



Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

Meeting Minutes: January 3, 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), Regina Lee, William Staderman, Michelle Clark, Marilyn Lutter, Debbie Brown, Tapan Banerjee, Paul Semelfort, Darrell Drake. Not present: Phil Posner (Vice-Chair), Emily Singer Lucio, David Winser, Jessica Hunt, and Brian Hurley. The January 3, 2012 agenda and December 5, 2011 minutes were approved. The Chairman's report to the Metro Board dated January 3, 2012 was approved with corrections.

Public Comments

A comment was made about MetroAccess driver communication with deaf-blind customers. A member of the disability community volunteered to assist with training drivers on working with deaf-blind customers and other disability groups. Mr. Kent reported that sensitivity training is provided to all MetroAccess drivers and suggested that the paratransit provider follow up with the volunteer to include in future trainings.

Status of Action Items from Previous Meetings

The AAC discussed the work of the MetroAccess Fare Policy Working Group. The Group discussed three possible options: (1) continue with the current fare structure; (2) use a ten cent incremental fare increase; and (3) implement a zone based fare structure.

Mr. Kent stated that options outlined were meant to apply to the Metrobus and Metrorail fare structures only. He indicated that the paratransit fare structure was not analyzed for these modifications. Metro's Board will review the proposed fare structure for Metrobus and Metrorail at the January Finance and Administration Committee meeting.

The Group ultimately recommended the following: (1) a base fare of two dollars (\$2) or less, not to exceed twice the fare charged for Prince George's County Transit System "The Bus" fare; (2) a zone based system with a base fare of less than two dollar and one cent (\$2.01) be used to travel within a particular zone; (3) and lower the current maximum fare of seven dollars (\$7) in consideration of low-income customers. The AAC voted to approve these recommendations, and appended the previously approved fare policy principles to the January Board report.

Frank Roth, Director of Eligibility Certification, invited the AAC to participate in a training course entitled, "Understanding ADA Paratransit Eligibility". The training will focus on paratransit eligibility as it relates to the Americans with Disabilities Act and will be held on Tuesday, January 24, 2012, from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm at the Jackson Graham Building, Lobby Level Training Room.

Bus Rail Subcommittee Report

Debbie Brown, Vice Chair, reported that the Subcommittee discussed accessible signage on Metrobus. The accessible signs will be a combination of Braille and raised letters and installed on the front of the fare box to allow customers with low vision or who are blind to identify the bus number information. The AAC voted to approve the accessible signage on buses. The accessible signs will be installed fleet-wide on buses in early 2012.

The Subcommittee also discussed gap reducers and the load leveling system on railcars. Without these devices, the gap between the platform and railcar makes it difficult for customers using mobility devices to enter and alight the train. The gap reducer decreases the opening between the train and platform, while the load leveling system keeps the railcar at an equal height to the platform. Staff reported that gap reducers and the load leveling systems are fleet-wide and frequently checked and adjusted for irregularities.

The Subcommittee will develop a work group to review station lighting and will partner with the National Capital Citizens with Low Vision (NCCLV); disability advocacy organizations; and staff. The BRS discussed internal training for Metrobus and Metrorail internal staff and invited volunteers from the Committee to participate. The Subcommittee discussed a draft of the Customer Guide for Metrobus and Metrorail and requested that information on unattended mini-mezzanines and telephone numbers for transit police and other commuter transportation services be added to the document.

The auto-dispatch system in elevators was also discussed. Auto-dispatch is available in 133 elevators in the system. The remaining 28 elevators without the system have incompatible circuitry. The Subcommittee requested information on the cost to add auto-dispatch to the remaining elevators. Additionally, the BRS expressed an interest in the design and placement of elevator buttons. The Subcommittee recommended that elevator buttons be universal throughout the Metrorail system.

MetroAccess Subcommittee Report

Chairman Semelfort reported that the MetroAccess Subcommittee received a report from the new CEO of MV Transportation, Mr. Carter Pate. Mr. Pate stated that feedback from the Town Hall meetings will be used to improve accountability, training

of staff and customer service. He indicated that policies will be enforced and disciplinary action issued for violations.

Mr. Semelfort also reported many items on the Subcommittee's FY2012 work plan had been completed and new action items from the MetroAccess Town Hall Meeting and Focus Groups will be added.

The Subcommittee discussed the possibility of a MetroAccess fare media exchange. The prior process to exchange old tokens, fare cards and other fare media spanned a six-month period. Staff reported that old fare media no longer has value and therefore cannot be exchanged. The Subcommittee requested additional information on fare media exchange in bulk. Staff will follow up and provide feedback at the January 17, 2012 meeting.

The Subcommittee also discussed MetroAccess customer information materials and policies. The level of service provided by some staff members is inconsistent with the standards and policies. The Subcommittee recommended that multiple formats should be used to educate and disseminate information to MetroAccess customers. The Subcommittee will develop a work group to discuss additional ways to educate customers on MetroAccess policies and services. The work group will be chaired by Carolyn Bellamy.

Mr. Kent provided an update on the paratransit contract and indicated that the vendor conference, Town Hall meetings, and Focus Groups related to the new MetroAccess contract all have been completed. The Subcommittee voted to develop a work group to measure and evaluate the paratransit contractor on the issues found in the Focus Groups and Town Hall meetings.

The Subcommittee recognized Mr. Jonas Apanah and Mr. Isaac Harris, two MetroAccess drivers for their excellent service and commitment to safety.

New Business

A comment was made about the inaccessible format of the last MetroAccess newsletters. Mr. Kent reported that all of Metro materials and information are available in accessible formats upon request. Mr. Roth reported that a database on customer preference of accessible formats is being developed. The AAC will review this issue.

Mr. Kent reported that staff has begun the process of developing a scope of work for the new paratransit contractor. He indicated that the AAC will play a significant role in the development of the new contract.

Meeting adjourned: The 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 -07	Review MetroAccess Fare Policy	5/2/2011	MACS	AAC voted to approve the Fare Policy Group recommendation and add the information to the Board report.	1/3/12
Action -11	AAC Special Meeting	1/17/12	MACS	AAC voted to amend fare policy recommendation to the Board. Information was forward in an amended Board Report	1/17/12
Info -14	Fare Policy Presentation on Metrobus and Metrorail	1/9/12	BRS	Update on Fare Policy by Ms. Carol Dillon Kissal, DGMA/CFO	