



Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
202-962-6060

MEETING MINUTES: MARCH 7, 2011

Attendees, Review of Agenda and Approval of Minutes

Phil Posner (Vice-Chair), Paul Semelfort, Julius Fleischman, Marilyn Lutter, Susan Holland, Tom Dowling, Debbie Brown, Darrell Drake and Tapan Banerjee were present. Patrick Sheehan (Chairman), McKinley Young, Joyce Callahan, Elliott Lapin, Michael Brownell, Emily Singer and ex-officio members, Sharon Moore and Carolyn Bellamy were absent. Mr. Posner chaired the meeting and informed the committee of several changes to the agenda. The agenda was accepted without any further changes. Mr. Semelfort requested that comments concerning customer issues during the MetroAccess Subcommittee Report be included in the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) minutes. As an alternative, there was discussion about Subcommittee minutes being posted on the WMATA website along with the AAC minutes for viewing. Upon motion to accept the minutes with revision, the minutes were accepted.

Summary of Discussion

Customer Issues

Comments were offered on the fare increase and differences in fares during different parts of the day. Mr. Kent explained that MetroAccess fares are based on the day of the week, the hours of travel and the fastest way of traveling compared with using bus and rail systems. Mr. Kent shared that about 25% of customers pay the \$7 fare, more than 50% are paying the same minimum fare of \$3 that they were paying before the fare increase and the remaining customers pay between \$3 and \$7. The average fare has been about \$4.50 to \$4.75 which is lower than the originally anticipated \$5. Mr. Posner stated the current AAC recommended a lower fixed fare which Metro staff supported but the Board of Directors had to make their decision based on Metro's financial situation. It was discussed that Carol Kissal, Metro's Financial Officer will provide financial information to the AAC in April.

Comments were received on shared ride scheduling, on courtesy of call center operators and dispatch of equipment. Mr. Kent explained that MetroAccess automated computer system follows specific scheduling criteria to prevent customers from arriving late to their destinations and that Metro staff and call center operators review each driver's schedule to make sure trips can be completed timely. However, although

MetroAccess on-time performance is 92%, scheduled trips can be delayed by traffic conditions or other unforeseen problems. Mr. Kent stated that courtesy is a Metro requirement and calls to the call center are recorded and the conversations between customers and personnel can be found and replayed. Employees found to display rude behavior will be addressed. Mr. Kent apologized to a customer who was mistakenly dispatched a non-lift equipped vehicle.

MetroAccess Subcommittee

Mr. Semelfort discussed continuing work on MetroAccess on-time performance, the length of trips and safety. Pavel Lesho was introduced as the new MetroAccess call center director. He gave a brief description of his role and the role and number of street supervisors and service updates relating to the fare increase, customer readiness, the ID policy and the new MetroAccess Customer Handbook. Mr. Leroy Hayford gave a statistical report about MetroAccess service and shared that Selene Dalton-Kumins, Director, MetroAccess, has accepted a position as Deputy Director in the Office of Civil Rights with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Mr. Kent shared that she was the first person with a disability to be appointed to serve as Director of MetroAccess and that her nearly four-year tenure was marked by many accomplishments. Ms. Dalton-Kumins thanked the committee for their hard work and leadership over the years while she worked at Metro.

Metro is Accessible Subcommittee

This subcommittee has met bimonthly in recent years and has been focused on the establishment and expansion of Metro's travel training program. Changes in the meeting schedule and subcommittee mission to provide broader review of Metro's fixed route services and facilities are underway. The new focus will be heavy emphasis on the promotion of the use of all of Metro's fixed-route services by customers with disabilities. More detail on this expanding subcommittee will be provided in future reports. The subcommittee may be renamed to "Bus & Rail Accessibility Subcommittee."

Working Group: Shared Responsibility of MetroAccess Applicants and Riders

Frank Roth, Director of Eligibility Certification, advised that as some MetroAccess applicants require assistance when using our paratransit service and even when visiting Metro's eligibility office, Metro staff have been working to develop a policy that ensures the applicant or customer is utilizing Metro services with the consent of a responsible

party and that an escort is provided when needed. An earlier policy requiring either power of attorney or proof of guardianship has been revoked at the request of numerous social service organizations. This working group is being established to develop a policy in partnership with these organizations. The group will be made up of 10 volunteers from the community and the AAC, and will be facilitated by Metro staff. The group's first meeting is being scheduled for mid-April.

Committee Member Orientation - Membership & Bylaws

Mr. Kent introduced the Board Secretary, Loyda Sequiera-Castillo and John Pasek, also from the Board Secretary's office, who will serve as staff support to both the AAC and the Riders' Advisory Council. Ms. Sequiera-Castillo described her role as Board Secretary. Mr. Kent shared that he and the directors from the Office of MetroAccess, Office of Eligibility Certification and the Office of ADA Programs will provide support during the monthly AAC meetings. Ms. Sequiera-Castillo and Mr. Kent discussed procedure and the roles and responsibilities of committee members as described in the Bylaws and shared that the roles of the AAC officers and manner of communications with the Board will be described in greater detail in the April AAC meeting.

Mr. Posner asked what would be the most efficient way of providing the AAC executive summary to the Board of Directors. Ms. Sequiera-Castillo described a concise, written monthly report that summarizes all key issues from the AAC and its subcommittees in one document. Mr. Kent stated that the RAC chairman attends the Board meeting and delivers the report directly to the Board. Mr. Kent also referred to Board Chairwoman, Ms. Catherine Hudgins' statement at the January AAC meeting, advising the committee that the Board acts on specific recommendations rather than have a working session at the monthly Board meeting. Mr. Posner stated that the AAC will include in these brief reports the most important customer concerns that can be worked on by the AAC and Metro staff and forwarded to the Board upon completion.

Discussion was held on the two types of items on the AAC agenda: Action items and information items. Action items are recommendations made by majority vote, whereas, information items do not require any action by the AAC. The AAC is required to take a formal vote on Action Items and do one of the following: a) accept the recommendation; b) continue the item and require further information or discussion; c) escalate the item to the Metro Board of Directors' attention through the Metro General Manager and Chief Executive Officer; or d) take no action.

Mr. Kent informed the AAC that the new Bylaws governing their committee can be discussed if they feel changes or clarifications should be made. He gave a presentation that included the following topics and highlights: Mission Statement; Goals; Responsibilities; Terms, Resignations and Vacancies. Discussion of developing a Work Plan for the AAC was held.

Discussion was held on accessible formats, changes in meeting schedules to weather other emergencies and special meetings called by the AAC chairman, AAC information that is posted on Metro's internet website and invitation of other groups to AAC meetings. Mr. Kent stated that the Transportation Planning Board's, Access for All Committee can nominate four people for two seats on the AAC, subject to Metro Board approval.

Discussion was held on how public comments, complaints, etc received by Metro are handled and if webcasts of the Board and subcommittee meetings be closed captioned. Staff will research and respond to these items.

Status of Recommendations and Actions

Action #	Issue	Mtg Date	Status
I-2011-01	Fare collection research	3/7/2011	Staff to report back on 4/4/2011
I-2011-02	CFO Budget Update	3/7/2011	CFO to attend 4/4/2011 meeting
I-2011-03	Launch ELIG safety working group	3/7/2011	First meeting scheduled for April
I-2011-04	SECT/AAC Training	3/7/2011	Continuing to 4/4/2011 meeting
I-2011-05	Revised procedure for publishing minutes	3/7/2011	Staff will implement immediately
I-2011-06	Research closed captioning of Board meetings	3/7/2011	Staff to research

Meeting adjourned: 7:30pm