



Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

Meeting Minutes: July 2, 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), Paul Semelfort, G. Robert Brown, Marilyn Lutter, Denise Rush, Regina Lee, Mary Jane Owen, Dr. Tapan Banerjee, Doris Ray, and Dr. William Staderman.

Not present: Susan Holland, Debbie Brown, Emily Singer Lucio, Jessica Hunt, Brian Miller, Elver Ariza-Silva, Chanelle Houston, Darrell Drake, Georges Aguehoude, and Carolyn Bellamy.

The July 2, 2012 agenda was approved. The June 4, 2012 meeting minutes were approved. The Chairman's report to the Metro Board dated July 2, 2012 was approved pending corrections.

Public Comments

A comment was made about shuttle service during elevator outages at the Bethesda and Cleveland Park Metrorail stations, and the ability to request shuttle service prior to a customer arriving at a station with an outage. Staff reported that during the June Bus Rail Subcommittee (BRS) meeting, Metro's Office of Bus Operations Control Center (BOCC) indicated that customers can request shuttle service from a Station Manager prior to arriving at the station where there is an elevator outage. The AAC requested that BOCC attend the next meeting for further discussion. Staff will schedule BOCC for the next meeting. In response to a question about inadequate lighting in stations, staff reported that the BRS Station Lighting Work Group is working to address the issue of station lighting. In response to questions about the lack of bumpy tiles at certain stations, Mr. Christian Kent, Assistant General Manager, Department of Access Services, stated that 70 of Metro's 86 stations already have bumpy tiles, and an effort is underway at Metro to have bumpy tiles installed at the remaining stations over the next 3 - 4 years. This topic will also be discussed at the July 9, 2012 BRS meeting. Upon motion, the AAC agreed to further review this topic, and make a recommendation to the Board to provide adequate funding needed to install bumpy tiles at all stations and improve station lighting.

Introductions and Role of the AAC

For the benefit of new members, Mr. Sheehan provided a brief discussion on how the Committee operates: issue research and discussion occur at the subcommittee level, and recommendations are brought to the AAC for vote. Staff reported that further discussion of the Committee will take place at the July 9, 2012 AAC New Member Orientation.

Customer Surveys

Ms. Alison Simon, Director, Customer Research, discussed the MetroAccess Customer Satisfaction and MetroAccess Knowledge and Usage surveys. She stated that a random sample of 400 MetroAccess customers was selected to participate in each study. Customers must have used MetroAccess service at least one time to qualify for either study. Ms. Simon indicated that more than half the customers who took part in the Customer Satisfaction survey indicated that they were satisfied with MetroAccess service and believe that the overall service is improving. This satisfaction with the service was consistent with customer feedback about MetroAccess in past surveys.

The Customer Satisfaction survey pointed out that customers viewed safety in service delivery, safety during trips, driver knowledge and helpfulness as areas of high importance. The survey also demonstrated that customers viewed other services, such as efficiency in routing trips and pick-ups in the promised window, as areas that need improvement. Ms. Simon stated that the challenge areas identified by those surveyed were consistent with past surveys, and those areas continue to be a challenge to the service. The AAC expressed an interest in customer satisfaction with MetroAccess fares. Ms. Simon reported that Metro's fare policy was not a question on the survey. The Committee also expressed an interest in a breakdown of respondents by jurisdiction, disability and travel choices. Ms. Simon reported that she would provide the requested information at subsequent meetings with the subcommittees.

The MetroAccess Knowledge and Usage Study examined the customer's knowledge about the service. Ms. Simon indicated that customer knowledge of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was low. She stated that less than fifteen percent of customer knew that a provision in the ADA determined the maximum fare for service. Ms. Simon reported that customer knowledge was even lower regarding the provisions of the ADA that allowed for 24-hour advanced reservations and an agency's option to suspend customers for excessive no-shows. Paul Semelfort, Chair of the MetroAccess Subcommittee (MAS), added the items to the FY13 MAS work plan, and reported that the Customer Service Task Force Work Group, chaired by Carolyn Bellamy, is working to address these type of issues with MetroAccess customers.

Ms. Simon reported over half of the customers surveyed were knowledgeable of Metro's late pick-up policy, and knew that a customer would receive a trip credit if they were not picked-up within a 30-minute window. Customers were also well aware of the policy prohibiting drivers from speaking with Dispatch while operating a MetroAccess vehicle.

In addition, a high number of customers were aware that they should board within 5 minutes of a vehicle arriving, show their ID, and pay exact fare for service. A large number of customers in the survey were less informed about the total cost of MetroAccess service. Ms. Simon stated that over half of the customers surveyed believed that a customer's fare covered the total cost of service. Some of the customers surveyed who did not think that a customer's fares covered the total cost of service indicated a belief that the federal government and/or other funding sources covered such costs.

In response to a question about the high number of respondents who indicated they use MetroAccess for medical and dental appointments, Ms. Simon stated that the number represented only the reason for using the service, not the number of trips taken. The AAC expressed an interest in how many respondents indicated using the service for employment. Ms. Simon reported that she would provide the requested information at subsequent meetings with the subcommittees. Additionally, the Committee expressed an interest in customers' knowledge of the lack of alternative transportation options. Ms. Simon indicated that data is still being collected, and information will be available in future meetings. The Committee expressed an interest in establishing a base line of questions for future surveys. Ms. Simon stated that further discussion on how best to incorporate additional questions will be discussed at subsequent meetings. Upon motion, the AAC recommended that both studies be referred to the MAS for further discussion.

AAC Administrative Process

The AAC continued its discussion on the role and structure of the Committee. B. Moore Gwynn, AAC Coordinator, reported that an orientation for new members is scheduled on July 9, 2012 immediately following the BRS meeting. This orientation will familiarize new members with information on how the AAC and its subcommittees operate as well as Metro policy and procedures. Nominating periods for AAC leadership will be open at each meeting in July 2012, and elections for new officers will take place during the August 6, 2012 meeting.

The Committee further discussed its role in MetroAccess Appeals process. Training for all members will be held on September 21, 2012 at Metro's Headquarters in the Lobby Level meeting room. Mr. Kent advised that AAC participation on MetroAccess Appeals panels is an important function in membership. The AAC and subcommittees will continue to develop their work plans for FY2013. The nomination period for the Richard W. Hedding Award will be from July 2nd until July 31th, 2012. All members are encouraged to nominate any person or organization that has excelled in advancing the mission of accessible transportation in the Metro region.

Mr. Kent announced that Metro was selected by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) to receive the 2012 Innovation Award. This award recognizes

excellence in public transportation systems, and will be given to Metro for its work in the eligibility process of paratransit services.

MetroAccess Fare Calculator

Mr. Dan O'Reilly, Director, MetroAccess, provided an update on the MetroAccess Fare Calculator and indicated that the tool is available on-line in beta format. He stated that customers can shop for the cheapest MetroAccess fare on-line during a 30-minute window by using the date, pick-up time, and pick-up location. Calculations are displayed in one-minute increments within a 30-minute window. The MetroAccess Fare Calculator will demonstrate a wide array of fares before and after the requested time. The AAC commended staff for the first phase of the MetroAccess Fare Calculator.

The AAC expressed an interest in the compatibility of the calculator with Trapeze, the scheduling software used in the MetroAccess call center. Mr. O'Reilly stated that customers can schedule trips with reservation agents in one-minute intervals and receive the same fare displayed on the on-line tool. Mr. Kent stated that the tool bar displays a range of times the cheapest fare is available. This feature will allow customers to better pinpoint fares when scheduling trips with reservation agents.

Bus/Rail Subcommittee Report

The BRS reported discussing accessible paths during construction at the Vienna and Dunn Loring Metrorail stations. The BRS recommended a temporary crosswalk at the Dunn Loring station to access a nearby housing complex. Staff reported that the construction fences covered the entire area, and customers should use the crosswalks along the accessible path for safety. The BRS also discussed Metro's response to elevator outages at Metrorail stations, commended Train Operators for making announcements for long-term elevator outages, and recommended that Bus Operators do the same. Additionally, the BRS received an update on Rush Plus, and applauded Metro for its enhancements to the service and its outreach efforts to the ridership.

MetroAccess Subcommittee Report

The MAS received an update on the Request For Proposal (RFP) for the new MetroAccess contract. The RFP was released on June 1, 2012, a pre-proposal conference was conducted on June 12, 2012, and a contract will be awarded in at the end of the 2012 calendar year. The MAS also discussed the MV1, Metro's new paratransit vehicle, and commended staff for introducing a potentially more comfortable new vehicle.

Meeting adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 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)



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STATUS OF FY 2013 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

Info/Action Item Number	Description	Date Initiated	Originating Group	Status	Completion Date
Action - 1	AAC Officer Elections	7/2/12	AAC		
Info -1	MetroAccess Fare Calculator (Update)	7/2/12	AAC	Presentation by Dan O'Reilly on 7/2/12.	
Info -4	Community Partnerships (MV Transportation and Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind)	8/6/12	AAC	Presentation by Morgan Ortagus MV Transportation	
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