



## Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

### **Meeting Minutes: August 6, 2012**

#### **Attendees, Review of Agenda, and Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Patrick Sheehan called the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Present: Patrick Sheehan (Chair), Dr. Phil Posner (Vice-Chair), Elver Ariza-Silva, Carolyn Bellamy, Debbie Brown, G. Robert Brown, Darrell Drake, Chanelle Houston, Marilyn Lutter, Regina Lee, Brian Miller, Doris Ray, Denise Rush, Paul Semelfort, and Dr. William Staderman.

Not present: Georges Aguehounde Dr. Tapan Banerjee, Jessica Hunt, Susan Holland, Emily Singer Lucio, and Mary Jane Owen.

The August 6, 2012 agenda and the July 2, 2012 minutes were approved. The Chairman's report to the Metro Board dated August 6, 2012 was approved as amended.

#### **Public Comments**

In response to a comment about the timetable to return out-of-service elevators at the Bethesda and Silver Spring Metrorail stations back into operating condition, staff reported that they will investigate and provide feedback. A comment was made about the process to transfer funds from a reduce fare paper card to a SmartTrip card. Staff reported that they will investigate and provide feedback. In a follow-up to comments made at the June 2012 meeting about MetroAccess drivers who have difficulty finding certain buildings on college campuses and a request for a written response, Dan O'Reilly, Director, MetroAccess, reported that MV has addressed the matter and will provide feedback in writing to the customer.

#### **Partnerships**

In a follow-up to comments made at the MetroAccess Town Hall meetings and Focus Groups about the quality of customer service and sensitivity, MV Transportation has collaborated with the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind (CLB) to increase the number of people with disabilities employed in their call center. Through its various programs and services CLB helps people in the Greater Washington region who are blind or visually impaired overcome the challenges of vision loss. Morgan Ortagus, Director, Business Development, MV Transportation, reported that MV is participating in CLB's "Bridge to Work" program. The "Bridge to Work" Program provides training and employment opportunities for blind, visually impaired, and returning disabled veterans. The AAC expressed an interest in the hiring of people with other disabilities. Ms. Ortagus reported that MV already employs a cross-section of individuals with disabilities in the call-center. MV

has invested in new technology and upgrades aimed at improving the workforce, and will hire approximately 20 qualified individuals who are blind, visually impaired or disabled veterans in the call center through this program.

### **MetroAccess Fare Calculator**

Mr. O'Reilly provided an update on the MetroAccess Fare Calculator. He indicated that some of the AAC's recommendations have been implemented, and that the fare calculator software is being customized with to work with Trapeze. In addition to its 508 compliance, the software will have a free-form address feature. This feature will allow customers to use any street address and the software will recognize the information and automatically complete the address adding the city, state and zip code. Mr. O'Reilly reported that this feature is designed to save customers a few extra steps in the process and will be available with the fare calculator. In response to a question about address errors with the free-form address feature, Mr. O'Reilly reported that the software was tested in a simulated environment, and additional issues were identified that are being corrected.

The AAC expressed an interest in the performance capacity of the system. Mr. O'Reilly reported that the challenges with the system were within the program and not in resources or the server itself. Many of the computer problems that delayed the fare calculator have been resolved. The AAC expressed an interest in the software's compatibility with screen reader software used by some individuals with visual disabilities. Mr. O'Reilly stated that the fare calculator software is compatible with some screen reader software such as JAWS. The AAC also expressed an interest in how fares are determined. Mr. O'Reilly stated that fares are calculated on requested time. When using the system, customers will be able to select the lowest possible fare even if the actual scheduled time eventually reserved, within a 30-minute window, is different. This includes both reservations made on the trip-booking module or through a MetroAccess reservationist. In the second phase, MetroAccess will explore the options to make the software available to reservation agents. Additionally, the AAC expressed an interest in customer outreach. Mr. O'Reilly reported that an outreach campaign will include fact sheets, information on the Interactive Voice Response system (IVR), and other outreach activities to spread the word about the system.

### **AAC Administrative Process**

The AAC held its biennial elections, and re-elected Mr. Patrick Sheehan and Dr. Phil Posner to the positions of Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively. The Committee also elected Dr. Tapan Banerjee as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chair. The AAC will appoint Dr. Banerjee's replacement as MetroAccess Subcommittee Vice-Chair at the September 2012 meeting.

### **Bus/Rail Subcommittee Report**

The Subcommittee discussed increasing the use of SmartTrip cards among customers who do not have bank accounts. Metro is working on a SmartTrip auto-load feature to enable customers to replenish cards automatically. Human Service providers around the region will be solicited to assist customers with intellectual and other disabilities on the use and benefits of the SmartTrip card. SmartTrip cards can be loaded at some Giant Food Stores and some CVS Pharmacy locations.

The BRS Station Lighting Work Group held its second meeting on June 27, 2012 and discussed the process for replacing lighting in Metro's elevators and escalators. Metro's Office of Systems Maintenance provided an update on lighting repairs in the Metrorail system. Marilyn Lutter, Chair, BRS Station Lighting Work Group, stated that improving lighting in the Metro system is complex and a long-term project that will require a consistent level funding for improvement. The BRS Station Lighting Work Group will continue to identify areas and stations where lighting can be improved in the system.

### **MetroAccess Subcommittee Report**

The Subcommittee discussed MetroAccess Bus Stop signs with the Office of Bus Planning. MetroAccess signs will be installed at fifty-three Metrorail stations with bus bays. The Customer Service Task Force continued its discussion on Metro's Door-to-Door policy and will provide a full report at the August 2012 meeting. Additionally, the Subcommittee reviewed its work plan, and requested that the presentations on the Metro's new open payment system and the update on Metrorail station accessibility for wheelchair users moved to the Bus and Rail Subcommittee work plan.

**Meeting adjourned:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Attachment: Status of Recommendations and Actions (completed items are reported once in the minutes and then tracked along with all pending recommendations and actions in the AAC Compiled Work Plan)



# Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

## STATUS OF FY 2013 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

Info/Action Item Number	Description	Date Initiated	Originating Group	Status	Completion Date
Action - 2	AAC Appointment	8/6/12	AAC	MetroAccess Subcommittee Vice-Chair	
Info - 5	Rail Service Criteria	9/4/12	AAC	A request for feedback by the October 2012 meeting from Metro's Board. Presentation by Andrea Burnside, Chief Performance Officer	
Info - 6	Membership Reimbursement	8/6/12	AAC	Discussion on reimbursement	
Info -1	MetroAccess Fare Calculator (Update)	7/2/12	AAC	Presentation by Dan O'Reilly on 7/2/12 and 8/6/12. Next update is schedule for 9/4/12 meeting.	

**FY13 COMPLETED STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS**

<b>Info/Action Item Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date Initiated</b>	<b>Originating Group</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>
Action - 1	AAC Officer Elections	7/2/12	AAC	The election results are - Mr. Patrick Sheehan, Chair, Dr. Phil Posner, 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice-Chair, and Dr. Tapan Banerjee was voted as 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chair of the AAC	8/6/12
Info - 4	Community Partnerships (MV Transportation and Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind)	8/6/12	AAC	Presentation by Morgan Ortagus MV Transportation	8/6/12
Info -2	AAC Administrative Process (Update)	7/2/12	AAC	Completed Follow up from 6/4/12 Meeting	7/2/12
Info -3	Customer Surveys (Update) MetroAccess Customer Satisfaction and MetroAccess Knowledge and Usage Study	7/2/12	AAC	Completed Presentation by Alison Simon Follow up from 4/2/12 meeting	7/2/12