



Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

Meeting Minutes: December 5, 2011

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 (Chairman), Phil Posner (Vice-Chair), Paul Semelfort, Debbie Brown, Michelle Clark, Elver Ariza-Silva, Susan Holland, Marilyn Lutter, Georges Aguehoude, Damian Gregory, Darrel Drake, William Staderman, Jessica Hunt, Emily Singer Lucio and Carolyn Bellamy. Not present: David Winsler, Regina Lee, Doris Ray and Brian Hurley. The November 7, 2011 minutes and the Chairman's report to the Metro Board dated December 5, 2011 were approved.

Public Comment

A customer stated that at the October 24, 2011 Town Hall meeting, a comment was made that any increases in paratransit fares should be preceded by additional increases in MetroAccess safety and security measures. Mr. Kent responded that the Town Hall meetings were about changes in the new MetroAccess contract. However, comments about fares were also received, and the AAC is working on developing a MetroAccess fare increase recommendation. A comment was made that Metro's temporary escalator shutdown at DuPont Circle station to search for a missing ring was inappropriate as it interfered with customer use of the escalator. A comment was made that auto-dispatch installations on two-step Metro elevators should be completed. Staff responded that the status of auto dispatch is being evaluated by staff. A customer asked if the new paratransit contract would consist of separate contracts for the call center and van operators. Mr. Kent responded that the new business model reviewed by Metro's Board provides this option.

Status of Action Items from Previous Meetings

At its November 2011 meeting, the MetroAccess Subcommittee recommended that the AAC approve a draft AAC response to the Access for All letter, copying Mrs. Catherine Hudgins, Metro Board Chair.

Fare Discussion - Carol Dillon Kissal

Ms. Kissal summarized her presentation to the Metro Board on December 1, 2011, stating that the discussion was framed by the concepts and guidelines that she previously shared with the AAC. Ms. Kissal stated that she recommended that a projected \$124 million FY 2013 revenue gap be addressed by \$60 million in fare increases and \$64 million through jurisdictional choices on subsidy or service. This would achieve an equitable distribution of costs. Reflecting prior Board guidelines that fares reflect CPI increases (5.7%), this allocation would increase bus fares from \$1.50

to \$1.60. Cash fares on Metrobus would round up to the nearest dollar. Base fares on Metrorail would increase from \$1.95 to \$2.05. To simplify and make rail fares more predictable to customers, Metrorail peak of the peak fares would be reduced or eliminated. To encourage use of parking lots, parking fees would increase by \$0.25 and monthly reserved parking fees would be reduced from \$65 to \$45. A two-zone Metrorail fare system (for paper fare cards only) to encourage use of SmarTrip cards was discussed, but the Board expressed concerns about a dual fare system. This proposal would set inner core rail fares at \$3.00 and outer core rail fares at \$6.00. In support, SmarTrip dispensers would be installed in all stations for customers wishing to purchase SmarTrip cards. Ms. Kissal stated that a Metro fare calculator smart phone application as well as possible terminals in each station are being considered. The AAC commented that, if deployed, this application should be made accessible.

Ms. Kissal advised the AAC that the maximum \$7.00 paratransit fare would remain at \$7.00 but that fare increases underneath the cap would continue to be double the fixed route fare. In response to a question about the equity of the paratransit 8% fare recovery ratio (FRR) and the possibility of a flat paratransit fare, Ms. Kissal stated that 8% is low compared to the FRR for bus and rail, and the Board is not considering a flat fare for paratransit. Ms. Kissal stated that the Board is looking for a synergy between obtaining needed fare revenue and ease of use by customers. Ms. Kissal requested that the AAC discuss and make recommendations to the Board before March when the Board will take further action. In response to a question about the possibility of adding "talking" features to all SmarTrip vendors, Ms. Kissal stated that this was under review. Mr. Kent stated that Metro will make facilities and personnel available to the AAC to continue work in developing a timely fare policy recommendation.

Bus Rail Subcommittee Report

The Subcommittee met with Barbara Milleville, National Capital Citizens with Low Vision (NCCLV) to discuss improvements needed in Metrorail station lighting. The AAC requested that Ms. Milleville work with the AAC to develop a list of specific lighting improvements to be provided to Metro. Ms. Milleville agreed to do so and also agreed to include other partners working on low-vision concerns. Mr. Sheehan reported that he has received comments from low vision organizations that they are encouraged by Metro's positive response to their concerns.

The Subcommittee reviewed the draft Customer Guide to Bus and Rail and requested staff to include Metrorail station elevator locations and a list of useful Metro phone numbers. The Subcommittee also requested that Metro develop an audio version of the Guide. Staff agreed to work on these requests.

Ms. Holland reported that Metro is seeking persons with disabilities to participate in Metro training and requested AAC members to either volunteer or help to identify volunteers to participate. During a one-hour session, these volunteers would

emphasize the importance of providing certain services essential to people with disabilities when using Metrobus and Metrorail.

Ms. Holland shared that future Subcommittee agendas will follow up on improvements to Metro's customer comment process, auto dispatch on elevators, AAC assistance to Metro employee training, and the Metro Customer Guide to Bus and Rail service.

Ms. Holland agreed to add reviewing the possibility of standardizing all Metrorail car interiors to the Subcommittee work plan.

MetroAccess Subcommittee Report

The MetroAccess Subcommittee reviewed a summary report from MV Transportation on customer concerns identified during recent MetroAccess Town Hall meetings. Mr. Semelfort requested that MV provide further details on both problems and corrections at the next Subcommittee meeting. Mr. Semelfort also requested that the Focus Group report be forwarded to the Subcommittee when completed. MV and Mr. Kent agreed to accommodate both requests.

Mr. Semelfort described customer comments received which focused on MV dispatch and scheduling and stated MV is working on corrective actions. Mr. Semelfort also noted that comments were received about MetroAccess fares.

The Subcommittee has completed its initial work on concepts and guidelines for a possible MetroAccess fare increase and will begin work on specific responses. The Fare Policy working group will convene directly after the MetroAccess Subcommittee meeting on December 19, 2011.

Leland Petersen, the MV Project Manager, agreed to provide MV dispatch staff to attend a future meeting of the Subcommittee to directly hear customer concerns about dispatcher performance. Mr. O'Reilly stated that MV dispatch staff is now doing ride-alongs with customers to evaluate dispatch performance and Mr. Kent agreed that a cross section of MV dispatchers will attend an upcoming Subcommittee meeting.

Access for All Letter

After discussion, the AAC approved the letter, recommended by the MetroAccess Subcommittee, from the AAC Chair to Metro's Board Chair.

Paratransit Contract

Mr. Kent discussed the Paratransit Business Model presentation made to the Board on December 1, 2011 and shared that the Metro Board was pleased by customer participation through Town Hall meetings, Focus Groups, and through AAC discussion. Mr. Kent shared that the Metro Board directed staff to ensure that new paratransit

vendors are customer focused. The new contracts will be awarded on a Request for Proposal (RFP) basis. Unlike an Invitation for Bid (IFB), awards made under an RFP consider the quality of service offered as well as price. Mr. Kent requested and it was agreed that the AAC will focus on quality assurance priorities to be reflected in the new business model and that the AAC will discuss and provide recommendations at each future meeting. Mr. Kent stated that Metro will compile these recommendations and provide the current list to the AAC at each meeting. The AAC recommended that the award selection should consider not only the best vendors but should also consider improving communication between vendors. Mr. Kent agreed with this recommendation.

New Business

No new business was discussed.

Meeting adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

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



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STATUS OF FY 2012 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

Info/Action Item Number	Description	Date Initiated	Originating Group	Status	Completion Date
Action -9	Review MetroAccess Fare Policy	5/2/2011	MACS	AAC to develop specific fare policy recommendations through Fare Policy Group.	
Info - 13	New Paratransit Contract.	12/5/2011	MACS	On-going	
Action - 10	Add bus numbers to assist customers with information needed to file complaints on Metrobus.	12/5/2011	BRS	AAC will discuss and approve bus numbers on fare boxes	
Action – 6	Response to the Access For All (AFA) Letter	9/6/11	AAC	The letter to the AFA was approved and sent.	12/5/2011