

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

*10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, MA. 02116-3968
Voice: 617-973-7100, Fax: 617-973-8855, TDD: 617-
973-7089, E-mail: AACT@ctps.org*

Membership Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 23, 2014

Board of Directors:

Chairman - James F. White

Vice Chairman - Rick E. Morin

Executive Board

Mary Ann Murray

Ian Perrault

Beverly Ann Rock

Lisa Weber

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; 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 (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.

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.

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/.

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

Reading of the Agenda

Introductions

AACT Member Attendees:

James White, Ian Perrault, Lisa Weber, Beverly Ann Rock, Richard Mahoney, Kathryn Piccard, Stan Edelson, Audrey Armand, Nancy Miller, Angela Manerson, Reggie Clark, Linda Shepard Salzer, Ways2Go Travel Trainer; Theadora Fisher, Human Services Transportation; Theresa Casey, Mass. Rehabilitation Commission; Sharon Harrison, Mass. Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing; Robert Dias, Mass. Office on Disability

Interested Parties:

Also Dennis Walsh, Illeana Hayes, Louis J. English, Arthur Kovas; John Lozada, MassDOT; and B.J. Finnell, Keolis Commuter Services

MBTA Staff:

Michael Lambert, Frank Oglesby, Larry Haile, Carol Joyce-Harrington,
William J. Grant

Vendor Staff:

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

MPO Staff:

Janie Guion and Matt Archer

Chairman White acknowledged and welcomed long time member Lillian Haynes wife of the late Ben Haynes, who helped pioneer AACT. She was given a round of applause for returning after a two-year absence.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman White requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes for February 26 and March 26, 2013. Ms. Piccard made the motion; the motion carried with one abstention.

Chairman's Report

The Chair stated the following:

- He discussed his participation in the recommendation of the new procurement of the new THE RIDE contracts. He read a letter of support from the AACT Executive Board of Directors addressed to the MassDOT Board of Directors. This letter was part of the April mailing package.
- He received a number emails stating that the Boston Police were issuing citations to THE RIDE vans in Downtown Crossing from the pedestrian section of Washington Street to Winter Street. He made a number of calls regarding this. OTA had been working on the situation as well, and by Friday, new orders were issued to Boston police in District A1. Citations should not be given to THE RIDE vehicles and that MBTA RIDE vehicles are allowed to drop off and pick up in that area without ticketing.
- He reminded users of the importance of updating their profiles with the OTA when there is an address change, telephone number, or a mobility device or other changes.

Michael J. Lambert, Deputy Administrator and Assistant to the General Manager, MassDOT Rail and Transit/MBTA gave a brief update on THE RIDE

procurement and commented on the procurement committee's three goals: (1) to sustain the current high levels for customer service and safety, and satisfaction; (2) to contain cost; and (3) to create a foundation for a new business model for a future centralized call center

He stated the following regarding THE RIDE Contract Selection:

- Contracts have been awarded to Veterans Transportation, Greater Lynn Senior Services, and National Express. The contracts are for five years, with an additional two-year option at the MBTA's discretion. He noted that AACT played a pivotal role in THE RIDE Selection process.
- THE RIDE may centralize all vendor dispatch and call service areas in the next three to four years, which would allow customers to get the best source of transportation. This would be run by a fourth vendor.
- Starting July 1, 2014, the core service area will include Brookline, Cambridge, and Somerville. This will allow for fewer transfers and greater choice. Chelsea will be serviced by north and west, and Burlington will be serviced directly from the north.

D. Walsh asked about the automation of THE RIDE phone systems. *Mr. Lambert* stated that the MBTA oversees the phone systems, and ensures that wait times and dropped calls maintain a good ratio on THE RIDE phone systems. He noted that phone systems need to have some level of automation in order to reduce wait times.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Lambert for his report.

MBTA Reports

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

Frank Oglesby, Deputy Director, submitted the OTA reports and stated the following:

- The new procedure for adding funds to THE RIDE accounts is as follows:

A customer calls to add funds or request a refund; the consumer must provide their full credit card/debit card number, card type, and expiration date. He noted the information is no longer stored. This new process complies with PCI (Payment Card Industry) regulations.

K. Piccard expressed concern that fixed-route riders are allowed to eat and drink on the vehicles while paratransit riders cannot; rather, they can only eat if they tell the driver or if they have a medical need. She stated that this disparity is inappropriate and should change.

F. Oglesby stated that he will research the issue and follow-up at the next AACT meeting.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Oglesby for his report.

*Deputy Chief Kenneth Green, Night Commander,
MBTA Transit Police*

Deputy Chief Green asked for questions.

R. Clark asked if the transit police are still towing people parked illegally in bus stops. *Deputy Chief Green* stated that they tow when they are made aware of them.

Deputy Chief Green stated that police can access new cameras on busses from their cruisers. He added that he will report back to AACT and inform them whether or not the real-time cameras have recording capabilities.

Chairman White thanked Deputy Chief Green.

Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)

Jacquelyn Reynolds, MBTA Contract Relationship Manager, distributed her report. She then asked for questions.

There were no questions.

Chairman White thanked Ms. Reynolds for her report.

Veterans Transportation (VT)

Kevin MacDonald, Project Manager, distributed his report. He then asked for questions.

K. Piccard asked if it is possible for a vendor to subcontract for another vendor to take a passenger if they do not currently have enough capacity to schedule additional trips. Mr. MacDonald stated that years ago they had subcontracted with another vendor, but there is no optional process for this in recent years RIDE contracts.

D. Walsh stated that the drop-off location had changed for the Esplanade during July 4th, 2013 celebrations, and asked if the guidelines for drop-offs during July 4th have changed. Mr. MacDonald stated that the location changed in 2013 because there was a new leaser of the property. He noted there is an annual discussion on this topic, and the event organizers work with the agencies to reach a decision.

BA Rock asked why there are frequently many scheduled riders on the waiting list. Mr. MacDonald stated if a trip is booked before 5:00PM the day before service, a ride is guaranteed. When scheduling is completed in the evenings, customers begin to make changes to their trips; they then need to wait for available vehicles to accommodate the changed pickup/drop-off times. Ms. Rock asked if cancelling a trip because another mode of transportation becomes available (such as a ride from family) will reflect negatively on the person. Mr. MacDonald stated that it will not, but asked that people keep in mind that this will ultimately inflate the cost of service to the MBTA and it is always requested a cancellation call be made to a customer's contractor as soon as possible.

R. Clark asked when the new No-Show/Late Cancellation Policy will come into effect. Mr. MacDonald stated they are still in discussion.

Chairman White thanked Mr. MacDonald for his report.

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

Victor Herrera, General Manager, distributed his report and informed members that his company will have a name change effective July 1st from Joint Venture to National Express.

In response to questions, Mr. Herrera stated the following:

The company will change its name due to the acquisition of Joint Venture by National Express.

The same personnel will remain after the name change.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Herrera for his report.

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

Larry Haile, SWA Coordinator, distributed his report and added the following.

Individuals can look up real time information about the Red, Orange, and Blue Lines on the MBTA website, under the Rider Tools section.

A. Armand remarked favorably on the new countdown clock at Dudley Station. Mr. Haile stated that in the coming months, they will be installed at other select stations.

Mr. Haile stated the following on the Green Line Extension:

- The Green Line will be extended from Lechmere to Union Square in Somerville, as well as locations in Medford. These stations will be accessible.
- The stations will have new customer assistance areas that the MBTA is experimenting with. One key feature of these areas will be call boxes that are easier to locate, especially for people with visual impairments; there will be detectable warnings on the perimeter of the customer assistance area. If the person who answers the call box hears no answer, MBTA staff is trained to go to that area; this allows for users with hearing impairments to use these call boxes. Additionally, a camera zooms in on the individual who pressed the button, so MBTA staff will be able to go directly to the individual.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Haile for his report.

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

Mr. Finnell stated the following:

- In January, the MBTA awarded the contract to run the Commuter Rail services to Keolis Commuter Service. The incumbent contractor, Massachusetts Bay Commuter Rail,

appealed this decision, which was denied; they then went to court to appeal this, which the judge denied. He noted that MBCR has promised to assist in the transition.

- Keolis will take over the Commuter Rail on July 1. They will take on all 2,000 current employees.

He then asked for questions.

K. Piccard asked if pensions will also transfer. Mr. Finnell stated they will.

R. Clark asked if Keolis has any plans for expansion. Mr. Finnell stated that Keolis will be the operator and will maintain the equipment for the MBTA. One project in the new transportation bill is the extension of South Coast Rail to Fall River and New Bedford, which will take several years; another project in the transportation bill is the South Station expansion. There are some track improvement projects on the Fitchburg line, which will improve speeds between Fitchburg and North Station. Keolis will also work to improve customer service and improve ridership.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Finnell.

Open Discussion and Announcements

D. Walsh asked if MBTA buses are equipped with silent alarms.

Chairman White stated that buses have a silent alert, and drivers can also contact dispatch.

K. Piccard stated that she had previously proposed ideas regarding the No-Show/Late Cancellation Policy to the MBTA. Ms. Harrington stated that they had received her suggestion and have taken everything into consideration. She noted that the No-Show/Late Cancellation Policy is still in draft form, and the MBTA will hopefully be able to present a final version to AACT in June.

D. Walsh stated that he has been hosting a friendship social in June and October at Florian Hall in Dorchester. The location is accessible; the next gathering will be on June 8.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00PM.