



Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

Meeting Minutes: July 11, 2011

Attendees, Review of Agenda and Approval of Minutes

Vice-Chairman Posner called the June 11, 2011 Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Present: Phil Posner (Vice-Chair), Darrell Drake, Carolyn Bellamy, Susan Holland, Tapan Banerjee, Paul Semelfort and Debbie Brown. Not present: Patrick Sheehan (Chairman), Marilyn Lutter and Emily Lucio. The June 6, 2011 minutes and the Chairman's report to the Metro Board dated July 21, 2011 were approved.

Public Comments

Members of the public attending the meeting did not offer comments. The AAC requested that comment cards be made available to persons attending future AAC meetings for the public to submit questions to the Chair during proceedings outside the public comment period.

Status of Action Items from Previous Meetings

Mr. Kent reported that Chairman Patrick Sheehan had requested that he inform the AAC that Mr. Sheehan will present the AAC Report at the July 21, 2011 Metro Board meeting. Specifically, Mr. Sheehan will address: the ability of MetroAccess customers to determine the exact cost of a MetroAccess fare prior to reserving a trip; gathering of MetroAccess customer feedback through surveys, focus groups and a town hall meeting regarding the new MetroAccess contract scheduled to begin July 2013 and the MetroAccess fare policy; and for the 7000 Series rail car design (i.e. priority and wheelchair parking locations, signage and location of stanchions in the car). Mr. Kent also reported that the Board will be considering approval of appointment of fifteen of twenty new members to the AAC at its July 21, 2011 meeting.

The AAC discussed establishment of new meeting times for the MetroAccess and Bus/Rail Subcommittees. Mr. Millis reported that the Lobby Level Meeting Room is available on the first, second and third Mondays of each month for AAC, Bus/Rail and MetroAccess Subcommittee meetings to be held in that order. Mr. Millis described how this meeting schedule will improve the coordination between AAC and its Subcommittees and improve the ability of Metro staff to provide timely information. If a Monday is a holiday, Mr. Millis recommended the impacted meeting be held on Tuesday. After discussion, the AAC approved that: the AAC will meet on the first Monday of each month from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm; the Bus/Rail Subcommittee will meet on the second Monday of each month from 4pm – 6pm; the MetroAccess Subcommittee will meet on the third Monday of each month from 4pm – 6pm; and that meetings cancelled due to Monday holidays be held the next day on Tuesday. Mr. Kent reported

that the Department of Access Services will ensure that all AAC materials, information, MetroAccess interactive voice response system, and the Department of Access Services Information phone line will be updated to accurately state the new meeting schedules.

Bus Rail Subcommittee Report

Ms. Holland reported that a half-day Regional Travel Training Forum will be held in October, hosted by Metro in collaboration with Easter Seals Project Action. The purpose of the forum is to develop strategies to promote and coordinate travel training in the region and to develop a database of travel training providers. The Bus/Rail Subcommittee (BRS) has agreed to provide support to and participate in the Travel Training Forum. Ms. Holland reported that the BRS has fully reviewed and approved a prioritized BRS FY2012 work plan. Work related to the 7000 series car was given first priority, followed by a briefing on the Union Station Rehabilitation Project, a review of the Metro customer complaint process, and review of possible improvements to the Metrorail system lighting, signage and platform information display system. As the Accessible Bus Stop Project (ABSP) will begin later this year, the BRS will do further research on the topic in preparation for the meeting with the jurisdictions in late FY2012. Under ABSP, Metro has obtained a federal grant for \$1M, but funds have not yet been received, to make repairs to inaccessible bus stops that prevent MetroAccess customers from using Metrobus.

Mr. Posner stated that Ms. Barbara Richardson, Assistant General Manager of Customer Service, Communications and Marketing, made a presentation to Metro's Board Customer Service Subcommittee on the 7000 Series rail car on July 7, 2011. Mr. Posner stated that in response to comments from AAC members Tapan Banerjee and Michael Brownell, floor-to-ceiling stanchions mounted near doorways, which seriously impede wheelchair users from entering and exiting the car, will be removed. Other 7000 Series car issues that the BRS will pursue include: improved and standardized priority seating signage including additional signage on the priority seats themselves; exterior signage designating the priority seating area; a U-shaped wall mounted grab rail at the two wheelchair stations in each car; and the evacuation protocol at the center doors and the impact of other entities such as bicycles, strollers and luggage in the open space and priority seating. BRS requested the AAC Chairman highlight, BRS concerns in the Chairman's next presentation to the Board. BRS requested staff invite Metro's Chief Engineer for rail cars to discuss concerns at the next BRS meeting on August 8, 2011. The Bus/Rail Subcommittee will not meet in the month of July.

Metro Access Subcommittee Report

Mr. Semelfort reported that staff from MV's Capitol Heights Garage was recognized for their efficiency in managing timely fleet departures as part of an MV initiative to improve on-time performance.

Mr. Semelfort stated that all customer complaints received at the prior MetroAccess Subcommittee meeting have been resolved and also reported that at its June 27, 2011 meeting, the new MetroAccess monthly performance report format was reviewed and approved by the Subcommittee. Mr. Semelfort noted that the same performance report statistics can be found on Metro's website.

Mr. Semelfort indicated that the Subcommittee has begun work to further develop the FY2012 MetroAccess Subcommittee Work Plan in collaboration with staff and that this work is scheduled to continue at the next Subcommittee meeting. Mr. Semelfort reported on a presentation made by Mr. Parr on MetroAccess fares. Mr. Kent reported that numerous reviews of the MetroAccess fare calculation program revealed that the calculations are being performed as intended. However, Mr. Semelfort shared that the Subcommittee believes that it is an effort for customers to search different departure times on the Ride Guide to find the lowest fare. The Subcommittee agreed to form a work group, working with Metro staff to better identify concerns and it was agreed that this work group will develop a problem statement to guide this discussion.

Mr. Kent indicated that a presentation on fare policy will be made to the Metro Board Finance and Administration Committee in September 2011. Mr. Kent stated that Metro's consultant on fare policy is aware that the AAC is interested in being included on the discussion on fare policy and a presentation to the AAC will take place at the August 1, 2011 meeting.

New Business

Mr. Kent reported that with AAC assistance, the extension of the MetroAccess contract was approved by the Board through June 30, 2013. This extension will allow staff to research best practices, new technology, and evaluate current service and ridership needs to better provide service in the new business model beginning July 1, 2013. Mr. Kent indicated that WMATA will hold a series of meeting with stakeholders this year in preparation of a presentation of findings and business model concept to the Metro's Board by the end of calendar year 2011. The stakeholders were identified as federal and jurisdictional partners, industry vendors, the Accessibility Advisory Committee and MetroAccess riders and individuals and organizations from the disability community. Upon approval of the Board, the next step would be to develop a Request For Proposal. Mr. Kent stated that WMATA will issue a Request For Proposal for Metro Board review, approval and contract award(s) by the end of CY2012. This will allow ample time for paratransit service contractor(s) to prepare to provide new service beginning on or before July 1, 2012.

The AAC views surveys, focus groups and town hall meetings as opportunities to gather information from customers on the structure of the next contract. Mr. Kent stated that Metro's Customer Research Office will undertake recommended surveys of MetroAccess

customers. Mr. Kent agreed that a town hall type meeting would allow customers an opportunity to provide comments and that work done by the AAC will be communicated to Metro's Board of Directors.

Meeting adjourned: Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 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 -06	Research closed captioning of meeting podcasts	3/7/2011	AAC	Cost estimated at \$20,000 per year to close caption AAC, BRS and MACS Subcommittee meetings. Not included in FY2012 budget.	7/11/2011
Info -07	Review MetroAccess Fare Policy	5/2/2011	MACS	Pending gathering of additional customer testimony. Comments included in June Board report. Further recommendations to follow. Consultant fare study to include AAC input, expected 9/2011.	
Info -11	Subcommittee Meeting Times	5/2/2011	AAC	AAC approved new meeting times: BRS will meet on the 2nd Monday, 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.; MACS will meet on the 3rd Monday, 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. Tuesday is the alternate day when Monday is a holiday.	7/11/2011
Info -13	AAC email to the Department of Customer Service Communication and Marketing on 7000 series	7/11/2011	AAC	Request for clarification was emailed on July 12, 2011	July 12, 2011

STATUS OF FY 2012 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

Info/Action Item Number	Description	Date Initiated	Originating Group	Status	Completion Date
Info -14	Comment cards be made available to persons attending future AAC meetings	7/11/2011	AAC	Comment cards will be available at the next meeting for customers interested in making comments after the public comment period on Committee business.	
Info -15	All materials, information, MetroAccess interactive voice response system and the Department of Access Services Information phone line will be updated to accurately state the new meeting schedules	7/11/2011	AAC	Materials and phone line will be updated	
Action -03	The AAC Chairman will highlight 7000 series concerns in the presentation to the Board	7/11/2011	AAC	On July 21, 2011 Chairman Sheehan requested Metro Board to re-consider the AAC concerns regarding the 7000 series Railcar (presentation).	July 21, 2011
Info -17	Establish a work group to identify concerns and develop a problem statement and recommend alternatives for t on MetroAccess fare policy.	7/11/2011	MACS	Working group established to convene and report back to AAC	July 11, 2011

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