

Memorandum for the Record Access Advisory Committee to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (AACT) Membership Minutes

Wednesday, February 28, 2018, Meeting

1:00 PM–3:00 PM (called to order at 1:07 PM), State

Transportation Building, Suite 2150, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

Voice: 857.702.3658; Fax: 617.570.9192; TDD: 617.570.9193;

email: AACT@ctps.org

Board of Directors

Chair—James F. White

Vice Chair—Lisa Weber

Executive Board

James Tozza

Nadine Jones

Mary Ann Murray

Beverly Ann Rock

Reading of the Agenda

Welcome and Introductions

Attendees

Lisa Weber

Lynn Hutchins

Debbie Weathers

Angela Manerson

Bob Hachey

Jim Tozza

David Viera

Nadine Jones

Rev. Ellen Frith

Mary J. Martin

Esther Minar

Dee Whittlesey

Thomas Gilbert

Christine Daniels

Elizabeth Crocker

Kevin Wilson

Beverly A. Rock

Ronda Tepfer

Reggie Clark

MBTA Staff

Carol Joyce-Harrington

Mike Hulak

Rob Sampson

Genevieve Cahill

Troy McHenry

Chief Ken Green

Ben Carrasco

Vendor Staff

Steve Epps

Victor Herrera

Jon Christina

Elizabeth Hickey

Ray Croteau

Thomas Laughlin

Other

Rhoda Gibson

Sharon Harrison

Patricia Mendez

Chair's Report

James White, Chair, on Monday, February 26, 2018, addressed the MBTA Fiscal Management and Control Board (FMCB) in support of the Office for Transportation Access (OTA), about the Uber and Lyft Ride Sharing Program, which has been well received and is seeing increased usage.

In March 2018, OTA Selection Committee will begin work on determining a replacement role for Global Contact Service (GCS) at The RIDE Access Center (TRAC).

Chair White shared his experience with his scheduled pick up by THE RIDE at 10 Park Plaza following the FMCB meeting. He noted the following issues about his experience:

- His pick-up location at 10 Park Plaza entrance was not checked by the driver. Instead of checking at the given location as listed, the driver waited at the Stuart Street entrance.
- THE RIDE driver did not follow standard operating procedure. The driver failed to locate him or contact dispatch for permission to leave a location.
- White contacted the Call Center (CC) to report to dispatch that the driver had not arrived. He also contacted Mike Hunter, dispatch manager, for assistance, who also experienced trouble getting through to the CC. He noted that the wait time was approximately 20 to 30 minutes.
- He asked that this driver's record be investigated for recent customer complaints.

White also shared the following items with the Committee:

- THE RIDE drivers are listing customers as no-shows.
- There have been several complaints regarding drivers leaving pick-up locations without informing dispatch.
- He addressed the vendors to ensure that drivers are aware that this is not permitted.

- MBTA customers were furious with a lack of communication to inform customers of problems during recent chaotic situations.
- He said that customers complained that the lack of communication by MBTA staff in the midst of a crisis is less than desirable.

The Chair opened the floor to questions and discussion.

Meeting Minutes Approval

Chair White asked for a motion to approve the minutes of January 24, 2018, and December 20, 2017. A motion was made and carried unanimously.

Department of System-Wide Accessibility (SWA) Development of the Guide Design to Access (GDA)

Kathryn Quigley, Technical Project Manager for SWA introduced **Thomas Laughlin, BSC Group**, who shared the following information:

- The GDA is an online and print system that will identify clear code requirements, regulations, policies, and best practices to provide access and human centered design in a transit-specific built environment (bus stops, transit stations, and paths that connect stations).
- Best practices will be streamlined, and regulations will be clarified. Many different interpretations of regulations currently

exist. The GDA will be a single source that people can consult and understand what to consider during project design.

- The GDA will be used by a diverse audience, including MBTA personnel, external contractors, municipal employees, MBTA customers, and regional transit authorities.
- BSC Group is leading the project. The Institute for Human Centered Design is working on design content and best practices. Toole Design Group is assisting with the format of the document, including graphics and layout. Michael Baker International is helping to address technical aspects of stations.
- Next steps include interviewing external stakeholders to understand issues that they represent, developing an online sample, and documenting the MBTA's internal approval process.

T. Laughlin and **K. Quigley** opened the floor for questions.

D. Vieira asked which external stakeholders they plan to interview. **K. Quigley** stated that they will interview interested parties who are not MBTA employees, including the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board and Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

N. Martin stated that the design of Government Center precludes her from using the elevator with her mobility device, as it requires a tight turning radius. **K. Quigley** stated that they are determining

what has and hasn't worked in past designs. She noted that the GDA information will be used in future designs.

E. Minar stated that many stations have poor lighting. She requested that the GDA recommend brighter lights. *K. Quigley* stated that lighting has been a frequent topic of discussion and will be included in the GDA. She added that this is a key issue to accessibility.

L. Hutchins asked if the GDA will address proper length of pedestrian walk phases at intersections. *K. Quigley* stated they are primarily focusing on transit, rail, and bus stop locations. There will be some component of sidewalk design. She noted that the MBTA generally has nothing to do with street design.

A consumer stated that bus stops should have enclosures due to winter conditions. *K. Quigley* stated that shelters and benches will be addressed in the GDA.

A. Manerson asked if the GDA will address audio announcements. *K. Quigley* stated that they met with groups that work on digital and audio displays; they will be incorporating their information.

E. Frith stated that MBTA stations need more extensive signage and asked about modifications that are currently being made. *K. Quigley* stated that they are recommending best practices for future designs; there are no projects at this time. She added that the GDA will include signage.

T. Gilbert asked if Fenway Station is included in the GDA. He stated that access to Fenway Station is limited. *K. Quigley* stated that the GDA will make general recommendations, but will not make specific recommendations for each station.

MBTA and Vendor Reports

1. Office for Transportation Access (OTA)–THE RIDE Program

Mike Hulak, Manager of Paratransit Contract Operations, submitted the OTA report and provided the following updates.

- Customers interested in the Uber and Lyft pilot should visit www.paratransitpilot.com.
- Checks and money orders for THE RIDE should be sent to MBTA THE RIDE, PO Box 847091, Boston, MA 02284-7091. Customers should ensure that they include their RIDE number.

M. Hulak opened the floor to questions and discussion.

L. Hutchins asked about the selection process for the new RIDE vans. She noted there is a problem with seating, specifically the fixed seat. *M. Hulak* acknowledged that there have been issues with drivers not allowing customers to sit in that particular seat. The van is designed to accommodate two wheelchairs and provides ample room.

D. Vieira related that a RIDE driver refused to assist him down the stairs during an active snowstorm. He noted that stairs were not cleared of approximately two inches of snow. *M. Hulak* stated that the OTA has advised dispatch and the drivers to not assist passengers down stairs if conditions are unsafe. This policy does not apply to small amounts of snow accumulation; if a driver refuses to assist in this situation, customers should ask them to contact their supervisor.

A. Manerson asked if customers will be listed as a no-show if a driver cannot safely assist them down snow-covered stairs. *M. Hulak* stated they would be listed as a no-show, with permission from the dispatcher. It is the responsibility of the customer to contact TRAC in these situations.

R. Gibson related an incident in which TRAC stated she could not change her drop-off location at 3:00 PM on the day prior to a trip. *M. Hulak* stated that customers may change trip requests until 5:00 PM on the day before a trip. An investigation will be opened.

2. Transit Police Department

**Chief Kenneth Green and Sgt. Benjamin Carrasco,
Community Outreach**

Chief Green introduced **Sgt. Carrasco**, the newest member of Transit Police Community Outreach, who will attend future AACT meetings. *Sgt. Carrasco* stated that prior to making Sergeant, he was the Community Officer for the Forest Hills

station. He will attend AACT meetings as frequently as possible and invited the members to contact him with any issues related to Transit Police.

They opened the floor for questions and discussion.

E. Frith noted that people consistently illegally park in bus stops, using them as loading zones and drop-off and pick-up locations, particularly the Cambridge Routes 71 and 73 bus stops on Bennett Street. *Chief Green* stated they will forward her complaint to the Director of Bus Operations.

A consumer witnessed a cyclist hit a person on the platform at South Station during the morning rush hour. *Sgt. Carrasco* stated that bicycles are not allowed during peak hours, and the behavior described is disorderly conduct. There is normally an officer on duty at South Station. *Chief Green* stated they would speak with the South Station officers. *E. Hickey* noted that some passengers use bicycles as mobility devices, and they are permitted to use them during peak hours. However, no one is permitted to ride their bicycle in the station.

T. Gilbert suggested inviting Representative Provost to an AACT meeting. This experience could support passing legislation that would allow using bus cameras to photograph vehicles parked in bus stops.

3. Department System-Wide Accessibility (SWA) and Fixed Route Services

Rob Sampson, Manager for SWA, provided updates on the following points.

- The Park Street elevator at the corner of Winter and Tremont streets will open on March 5, 2018.
- The Harvard Square elevator located near the newsstand will undergo construction in April 2018.
- He explained that the unannounced stop announcements on the Route 39 buses were due to damaged equipment caused by cold weather.

R. Sampson opened the floor to questions and discussion.

B. Hachey expressed frustration with buses bypassing stops with waiting passengers. *R. Sampson* stated these incidents are egregious. SWA actively investigates these complaints and ensures that garages complete their investigations within the required 30 days.

4. THE RIDE Access Center (TRAC)

Ray Croteau, General Manager, distributed his report and opened the floor to questions and discussion.

R. Tepfer noted that she booked what she thought was a direct trip without a transfer. She had the impression that the opening of TRAC eliminated transfers. *R. Croteau* stated

customers still need to transfer. Although there have been discussions about reducing transfers, the current focus of GCS is improving TRAC.

R. Gibson asked if GCS is still training employees and whether calls were recorded. She expressed that reservationists are frequently rude. *R. Croteau* stated that all calls are recorded, and quality assurance is performed on at least one percent of calls.

D. Weathers has filed complaints and received no responses. *M. Hulak* stated that all complaints filed with OTA are submitted to the appropriate vendor. He noted issues with response time from GCS in prior months, but this has greatly improved. Every complaint receives a response, and OTA will investigate if customers have not received one.

5. Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)

Steve Epps, Director of Transportation, distributed his report and announced the next passenger assistance training (PAT) class would be on Friday, March 9, 2018.

S. Epps opened the floor for questions and discussion.

K. Wilson related an incident in which a driver did not enter the lobby of his pick-up location, and dispatch informed him the driver had left. *S. Epps* stated that the reservationist normally makes notations about pick-up details for drivers, such as approaching doors. If a driver cannot find a customer,

they are required to contact dispatch; dispatch will then contact the customer. He stated he would investigate.

6. National Express Transit (NEXT)

Victor Herrera, General Manager, submitted his report and announced a PAT class on Wednesday, March 7, 2018. He stated that NEXT's new vehicles are now in service.

K. Wilson stated that a RIDE trip in a Crown Victoria was very uncomfortable with three people in the rear. *M. Hulak* stated that if customers feel they cannot be accommodated in a sedan, they should update their profile and be listed as a "van only" status.

B. Hachey stated that he observed three people in the back of a Ford Fusion; in this situation, one of the riders was a personal care attendant (PCA). *M. Hulak* stated that the trip was likely not scheduled to include the PCA. The scheduling software will prevent booking a trip with three people in the back seat of a Ford Fusion.

7. Veterans Transportation (VT)

Jon Christina, Operations Manager, submitted his report and announced a PAT class on Tuesday, March 6, 2018.

J. Christina opened the floor to questions and discussion.

N. Miller stated that the automated calls indicating that their driver is nearby have been directed to her home phone

number despite her request for calls to come to her cell phone. *M. Hulak* advised that she contact OTA to update her profile.

8. Keolis Commuter Services

Elizabeth Hickey, Manager, Diversity, Inclusion, and Title VI, stated the following:

- The Wollaston Station will be closed for approximately two years. Individuals who use this station can board the Commuter Rail at Quincy Center using MBTA fare.
- Permanent mini-high platforms are under construction at Mansfield Station.
- The stairs at the Lowell Station are under construction as part of its Capital Improvement Project. The station will remain accessible during construction.
- There will be weekend busing on the Old Colony line at the end of March.

E. Hickey opened the floor to questions and discussion.

R. Clark stated that the platforms at South Station should have railings. *E. Hickey* thanked him for the suggestion.

Announcements

There were none.

Old Business/New Business

There were none.

Meeting adjourned at 3:02 PM.

Notables

The AACT meeting location is accessible to people with disabilities and is near public transportation. The AACT Executive Board meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month, except when noted, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM (noon). The Membership meeting follows immediately from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

Notices of AACT meetings are posted on the MBTA website at http://www.mbta.com/about_the_mbta/public_meetings/. Visit the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) 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 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 <http://www.mbta.com/accessibility>.

Comments and questions concerning AACT should be directed to Chair James White by contacting the AACT Coordinator, Ms. Janie Guion, at 857.702.3658 (voice); 617.570.9193 (TTY); AACT@ctps.org (email); or c/o CTPS, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, MA 02116 (US mail).

The MBTA has advised AACT that interpreter services will be canceled the Friday before each Wednesday monthly meeting unless you notify, the AACT Coordinator, Janie Guion, by the close of business the Friday before the Wednesday meeting. Contact information at AACT@ctps.org or by leave a voicemail at 857.702.3658.

Upon request 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.

The MPO complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other federal and state nondiscrimination statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. The MPO does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin (including limited English proficiency), religion, creed, gender, ancestry, ethnicity, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran's status (including Vietnam-era veterans), or background. Any person who believes herself/himself or any specific class of persons to have

been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI, ADA, or another nondiscrimination statute or regulation may, herself/himself or via a representative, file a written complaint with the MPO. Complaints filed under federal law (based on race, color, national origin [including limited English proficiency], sex, age, or disability) must be filed no later than 180 calendar days after the date the person believes the discrimination occurred. Complaints filed under Massachusetts General Law (based on race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or ancestry) or Governor's Executive Order 526, section 4 (based on race, color, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, disability, veteran's status [including Vietnam-era veterans], or background) must be filed no later than 300 calendar days after the date 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.