutes, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MBTA and AACT, and the AACT bylaws, and ADA regulations. There are also links to the MPO's newsletter, *TRANSREPORT*, and information on accessibility at the MBTA. This page includes the contact information for the AACT Coordinator.

Comments and questions concerning AACT should be directed to the Chairman James White by contacting the AACT Coordinator, Ms. Janie Guion, at 617-973-7507 (voice); 617-973-7089 (TTY); 617-973-8855 (fax); [AACT@ctps.org](mailto:AACT@ctps.org) (email); or at c/o CTPS, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, MA 02116 (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 617.973.7100 (voice), 617.973.7089 (TTY), 617.973.8855 (fax), or [publicinformation@ctps.org](mailto: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 herself/himself or any specific class of persons has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI, ADA, or other non-discrimination statute or regulation may, herself/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](http://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 Sat/Sun from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM, or the MBTA website at [www.mbta.com/customer\\_support/feedback/](http://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.

Meeting opened at 1:03 PM

**The Chairman read the agenda**

**Introductions**

*Attendees:*

James White, Ian Perrault, Lisa Weber, Mary Ann Murray, Allen M. Karon, Richard Mahoney, Kathryn Piccard, Nancy J. Miller, Angela Manerson, Cheryl Ravalli, Joan Canty, Deanne Sisco, Reggie Clark

Also Juanita Bradshaw, Audrey Armand, Melanie Toner, Norma Stenstrom, Stan Edelson; Linda Shepard Salzer, Ways2Go Travel

Trainer; Robert Dias, Massachusetts Office on Disability; Theadora Fischer, Human Services Transportation; James Cawley, Work Inc.; James Cassetta, Work Inc.; B.J. Finnell, Keolis Commuter Services; Robert White, Robert White Associates

**MBTA Staff:**

Frank Oglesby, Larry Haile, Carol Joyce-Harrington, Mike Hulak, Timothy Davis, Heather M. Hume, Phillip Balcom, Laura Brelsford, Kenneth Green

**Vendor Staff:**

Victor Herrera, National Express-Joint Venture of Thompson Transit; Jacquelyn J. Reynolds, Greater Lynn Senior Services; Kevin MacDonald & Kaitlin Thompson, Veterans Transportation

**MPO Staff:**

Janie Guion and Matt Archer

## **Approval of Minutes**

Chairman White requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes for December 18, 2013. Mr. Karon made the motion; the motion was seconded and carried with one abstention.

## Chairman's Report

*The Chair stated the following:*

- The Selection Committee for THE RIDE contracts is nearing the end of the process. He will report to AACT if and when he can.
- He congratulated Laura Brelsford on her promotion to Assistant General Manager of System-Wide Accessibility.
- He noted that consumers who attend at least two meetings become members of AACT.
- He noted that there was a flyer distributed announcing a vehicle demo of a THE RIDE van and potential sedans scheduled for February 27<sup>th</sup> at VTS. He urged anyone interested in viewing them to go and offer their input.

### ***B.J. Finnell, External Affairs and Community Outreach, Keolis Commuter Services***

**Mr. Finnell** stated the following:

- Keolis has been selected to take over the MBTA's Commuter Rail service from the Massachusetts Bay Commuter Railroad Company (MBCR). Operations begin on July 1, their mobilization

has already begun. They have an eight-year contract with two potential two-year renewals at the seven-year mark.

- There will be the same conductors, engineers, and customer service representatives as there are with MBCR (see attached).
- Keolis will be represented at all AACT meetings, and customers will have direct access to Keolis personnel.
- Contact information for employment opportunities at Keolis: Mike Cawley, Director, Human Services & Training, 470 Atlantic Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Boston, 02110; [www.keoliscs.com](http://www.keoliscs.com) and by telephone at 617-849-7975.

He then asked for questions.

**Chairman White** stated that AACT would like to work with Keolis in developing training programs. He noted that Keolis reached out to him, while he had not been in touch with Mass Bay Commuter Rail in three years.

**N. Miller** inquired about who owned Keolis Commuter Services.

**BJ Finnell** stated that 70% of Keolis is owned by Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer of France and 30% is owned by the Teachers Retirement Board of Quebec.

**Chairman White** thanked Mr. Finnell for his presentation.

***Jim Cassetta, President and CEO, Facility Management and Maintenance, Inc. and WORK Inc.***

**Mr. Cassetta** stated the following:

- For approximately the last 10 years, WORK Inc. has been advocating on behalf of persons with disabilities to convince people who purchase goods and services for the public and the private sector that individuals with disabilities are great employees.
- He commended Mr. Finnell and Keolis for reaching out to WORK Inc.
- WORK Inc. will be a subcontractor to Keolis. WORK Inc. will need to ensure the 126 commuter rail stations are safe, clean, and above all accessible.
- Keolis reached out to communities and organizations like WORK Inc. and made a commitment to individuals with disabilities.
- WORK Inc. will also be available to attend AACT meetings.

He then asked for questions.

**Chairman White** asked how individuals can seek employment through WORK, Inc.

**J. Cassetta** stated that WORK, Inc. just hired a dedicated Human Resources manager for several contracts. He noted that he will send contact information to the Chairman.

**K. Piccard** stated that there are different standards at different commuter rail stations for the depth of snow required to begin snow removal. She encouraged WORK, Inc. to ask for more uniformity between the commuter rail stations. She asked that priority be given to ramps, platforms, and parking spaces for the disabled.

**J. Cassetta** stated that WORK Inc. is very accustomed to snow removal. Their standard for the Rose Kennedy Greenway is bare pavement at all the times; they begin removal when it begins to snow, and they stop when it has stopped snowing and the pavement is cleared. He stated that WORK Inc. would be working with Keolis on setting snow removal standards.

**A. Manerson** noted that attention should be given to ice on steps.

**Chairman White** thanked Mr. Cassetta for his presentation.



## MBTA Reports

**Deputy Chief Kenneth Green, MBTA Transit Police** is the night-time Commander and is also in charge of Community Partnerships for the Department.

He noted that he had not prepared a report but would respond to questions.

**Chairman White** informed the Deputy Chief that parking for THE RIDE vehicles to unload passengers at the Charles Street entrance is very limited. He also stated that the snow had not been removed from the sidewalks.

**R. Clark** stated that people who sit on the stairs of subway entrances are a tripping hazard to the visually impaired.

**Deputy Chief Green** stated that this is not allowed; the Transit Police are constantly moving people who sit on the stairs, especially during school vacation. He also noted that all buses will have cameras within a year and half.

**A. Manerson** asked if the cameras would have audio.

**Deputy Chief Green** stated that there will be no audio cameras.

**Chairman White** thanked Deputy Chief Green.

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

**Larry Haile, SWA Coordinator**, presented his report with a few additional updates (please see the attached). He stated that there has been a significant increase in system orientation training participation within the first quarter of 2014; much of this is due to interest by public school systems and student agencies. He added that human service agencies have also shown interest.

He then asked for questions.

**A. Karon** commented that he observed the new bus departure boards at Forest Hills, and he appreciates that Brockton Area Transit has similar signs.

**L. Haile** noted that the departure boards at Forest Hills Station have an audio feature, which can be activated by pressing a button on the screen.

**K. Piccard** stated that the information of importance should always be on the front page of the System-Wide Accessibility (SWA) report. Such as the new SWA reports are available in audio upon request

**T. Fisher** asked how SWA would collaborate with Keolis regarding system orientation for the Commuter Rail.

**L. Haile** stated that he had not heard from Keolis regarding that subject, but that SWA would be interested. He stated it would be challenging because the site of the trainings has no nearby commuter rail station. He looks forward to talking with Keolis about the training.

**BJ Finnell** stated he would speak with Mr. Haile regarding trainings.

**R. Clark** asked if Bowdoin Station will be open while Government Center is undergoing construction.

**L. Haile** stated Bowdoin Station would be open.

**Chairman White** thanked Mr. Haile for his report.

## ***MBTA Office for Transportation Access -THE RIDE Program***

**Frank Oglesby, Deputy Director of OTA**, submitted the OTA report and added the following:

- He thanked the three THE RIDE contractors and their staff for safely transporting riders during the recent snowstorms.
- MBTA General Manager Beverly A. Scott has gone through the eligibility process for THE RIDE and was determined eligible; she has been using THE RIDE for over a month.

- MBTA Chief Financial Officer Jonathan Davis publicly stated that the Authority would recommend to the MassDOT/MBTA Board of Directors that no increase in THE RIDE fares be implemented on July 1, 2014.
- THE RIDE ADA fares would remain at \$3.00 and non-ADA fares will remain at \$5.00.

He then asked for questions.

**K. Piccard** asked where individuals can submit ideas regarding the No-Show/Late Cancellation policy.

**F. Oglesby** stated that suggestions can be emailed to [theride@mbta.com](mailto:theride@mbta.com) or mailed to THE RIDE offices at 10 Park Plaza, Suite 5750, Boston, MA 02116.

**I. Perrault** asked if THE RIDE would operate on a late-night schedule when late-night MBTA services are implemented.

**F. Oglesby** stated it would mimic the fixed-route system for the area within the 3/4 mile corridor.

**C. Ravalli** asked if she would be charged a fare to go and review THE RIDE vehicles on February 27<sup>th</sup>

**M. Hulak** answered that trips to and from the event being held at VTS would be waived as T business for anyone interested in participating.

**A. Manerson** asked what time THE RIDE has their last pickup.

**F. Oglesby** stated that service generally stops at 1 AM.

**M. Hulak** stated people could be picked up at 12:30 AM.

**J. Bradshaw** asked about THE RIDE's cancellation policy.

**F. Oglesby** stated there has not been a decision regarding changes to the cancellation policy. He noted that THE RIDE asks that cancellations be made at least an hour before the scheduled trip. He added that this policy is for chronic offenders, and very few passengers will be affected by this.

**Chairman White** noted that there is a provision in the ADA that protects passengers from penalty if they cancel a trip due to medical issues.

**Chairman White** thanked Mr. Oglesby for his report.

## Vendor Reports

## *National Express and the Joint Venture of Thompson Transit and YCN Transportation (JV)*

**Victor Herrera, General Manager**, distributed his report and announced Passenger Assistance Trainings (PAT) on March 5 & 6. He congratulated Laura Brelsford on her recent promotion as the new Assistant General Manager for System-Wide Accessibility and to the Kelois Commuter Rail Services on the new contract.

He then asked for questions.

**Chairman White** asked if there has been an increase in ridership since THE RIDE fare reduction.

**V. Herrera** stated there has been an increase, though it may be due to improving weather. He noted that they expect an increase.

**A. Armand** stated that she experienced difficulty with a driver and the order in which he dropped off passengers.

**V. Herrera** stated that if a situation like this arises, the consumer should speak to the driver so they can contact dispatch. He recommends that a complaint be sent in these situations.

**Chairman White** thanked Mr. Herrera for his report.

## *Veterans Transportation (VT)*

**Kevin MacDonald, Project Manager**, distributed his report and announced trainings for the month of March.

He then asked for questions.

**D. Sisco** stated that she cancelled THE RIDE due to snow, but the vehicle still arrived the next day. She asked if this would be considered a no-show.

**K. MacDonald** stated it would be recorded as a no-show, but as it's reconciled later, they would go back and make it a cancellation. He noted that the No-Show/Cancellation Policy should not frighten people; the average person who has a few cancellations per year will not be punished.

**Chairman White** asked if VT has seen an increase in ridership since the fare was reduced.

**K. MacDonald** stated there have been a handful of days that may have had to do with the weather, but he expects an increase.

**Chairman White** stated that VT is hosting a public inspection on February 27 to look at sedans that may be purchased by the MBTA and determine which best suits the MBTA's needs.

**N. Stenstrom** asked if drivers are required to use GPS.

**K. MacDonald** stated they have GPS, but may or may not use it depending on how familiar the driver is with the route.

**Chairman White** thanked Mr. MacDonald for his report.

## *Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)*

**Jacquelyn Reynolds, MBTA Contract Relationship Manager**, distributed her report and had no further updates.

She then asked for questions.

There were no questions.

**Chairman White** thanked Ms. Reynolds for her report.

## **Open Discussion & Announcements**

**Chairman White** stated the AACT Board of Directors saw a presentation on the Government Center Station Reconstruction Project, and copies of their material will be made available to the general membership. He stated that the MBTA will report to AACT when the project approaches 40% and 60% completion, and he will make sure this happens during the membership meeting.

**K. Piccard** stated that text and images should be posted near shuttle bus locations to show how the renovated station will look.

**L. Brelsford** stated there will be information posted around the construction site, and she will check to see if there will be information near shuttle bus locations. She added that some of the shuttle bus locations will be at existing bus stops.



**N. Stenstrom** asked about the accessibility of Wollaston Station.

**L. Brelsford** stated that it is not currently feasible to install an elevator in the station due to water run-off into the station. The MBTA has put forward the beginning of a design package to address the drainage issues of Wollaston Station; as part of that project, they will begin the design of redundant elevators.

**J. Bradshaw** stated that the Route 39 bus stop for Brigham Circle has been moved and the new stop is blocked by snow.

**L. Brelsford** stated that for snow and ice removal, individuals should call 617-222-3200 and let them know they have a disability; the snow removal request will get flagged as a priority. The phone line is answered from roughly 6:30 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and on limited hours on weekends. Individuals can also email [snowandice@mbta.com](mailto:snowandice@mbta.com).

**S. Edelson** stated that he feels THE RIDE has certain chronic problems, and he would like to offer his assistance.

**Chairman White** commented that for personal complaints consumers should contact the Office for Transportation Access (OTA) or THE RIDE vendor. He noted that he reviews all complaints monthly that are forwarded from OTA.

Meeting adjourned at 3:05PM.