

**AAC****Accessibility Advisory Committee**

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

Meeting Minutes: September 6, 2011**Attendees, Review of Agenda, and Approval of Minutes**

Vice-Chair Phil Posner called the September 6, 2011 Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Present: Phil Posner (Vice-Chair), Darrell Drake, Carolyn Bellamy, Tapan Banerjee, Paul Semelfort, Debbie Brown, Michelle Clark, Regina Lee, Doris Ray and Elver Ariza-Silva. Not present: Patrick Sheehan (Chairman), Susan Holland, Marilyn Lutter, Emily Singer Lucio, David Winser, and Brian Hurley. The August 1, 2011 agenda, minutes, and the Chairman's report to the Metro Board dated September 6, 2011 were approved with corrections.

Public Comments

Comments were offered about MetroAccess wheelchair securement and discourteous drivers. Mr. Kent stressed the importance of customers providing vehicle number, date and other information to facilitate full investigation of customer concerns. A point of recognition was made about the timeliness of pick-up and drop-off of MetroAccess service.

Status of Action Items from Previous Meetings

Ms. Alison Simon, Office of Customer Research, provided an update on planned customer research related to the new paratransit contract. She indicated that in-depth interviews and focus groups will be the two techniques used to garner information from customers on the new paratransit contract. A total of 20 in-depth interviews will be conducted and will consist of customers and representatives of disability advocacy organizations. Each in-depth interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes in length, and participants will be chosen from a random sample of MetroAccess riders that meet criteria related to usage of service, comfort level speaking in groups, age, gender, ethnicity, and disability. The AAC expressed interest in the types of disability organizations that will be included in the research and suggested that local or regional organizations be involved instead of national organizations. The AAC agreed to provide Ms. Simon with a list of local or regional organizations for the in-depth interviews.

Mr. Kent shaped the discussion on focus groups, stating that the purpose of the focus groups is to primarily obtain information on the customer experience with MetroAccess. Ms. Simon reported that there will be six rider focus groups, two for each jurisdiction, and the same criteria will be used for the in-depth interviews. The focus groups will concentrate on safety, service reliability and customer service.

The AAC suggested that surveys be conducted in different languages and that the criteria for usage of services should be increased to capture true ridership. The

Committee requested that they be able to review questions prior to the consultant conducting the survey, and Ms. Simon agreed.

Mr. Kent discussed the AAC's request for Town Hall meetings for the new paratransit contract. Town Hall meetings will be held in the following locations: Prince George's County, MD; Arlington, VA; and the District of Columbia. Carolyn Bellamy and Doris Ray suggested that Town Hall meetings also be conducted to reach those riders in areas such as Montgomery County and Fairfax County. Mr. Kent stated that meetings are being held in areas where there is a high concentration of MetroAccess riders, and at a later date there may be additional meetings that can be held in Fairfax County and Montgomery County. In addition, Mr. Millis reported that customers interested in offering comments will be able to provide input via phone, in writing and on-line. The Committee approved the Town Hall meetings scheduled for October 24, 25, 26, 2011.

The AAC deferred the discussion of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board letter dated April 7, 2010 concerning the MetroAccess Fare Policy to the MetroAccess Subcommittee. Mr. Kent reported that many of the topics in the letter have been addressed in the Subcommittee meetings and work plan. Mr. Kent suggested that, following discussion, the AAC make a recommendation to the Metro Board of Directors and that Chair Hudgins forward a response to the Chair of the Access for All (AFA) Committee, and the AAC agreed.

Mr. Kent introduced and the Committee welcomed Daniel O'Reilly, the new Director of the Office of MetroAccess Service. Mr. Kent thanked Mr. Omari June for serving as interim Director of MetroAccess during the search for a new Director.

Bus Rail Subcommittee Report

Debbie Brown, Vice Chair, reported that seventeen (17) of the accessibility features and enhancements for the 7000 railcar series were adopted from the input provided by the AAC. Ms. Brown reported that these recommendations will enhance accessibility for people with disabilities. The AAC voted to approve the accessibility recommendations for the 7000 railcar series.

The AAC suggested that gap reducers and inter-car barriers should also be included in the list of accessibility features and enhancements. Mr. Millis reported that in the presentation by Mr. Reynolds at the BRS meeting, it was reported that gap reducers would be installed, and the inter-car barrier design is still being developed. Mr. Millis stated that Mr. Reynolds has agreed to present again when the development of inter-car barriers is at a final stage.

Ms. Brown also reported that a presentation was made on the Union Station Rehabilitation Project. Metro is making improvements to the station manager's kiosks,

electrical system and air conditioning. Ms. Brown also reported that the repairs to the escalators and elevators at Union Station have been completed. Ms. Brown stated that at the next BRS meeting, there will be presentations on Metro's customer complaint process, skip stop announcements, and the Passenger Information Display Systems (PIDS).

MetroAccess Subcommittee Report

Mr. Semelfort stated that the Subcommittee's FY12 work plan was discussed, and more feedback from the Subcommittee is needed before it is finalized. The Safety and Accountability Process Working Group update has been deferred to allow additional input from the disability community. The Subcommittee also discussed the accuracy of the information on the website and IVR. Mr. June reported that all the information on the on-hold message and website for the AAC and its Subcommittees has been updated. Mr. Semelfort reported that the Fare Policy Working Group met to discuss the impact of the current fare policy on MetroAccess riders. The Fare Policy Working Group will gather information concerning the structure of fare policy and how it impacts riders of the service. The next meeting of the Fare Policy Working Group will be held on September 19, 2011, directly after the MetroAccess Subcommittee meeting.

In light of the recent natural disasters in the area, the AAC requested information on emergency procedures or alternatives for riders of MetroAccess. Mr. Posner noted that the website had a lot of suggestions on things to do to be safe and information related to emergency preparedness. Mr. Kent suggested that this topic be discussed by both Subcommittees, and the full Committee agreed.

New Business

Mr. Kent reported that Metro held a vendor conference for companies interested in the new MetroAccess contract. He stated that there were 25 companies in attendance in addition to the current MetroAccess provider, MV Transportation. Mr. Kent reported that Patrick Sheehan discussed AAC concerns and the types of issues the Committee addresses on a regular basis. Mr. Sheehan will give a full report at the next MetroAccess Subcommittee meeting.

Meeting adjourned: The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 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	Fare Policy Work Group will discuss the impact of the current fare policy on MetroAccess riders; gather additional customer testimony. Final recommendations to the AAC are expected by 10/17/2011.	
Info – 13	Accessibility Excellence Awards	8/1/11	AAC	AAC will discuss the tribute to Dr. Roslyn Simon	
Action – 6	Approval of Letter to the Access For All (AFA)	9/6/11	AAC	AAC will discuss and approve letter to the Access For All (AFA)	