



Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

Meeting Minutes: October 1, 2012

Attendees, Review of Agenda, and Approval of Minutes

Vice-Chairman Dr. Phil Posner called the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Present: Dr. Phil Posner (Vice-Chair), Dr. Tapan Banerjee (2nd Vice-Chair), Elver Ariza-Silva, Carolyn Bellamy, Debbie Brown, G. Robert Brown, Darrell Drake, Chanelle Houston, Regina Lee, Marilyn Lutter, Brian Miller, Doris Ray, Denise Rush, Paul Semelfort and Dr. William Staderman.

Not Present: Georges Aguehoude, Susan Holland, Jessica Hunt, Mary Jane Owen, and Patrick Sheehan (Chair).

The October 1, 2012 agenda was approved. The Chairman's Report to the Metro Board, dated October 1, 2012, was approved as amended. The September 4, 2012 minutes were approved as amended.

Public Comments

There were several comments made about station lighting in the Metrorail system and the need for funding, and that insufficient lighting is a safety issue for all customers, especially those with low vision. Marilyn Lutter, Chair, BRS Station Lighting Work Group reported that improving lighting in the system is a long-term initiative that will require a consistent level funding for improvement. She added that she did not concur with the suggestion that the Work Group submit a final report and for work directly with ADA on any future findings or suggestions. Ms. Lutter stated that she does not believe that the work of the BRS Station Lighting Work Group is complete, so its meetings should continue. Barbara Millville, President, National Capital Citizens with Low Vision, expressed an interest in providing assistance to prioritize the lighting list for the budget. Staff reported that the Committee has placed the issue of lighting in its recommendation on the FY14 Budget to Metro's Board.

There were two comments made about the load leveling system on railcars. The Rhode Island and Gallery Place Metrorail stations were identified as examples where the height or width differences between the platform and railcars makes it difficult for customer using mobility devices to board the trains. Mr. Blake reported that GAP inspections are a routine aspect of the quality assurance inspections conducted by his staff. He added that he will instruct staff to conduct non-scheduled GAP inspections this week at Rhode Island and Gallery Place Metrorail stations.

An AAC member asked for clarification on the number of stations with bumpy tiles. Mr. Blake stated that there are 65 stations out of 86 with bumpy tiles. He added that during

a previous presentation to the AAC cited the number of platforms within the Metrorail system that have bumpy tiles, 69 platforms out of 90 in the system. A comment was made with concern regarding the color of the bumpy tiles used in the Metrorail system.

Committee Discussion – AAC MetroAccess Travel Cost

The AAC discussed the costs incurred by members attending meetings and other AAC related activities. All members agreed that they serve because they want to make a difference, and that compensation for travel is not the reason for their service. However, as the cost of MetroAccess has increased, having these costs alleviated could maintain or increase the participation of AAC members. The AAC expressed an interest in financial relief for the cost to travel to meetings and other related events. It should be noted that some members were not interested in a travel reimbursement. Upon motion, the AAC recommended that a survey be conducted of members' means of transportation and associated expenses.

Customer Guide

Mr. Blake provided an update on the Customer Guide to Metrobus and Metrorail for People with Disabilities and Senior Citizens. He stated that the Guide is design to assist riders with the use of Metro's fixed route services, and it provides specific information on trip planning, customer rights and responsibilities, personal-care attendants, service animals, and other tips for traveling on Metrobus and Metrorail. The AAC expressed an interest in where the guide will be distributed. Mr. Blake stated that the Guide will be distributed at libraries, hospitals, public schools systems, and university disability offices.

The AAC expressed an interest in the Guide being available in Spanish or other formats. Mr. Blake reported that the document will be made available in accessible formats, on Metro's website, and staff will follow-up on the request to provide the Guide in Spanish. Mr. Blake requested that the AAC review the document and provide any additional recommendations by November 1, 2012. The final document will be available in December 2012.

Work Plan AAC Administrative Process

The AAC discussed Bus Rail Subcommittee (BRS) and MetroAccess Subcommittee (MAS) work plans and applauded the subcommittees for the work they do to enhance the transportation services for Metro riders with disabilities. Upon motion, the AAC approved the work plans of both subcommittees.

Bus/Rail Subcommittee Report

The BRS discussed the MetroAccess Knowledge and Usage Study, which identified the characteristics and usage patterns of conditionally eligible MetroAccess customers. The

term “conditionally” eligible refers to customer whose disabilities prevent them from utilizing fixed route services for most, but not all of their trips. The survey emphasized the need for greater communication and outreach, so that customers can become more familiar with the programs and services such as the Free Ride Program and MetroAccess alerts systems. Additionally, the survey showed that conditionally eligible MetroAccess customers prefer using Metrobus over Metrorail, and they like the convenience of the fixed route system.

The BRS continued its discussion on bus stop accessibility with the Arlington County Division of Transportation and the Montgomery County Division of Transit Services.

The BRS received an update on the update on Metro’s new SmartTrip card dispensers. All of the new SmartTrip card dispensers have been covered until all of the accessibility features have been incorporated. The new dispensers will feature a touch screen display with Braille and raised lettering and audio prompts. There will be a new machine placed in each Metrorail station in the system.

MetroAccess Subcommittee Report

The MAS discussed the MetroAccess Fare Calculator. There have been technical challenges with the system, and as a result, the Fare Calculator is not currently available to the public. Metro’s IT department is working towards a solution. The next step will be to integrate the Fare Calculator with the Trapeze scheduling software, which will allow reservation agents to provide customers with lowest-fare options. Trapeze estimates the software update will be completed by the spring of 2013.

The MAS also discussed the MetroAccess Knowledge and Usage Study. The results demonstrated that a need for communication and outreach on policies and procedures that are the least well known to customers.

New Business

Dr. Posner provided an update on the AAC’s report to Metro’s Board. He stated that his comments to the Board centered on fare policy, the Fare Calculator, and the surcharge for using cash on Metro’s fixed route services. The AAC praised Mr. O’Reilly and his staff for their work on the Fare Calculator, and reminded the Board that the Fare Policy has been in effect for over two years without the Fare Calculator. Dr. Posner said that he reiterated his recommendation that Metro charge twice the bus fare until the Fare Calculator is available for all customers. The Fare Policy Work Group supported this recommendation, and supports more outreach and communication on places where SmartTrip cards can be loaded.

Meeting adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Attachment: Status of Recommendations and Actions: completed items are reported 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
Info - 6	AAC MetroAccess Travel Costs	8/6/12	AAC	Committee supports survey of AAC members, to provide Metro staff with information need for recommendation.	
Info - 7	Customer Guide to Metrobus and Metrorail	10/1/12	BRS	All AAC members will review draft, and provide feedback to ADAP by 11/5/12 and final document on December 2012	
Info - 8	Strategic Plan	11/5/12	AAC	Presentation by Andrea Burnside, Chief Performance Officer	
Info - 9	APTA Innovation Award	11/5/12	AAC	Metro receives award for Travel Training Program	
Action - 5	BRS Station Lighting Work Group	12/12/11	BRS	Recommendations for approval to the Board	

FY13 COMPLETED STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

Info/Action Item Number	Description	Date Initiated	Originating Group	Status	Completion Date
Action - 1	AAC Officer Elections	7/2/12	AAC	The election results are - Mr. Patrick Sheehan, Chair, Dr. Phil Posner, 1 st Vice-Chair, and Dr. Tapan Banerjee was voted as 2 nd 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
Info -1	MetroAccess Fare Calculator (Update)	7/2/12	AAC	Presentation by Dan O'Reilly on 7/2/12 and 8/6/12. Referred back to MAS	9/4/12
Action - 2	AAC Appointment	8/6/12	AAC	MetroAccess Subcommittee Vice-Chair	9/4/12
Info - 5	Rail Service Criteria	9/4/12	AAC	A request for feedback by the October 2012 for the Metro's Board. Presentation by Andrea Burnside, Chief Performance Officer	9/4/12
Action - 3	BRS Subcommittee Work Plan	10/1/12	BRS	AAC Approved	10/1/12
Action - 4	MAS Subcommittee Work Plan	10/1/12	MACS	AAC Approved	10/1/12