



Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
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METROACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: January 19, 2016

In attendance: Mr. Paul Semelfort (Chair), Ms. Denise Rush (Co-Chair), Ms. Darnise Bush, Mr. Anthony Stephens, Mr. Charles Crawford, Dr. Philip Posner, Ms. Doris Ray, Mr. Steven Kaffen, Dr. Tapan Banerjee, Ms. Carolyn Bellamy, Dr. William Staderman, and Ms. Phillippa Mezile.

Call to Order

Co-Chair Rush called the MetroAccess Subcommittee (MAS) meeting to order at 4:00pm.

Review of January 2016 Agenda

The agenda was approved without amendments.

Review of December 2015 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Rush requested a correction under "Comments from the MAS" that she attending the emergency exercise on December 13, 2015, as she did not attend. The minutes were approved with the amendment.

Customer Service and Outreach Report

Mr. Carlton Brown, Quality Assurance Administrative Manager, MTM, reported that all public comments from the previous meetings have been addressed.

Ms. Janice Carpenter, Service Monitor, MetroAccess, stated that there were no outreach events to report for January 2016. She stated that there is a scheduled outreach event at Target Community and Educational Services Inc. in February 2016.

MetroAccess Employee Recognition

Ms. Stephanie Newsome, Service Monitor, MetroAccess, recognized Mr. Sevket Piroglu the Michael Wilson Staff Recognition Award winner. A detailed description of Mr. Piroglu's accomplishments can be found in the accompanying document titled "Michael Wilson Staff Recognition Award" located under the January 2016 heading at http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/advocacy_policy/subcommittee.cfm

Mr. Semelfort announced that the topic of Stops at non-Metro Location was removed from the agenda.

Maryland – Abilities Ride

Mr. Christian Kent, Assistant General Manager, Access Services, proposed MetroAccess alternatives he asked committee to share with him the issues they see. He explained the history and growth of MetroAccess, and the need for service change. As the MetroAccess ridership increases the cost to operate MetroAccess increases. Discussions have been had to consider alternatives that will aid in sustainability of the service. Mr.

arranging transportation. He said Uber is experimenting with the driverless car and moving toward the future. He proposed to engage the TNC industry as people with and advocates of people with disabilities to partner in an effort to build a system that would work for the disability community.

Mr. Kaffen suggested that the aspect of control be considered when deciding to partner with a TNC. He said there needs to be complementary control that Metro oversees. He stated a TNC contract could be a benefit to MetroAccess customers if it provides a quicker ride to destinations. Mr. Stephens continued by saying that at the time it is determined that such a program will be implemented, there needs to be a commitment to maintain the MetroAccess service, while providing a complementary service through a TNC.

Ms. Ray commented that compliance with Title II & Title III under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a must as a provider or vendor for MetroAccess. These companies would be obligated to live up to all of the requirements and performance standards including ready access to accessible transport. She said the TNC's in the local area have continued to extricate themselves from any requirements of the ADA. She suggested that the Committee would not accept a proposal utilizing Uber or any other TNC. She said that equal access to reservations is necessary, and requiring people to utilize a computer application to book trips is not inclusive. Ms. Ray said many people in the disability community do not have access to a smart phone or computer. She continued by stating that Uber and Lyft operators do not undergo background checks, therefore safety would be an issue. She also questioned who would be responsible for maintaining the accessible features on TNC vehicles.

Ms. Rush stated that with the concerns raised by other Committee members, Uber and Lyft should not be a consideration.

Mr. Crawford expressed his concern with Lyft's unwillingness to transport people with wheelchairs. He suggested requiring the TNC's to provide accessible vehicles.

A customer comment stated that any thought or discussion of service for only some is unacceptable and will be opposed by the disability community.

Public Comments on Maryland-Abilities Ride

Customer #1 - stated that the ADA sets the international standard for the UN Treaty on the convention for the rights of people with disabilities. She said Uber claims they are not responsible to meet the civil rights guaranteed under the ADA. She cited examples of Uber violating the ADA. She said they are spending large sums of money in court to avoid adhering to the ADA standards.

Mr. Stephens responded that he was not intending to say that MetroAccess should contract with Uber. He said he merely hopes that a conversation could be had with the TNC's as advocates and work towards a future that is all inclusive.

Customer #2 - shared comments regarding information about Uber and their practices. She posed a question to WMATA stating; are you creating a two tiered segregated system if you partner with a company that is providing service only to ambulatory

Public Comments

Comments received were with regard to: The medical portion of the MetroAccess application, rude drivers who don't provide door-to-door service or assist with seatbelts, unanswered complaints, linking EZ-Pay and web booking system, online scheduling, circuitous routing from Prince George's County to Montgomery County, MetroAccess signage at the airports, rude dispatcher, continuous and disruptive calls to drivers by dispatch agents, a request for a copy of the sustainability study and information about Maryland Abilities Ride.

Comments from the MAS

Ms. Rush stated many customers did not formally report their complaints, and therefore the number of complaints are underrepresented.

For detailed descriptions and resolutions of public comments made during the meeting, please refer to the January 2016 Complaint Resolution Report located at http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/advocacy_policy/subcommittee.cfm.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00pm.