



Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
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METROACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: May 15, 2017

In attendance: Mr. Paul Semelfort (Chair), Ms. Denise Rush (Vice-Chair), Ms. Carolyn Bellamy, Dr. Philip Posner, Dr. Tapan Banerjee, Mr. Elver Ariza-Silva, Mr. Charles Crawford, Mr. Edward McEntee, Ms. Philippa Mezile, Mr. Patrick Sheehan

Call to Order

Mr. Semelfort called the MetroAccess Subcommittee (MAS) meeting to order at 4:03pm.

Review of April 2017 Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved.

Review of May 2017 Agenda

Mr. Semelfort requested to move the Ranger/GPS Mapping presentation to the June meeting in order to discuss the upcoming MetroAccess Service Delivery Pre-Proposal Conference. The agenda was approved as amended.

Customer Service and Outreach Report

Mr. Carlton Brown, Quality Assurance Administrative Services Manager, MTM, reported all public comments from the previous meetings were investigated, addressed with the appropriate service providers, and communicated to the customers.

Ms. Janice Fitzhugh, Service Monitor, MetroAccess, reported that she and Mr. David Shaffer, Access Policy Officer and ADA Ombudsman, attended the Maryland Resource Fair at Thomas Johnson High School in Bethesda, MD on April 22, 2017. They provided over 200 attendees with information regarding MetroAccess service and travel training. Additionally, on April 29, 2017, MetroAccess provided a vehicle for students at the Shaare Torah Early Childhood Center in Gaithersburg, MD during their Truck Day event.

Ms. Rush presented the "African Queen Award" to Ms. Carolyn Bellamy, committee member of the Accessibility Advisory Committee. Ms. Rush stated Ms. Bellamy has been incredibly dedicated to the committee, despite her health concerns, and she remains an advocate for the citizens of her community.

Michael Wilson Award Presentation

Mr. Robbie Werth, Project Manager, Diamond Transportation, recognized operator Chris Thomas as the Michael Wilson Award recipient. Mr. Werth provided a summary of Mr.

Thomas's statistical performance, accomplishments, and key contributions to MetroAccess Service.

MetroAccess Service Delivery Pre-Proposal Conference

Mr. Semelfort stated the committee received an email invitation to the Service Delivery Pre-Proposal Conference scheduled for Wednesday, May 17, 2017, but it was not sent in a timely manner. The committee would have only two days to ensure their availability and to schedule transportation to the conference. Mr. Semelfort also inquired how the information was disseminated to the public.

Mr. Christian Kent, Assistant General Manager, Access Services, stated this meeting was a Service Delivery Pre-Proposal Conference for the solicitation of additional MetroAccess Service providers, and the invitation to this event was extended to those companies interested in providing the service. This is a WMATA Procurement activity, and those companies on the bidders' list were notified of the conference to get information on the bidding process. In the past, the practice has been to include the AAC Chair in this activity.

Mr. Kent noted that the scope of work is the same as previous solicitations where the committee had already commented. The current contract has an option to extend an additional five years. However, using the lessons learned from the first five years of the contract gives WMATA staff and the contractors the opportunity to reevaluate the current state of the service.

Mr. Kent stated he regrets the invitation was not extended to the committee earlier, but WMATA's focus was centered on preparing the Request for Proposal (RFP) document for submission.

Dr. Posner asked if there will be differences in the RFP due to the knowledge gained from the first four years of the contract, and he requested the committee be informed on those changes. He stated during the last RFP, WMATA staff spent time with the AAC committee listening to their feedback and concerns on the new business model. This time the committee was not given that same consideration.

Mr. Kent stated the changes in the RFP are predominantly financial, legal, and administrative. This is a chance for the contractors to submit new pricing for the service, as opposed to the five-year pricing they submitted before starting the contract. These changes and updates are not customer-facing concerns, and there will not be a change to the customer guide.

Dr. Posner stated the financial changes could increase the cost of the service to WMATA, which could in turn cause the cost to increase to the customer. If that was the case, these changes would affect the customer.

Mr. Kent stated this proposal is a way to determine what the market will bear. In the past, MetroAccess has chosen to use the option to extend the current contract, but at this time, putting the contract out for bid would allow for additional companies to increase the competition to leverage better pricing and service.

Mr. Kent stated he is glad to see the committee actively interested in the financial aspects of the service, but the General Manager, the Chief Financial Officer, and Mr. Kent generally discuss these details.

Dr. Posner asked if MetroAccess will continue with the option to extend the contract if better pricing is not secured for the contract during this bidding process.

Mr. Kent stated WMATA will keep the option to extend the contract if the new bids are not favorable. Some of the changes to the contracts were made to assist in the operator resource challenges.

Ms. Rush noted that the short notice was not considerate of the committee's time.

Mr. Kent reiterated the Pre-Proposal Conference is a Procurement activity, and as such, there was little control in the scheduling of the event.

Dr. Banerjee asked if this will be the last meeting regarding the RFP. He inquired if the committee will have the opportunity to discuss the RFP in the June meeting.

Mr. Kent stated this is a pre-proposal conference for companies interested in joining the MetroAccess contract to come to Metro Headquarters and obtain information regarding the service. This is the contractors' opportunity to ask questions of the Procurement staff about the service and the contract. The Procurement team will record the proceedings of the meeting and publish the results to the public. WMATA will make a decision in August 2017, and the new companies will begin operating service in October 2017, at the earliest.

Ms. Rush stated the committee is interested in hearing the questions from the companies, but it is difficult to make arrangements in less than two days.

Mr. Kent reiterated the proceedings of the Pre-Proposal Conference will be available to the public after the conference is concluded. He apologized for the late notice of the event, but assured the committee they are an integral part of the process for MetroAccess service advancements, since the committee reports directly to the Board.

A comment from the audience inquired whether all current contractors are required to bid on the contract, and when the Committee Chair was notified of the conference.

Mr. Kent stated all incumbent companies should participate in bidding on the contract if they are interested in remaining as MetroAccess service contractors. The Committee Chair was given the same information regarding the conference as the rest of the committee.

A comment from the audience inquired whether the Committee Chair was aware of the plans the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) had to remove MetroAccess service from contractors and run directly by WMATA employees.

Mr. Kent stated he is aware of the ATU's suggestions for resolution of MetroAccess service issues. There are no current plans right now to alter from the current model of using contractors, and any changes would come from the General Manager.

Ms. Bellamy stated the committee is being overlooked when issues regarding MetroAccess are presented. The committee should have received an invitation before the conference invitation went to the public.

Mr. Kent stated Ms. Bellamy is a fantastic advocate for MetroAccess customers. Mr. Kent stated it is his responsibility to work with the committee to ensure the committee is informed. There are many issues the committee is facing in regards to the service, and there was no intention of purposely overlooking the committee in this process.

Presentation of New MetroAccess Vehicle

Mr. Donald Scruggs, Assistant Director, Office of MetroAccess Service, introduced Mr. Kevin Tolson, Fleet Maintenance Officer, Office of MetroAccess Service to present the statistics and updates for the new vehicle, Ford Transit.

Mr. Tolson instructed the committee members and the public to join him in front of Metro Headquarters to view the new vehicle. The vehicle features, capacity, and design were discussed by WMATA staff.

Public Comments

Comments received were about safety while riding the lift; getting off the vehicle on the correct side of the street; mobility device eligibility; and wheelchair securement with Transport DC.

For detailed descriptions and resolutions of public comments made during the meeting, please refer to the May 2017/AAC MAS May Meeting located at <https://www.wmata.com/about/accessibility-advisory-committee/subcommittee.cfm>.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05pm.

