



AAC

Accessibility Advisory Committee

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BUS AND RAIL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: July 8, 2013

In attendance: Dr. Brian Miller (Vice-Chair), Georges Aguehoude, Elver Ariza-Silva, Heidi Case, Darrell Drake, Kevin Hanretta, Chanelle Houston, Regina Lee, Dr. Phil Posner, Nanette Roberson, Denise Rush, and Dr. William Staderman.

Call to Order

Vice-Chair Miller called the July 8, 2013 Bus and Rail Subcommittee (BRS) meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Review and Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The BRS approved the July 8, 2013 meeting agenda, and approved the June 10, 2013 meeting minutes.

Introductions and Role of the BRS

Dr. Brian Miller, Vice-Chair Bus/Rail Subcommittee (BRS) provided an overview of the BRS. He indicated that the BRS discusses issues related to Metro's fixed route system and recommendations of the subcommittees are brought to the full committee for a vote. Vice-Chair Miller stated that the BRS will follow the lead of the AAC and use the two-minute rule on comments, questions, and responses for all members. A 30-second notification will be provided before the speaker's time expires. Vice-Chair Miller asked that BRS members interested in speaking during the meeting should verbally state their name and he will call on the member in order of request.

Brochure on Metrorail Evacuation Procedures for Customers with Disabilities

The BRS continued its discussion on Metro's brochures for safety procedures on Metrorail. Christiaan Blake, Director, Office of ADA Policy and Planning, reminded the Subcommittee that review of this brochure was one of the quarterly meeting action items from the AAC Leadership meeting with Metro's Executive Board. Mr. Blake stated that Metro's Department of Safety has the lead in the development of the brochure, and is collaborating with stakeholders to ensure the information is useful and usable by all customers including individuals with disabilities.

At the last meeting, some members expressed an interest in having fewer words and more pictures to describe the content of the brochure. Mr. Blake indicated that the new brochure had more *white space* and fewer words. However, much of the information in the brochure remained because of its relevance to safety procedures for customers. Mr. Blake stated that the pictures were updated to include Metro Emergency Tunnel Evacuation Cart (ETEC). Dr. William Staderman indicated that although a picture of ETEC Cart placed on the front of the brochure, there was no description in the literature. In response to a question about the emergency telephone number, Mr. Blake indicated that the number to Metro's Transit Police was listed in the brochure. The BRS expressed an interest in adding information that tells customers to move away from the

doors once they have boarded the train. This type of information may make the entry ways less crowded. The BRS also expressed an interest in making the emergency procedures more visible in the brochure. In the old brochure the emergency procedures were buried too far back and did not stand-out enough for customers to take advantage of the information in the brochure. Mr. Blake indicated that certain sections of the content can be highlighted to make the information more eye-catching for the customers.

Heidi Case expressed an interest in adding language to the brochure that will encourage customers that are unable to evacuate the train in an emergency to remain and assistance will be forthcoming. This is an important message to all customers include customers with disabilities that use mobility devices. Dr. Posner stated that near the center door and the accessible space for mobility devices on the train is information that advises customers that use mobility devices to stay in place and Metro personnel will be along to assist. In response to a question about communicating similar information to customers who are Blind, Dr. Posner stated that the Train Operator will make the announcements providing information during an emergency. In addition to the Train Operator announcement, on the new 7000 series railcars, the information will also be displayed on a monitor. Mr. Blake stated that he will review ways to incorporate the recommendations into the brochure.

Dr. Posner stated that the AAC recommended that Metro's Office of Emergency Management add accessible signage to the emergency gear to communicate with customers who are Blind and deaf. Darrell Drake expressed an interest communicating to customers not all stations have detectable warning tiles. Mr. Blake indicated that Metro has an aggressive schedule to add bumpy tiles in all stations by November 1, 2013. In response to a comment about adding language that describes the flashing light at inner and outer doors of a railcar that notifies customers who are deaf or hard-of-hearing of the train doors are opening and closing, Mr. Blake stated that he will review the information to find ways to include the suggestion into the brochure.

Mr. Blake stated that the new brochure will be accessible and available in various formats. Upon motion, the BRS recommended that Metro continue the development of the safety brochure for Metrorail.

BRS Administrative Process Discussion

The BRS discussed leadership on the Subcommittee. Dr. B. Moore Gwynn, AAC Coordinator, explained the appointment process and after a lengthy discussion, the BRS decided to follow the wisdom of the AAC in recommending members for appointment. It was recommended that the current BRS Vice-Chair, be appointed to the position of

Chairman. It was also recommended that Dr. William Staderman be appointed to the position of BRS Vice-Chair; and Heidi Case, be appointed to the position of 2nd Vice-Chair. Upon motion the BRS recommended that the appointments be forwarded to the AAC for approval at their August 2013 meeting.

The BRS also discussed its 2014 work plan and identified the following additional items: update on Metro's public education campaign for priority seating; an update on the travel training program; an update on Wayfinding with Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind; Metro's Smart phone applications and 911 text technologies.

Some BRS members expressed an interest in the travel training process. Dr. Posner Metro offered a Train-the-Trainer Travel Training program that identified and described all the accessibility features and how to properly use them in the fixed route system. Vice-Chair Miller stated that the training was very beneficial and the trainer for the Blind community is excellent.

Chris Colbert, Operations Manager, Office of Eligibility Certification Outreach indicated Metro has new Travel Training Program. The new program is a three-day workshop that provides in-depth information that focuses on techniques that will assist Metro's area partners in providing travel training service to customers. Mr. Colbert stated that travel training can vary based on the disability and all of the travel training staff have specialized skills and are in high demand. This service is offered to all customers that apply for services in the Transit Accessibility Center.

Regina Lee indicated that from her experience serving on the MetroAccess Appeals Panel, many customers have indicated that they did not understand the offer of travel training services and therefore declined when asked if they were interested in the services. In response to a question about providing travel training service to senior citizens, Mr. Colbert indicated that Metro does provide travel training services to the senior citizen community throughout the metropolitan region. Nanette Roberson expressed an interest in some of the places where travel training has been conducted for seniors. Mr. Colbert indicated that he will investigate and provide feedback at the next BRS meeting. Upon motion, the BRS recommended that the FY2014 work plan move forward for approval by the AAC.

Fare Policy Work Group

For the benefit of new members, Dr. Posner, Chair, Fare Policy Work Group provided a brief history of the Work Group. He indicated that two years ago, the Metro Board discussed fare policy changes that would significantly increase the cost of MetroAccess services. MetroAccess service fare moved from a fixed flat-fare to calculated fare of

twice the fastest fare derived from Metro's Trip Planner. The Work Group was designed to provide Metro's Board through the AAC less complicated options for MetroAccess fares.

Dr. Posner stated that at the same time, Metro began to phase out paper fare cards and move customers toward using SmarTrip cards throughout the system. Metro charged customers an additional \$1 for the use of paper cards in the Metrorail system and an extra twenty cents for the use of cash on Metrobus. The Work Group recommended many alternatives to the additional charges, yet none were not adopted. Metro did, however, embrace the AAC recommendation to provide better access to purchase and load SmarTrip cards for customers. Dr. Posner stated that all rail stations have accessible SmarTrip card dispensers where customers can purchase and load SmarTrip cards. Customers can also purchase and load SmarTrip cards at various retail stores around the metropolitan region.

The Work Group will continue its work on additional charge for cash on the Metrobus. Dr. Posner stated Metro is proposing to add fare machines at bus stops to allow customers to add fare to SmarTrip cards prior to boarding a Metrobus. He indicated this technology has been demonstrated to other stakeholders, such as the Metro's Rider's Advisory Council (RAC), and that a presentation should be made to the AAC. In response to a question about the safety of using cash at a bus stop in some neighborhoods, Dr. Posner indicated that the point was raised by the RAC. The BRS also expressed an interest in the cost of installing fare machines at bus stops around the region. Upon motion, the BRS recommended that Metro present the proposal to incorporate fare card machines at bus stops. Dr. B. Moore Gwynn reported that as soon as that office is available, they will be scheduled to present to the BRS. Dr. Posner stated that presentation will assist members in increasing their understanding of Metro's Fare Policy.

Dr. Posner indicated that one of the goals of the Work Group this year will be to recommend to the Metro's Board to remove the twenty cents additional charge for cash on Metrobus. He indicated that on July 15, 2013, the Work Group will meet after the MetroAccess Subcommittee meeting. All members are invited.

Public Comment

Persons in attendance offered no public comment.

New Business

Regina Lee reported that a street level elevator outage at the Potomac Avenue Metrorail Station displaced several customers that use mobility devices. She

indicated that there was not any notification of the outage. Chanelle Houston and Elver Ariza-Silva stated that a similar situation has occurred to them at the Fort Totten and Waterfront Metrorail stations. Mr. Blake stated that he would investigate and provide feedback.

Heidi Case expressed an interest in the elevator outage and lift bus reports that is included in the BRS packet. She indicated that the elevator outage report appears to have a steady decrease in the number of elevators available and requested clarification on the response times in the lift bus report. Mr. Blake stated that he would investigate and provide feedback.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Attachment: Work Plan