



Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

Meeting Minutes: February 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 (Chairman), Dr. Phil Posner (Vice-Chair), Regina Lee, William Staderman, Georges Aguehounde, Marilyn Lutter, Tapan Banerjee, Paul Semelfort, Darrell Drake and Carolyn Bellamy. Not present: Debbie Brown, Elver Ariza-Silva, Michelle Clark, Emily Singer Lucio, Damian Gregory, Jessica Hunt, David Winsler, Jessica Hunt, and Brian Hurley. The February 6, 2012 agenda and January 3, 2012 minutes were approved. The Chairman's report to the Metro Board dated February 6, 2012 was approved with corrections.

Public Comments

In response to a question about MetroAccess policy for inclement weather and Federal Government delays, staff reported that same-day service changes as a result of inclement weather or a delayed opening or closing of the Federal Government is not available. The cancellation of MetroAccess trips in inclement weather and Federal Government delays are reviewed on an individualized basis. A comment was made about a section on the proposed FY13 public hearing docket about MetroAccess fares. Dr. Posner reported that the information on MetroAccess fare changes is listed on the docket, and customers can make comments at the upcoming public hearings. A comment was also made about the option to call-in comments for the upcoming public hearings. Staff reported that they will follow up on this request.

Status of Action Items from Previous Meetings

Ms. Carol Dillon Kissal Deputy General Manager/Chief Financial Officer, provided an update on Metro's Fare Policy. She indicated that there is no proposed change to the pricing calculation for MetroAccess. Fares are based on twice the equivalent of the fixed route system's fastest trip, and any adjustments will be related to the increase of the Metrobus and Metrorail fares. Ms. Kissal stated that the proposed MetroAccess fare increase of 5.7% is consistent with the proposed increase for the fixed route system (based on the consumer price index) and will increase the maximum fare for MetroAccess by forty cents.

Based upon the AAC recommendations an analysis was conducted on the paratransit fare models. The analysis evaluated the AAC recommendations in contrast to data on MetroAccess of trips over a six-month period. Mr. Kent reported that the results indicated that certain trips would be more than twice the fixed route fare and

potentially reduce annual paratransit revenue. Ms. Kissal reported that information from the analysis along with the recommendations by the AAC will be shared with Metro's Board of Directors.

To address the issue of the predictability of MetroAccess fares, Ms. Kissal reported that an application is in development to assist customers with determining fares. The AAC expressed a concern over the availability of technology in the disability and older adult community. Mr. Kent stated that MetroAccess reservationists will continue to provide customers with the cost of the fare prior to booking a trip.

Ms. Kissal reported that any increase requires the proposal of fares to be placed on the public hearing docket of Metro's Board. Town Hall Meetings and Public Hearings to address fares are scheduled for late February to early March of 2012. Public comments can be made in person, via the internet, and by telephone. Additionally, a survey will be available for customers to provide feedback on issues on the docket. The AAC expressed an interest in use of the telephone as a mechanism for obtaining feedback from customers who are unable to attend the hearings. Staff will follow up and provide feedback on the option of customer being able to provide remarks by telephone.

The AAC thanked Ms. Kissal and the Department of Access Service, Office of ADA Policy and Planning for their assistance to the Committee and the disability community in their work with MetroAccess fares policy. The Fare Policy Work Group will continue its work to develop a MetroAccess fare policy recommendation that is also revenue neutral or at least "revenue reasonable."

Bus/Rail Subcommittee Report

Chairman Holland reported that the Subcommittee discussed accessible bus stops in the Metro system. She indicated that there are approximately 12,000 stops in the system. Many of the bus stops located in each of the jurisdictions are inaccessible. These stops are older stops that lack the following: no pedestrian pads or too narrow of a pedestrian pad; news box obstructions; gap between pad, curb or sidewalk; and or parking is allowed at the stop.

The Subcommittee also discussed the Bus Stop Enhancement program. The Bus Stop Enhancement Program is designed to upgrade bus stop and will consist of Braille signage, new flags, and new bus stop information boxes for schedules. Another program, the New Freedom Grant, will provide funds to improve accessibility at approximately 150 bus stops in the Metro System. The enhancements will begin in locations where ease of access can improve service for all customers, and eliminate the need for paratransit service for many MetroAccess customers.

The Station Lighting Workgroup will hold its first meeting on February 13, 2012 with the National Capital Citizens with Low Vision (NCCLV), other disability advocacy organizations and staff. The work group will be chaired by Marilyn Lutter.

MetroAccess Subcommittee Report

Chairman Semelfort reported that the MetroAccess Subcommittee meeting was rescheduled for a special meeting of the AAC to discuss the proposed FY13 Metro budget and possible MetroAccess fare increase.

Mr. Semelfort also reported that Mr. Raj Srinath, WMATA Treasurer, provided an update on MetroAccess Fare Media Exchange. He indicated that the policy to phase out fare media was a cost-saving measure. Mr. Srinath agreed to offer another opportunity for MetroAccess customers to exchange fare cards and tokens. Staff reported that the exchange of fare media will take place on February 23-24, 2012 at Metro's Headquarters, Jackson Graham Building. All exchanges of fare media will be credited to MetroAccess EZ-pay accounts. The Subcommittee expressed an interest in the dissemination of this information to customer. Mr. Millis reported that the communication plan consists of the dissemination of information through the listserv, metro's website, IVR Metro press release and MetroAccess seat drops.

The Subcommittee discussed MV Transportation's report, and its recommendations of customer statements made at the MetroAccess Town Hall Meeting and Focus Groups. Additionally, the Subcommittee expressed an interest in the use and cost of the Inter-County Connector highway in Montgomery County for MetroAccess vehicle. Staff reported that they will follow up and provide feedback. The Subcommittee also discussed MetroAccess customer information materials and policies. An Educational Work Group will be developed to discuss additional ways to inform customers on MetroAccess policies and services. The work group will be chaired by Carolyn Bellamy.

New Business

The AAC expressed an interest in an update on the Request For Proposal (RFP) for the new MetroAccess contract. Mr. Kent reported that staff has begun the process of developing a scope of work for the new paratransit contract. The RFP will be available for bid in spring 2012. Mr. Kent indicated that the AAC will have multiple opportunities to provide feedback on the contract, and the Educational Work Group led by Ms. Bellamy will play a significant role in the development of the new contract.

The AAC expressed an interest in adding some technical requirements to the proposed RFP. Mr. Semelfort reported that the topic will be on the MetroAccess Subcommittee agenda until a new contract is awarded. Mr. Kent stated that staff will keep the Committee and the Subcommittees abreast of any developments in the new paratransit contract.

Chairman Sheehan reported that Patrick Wojahn, Chairman Access For All, Transportation Planning Board, requested a joint meeting with AAC. He indicated the meeting will be an open discussion that may include a discussion on the fare policy. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for the March 2012 meeting.

Meeting adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 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
Info -07	Review MetroAccess Fare Policy	5/2/2011	MACS	In light of the impact of the proposed fare adjustments on the fixed route, the Fare Policy Group will continue its discussion and add Bus/Rail fare policy to its topic and provide the recommendations to the Board report.	
Info -14	Fare Policy Presentation on Metrobus and Metrorail	1/9/12	BRS	Update on Fare Policy by Ms. Carol Dillon Kissal, DGMA/CFO	2/6/12
Info -15	Joint meeting with Access For All (TPB)	2/6/12	AAC	Scheduled for March 5,2012	