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Accessibility Advisory Committee

METROACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: October 15, 2012

In attendance: Paul Semelfort (Chair), George Aguehounde, Dr. Tapan Banerjee, Carolyn Bellamy, Regina Lee, Marilyn Lutter, Doris Ray, Denise Rush, Patrick Sheehan, and Dr. William Staderman.

Call to Order

Chair Semelfort called the October 2012 meeting of the MetroAccess Subcommittee (MAS) to order.

Approve September 2012 Meeting Report

The September 2012 meeting report was approved without amendment.

Approve October 2012 Agenda

The October 2012 meeting agenda was amended to include an update from the Customer Service Task Force and an update on the MetroAccess Fare Calculator.

Customer Service and Outreach Report

Allison Anderson, MV Transportation, stated that all of the public comments submitted at the previous MAS meeting have been addressed.

Ms. Anderson reported that she visited the Sharpe Health School in Washington D.C. and the Maryland Fall Transitioning Youth Fair at the First Baptist Church of Glenarden, and that she participated in a conference call with parental representatives of the St. Coletta School of Greater Washington. The focus of these efforts was to inform students with disabilities, school representatives, and parents about MetroAccess service.

Michael Wilson Staff Recognition Award

Ms. Anderson and Leland Petersen, MV Transportation, recognized Donald Bonner as the Michael Wilson Staff Recognition Award winner. A detailed description of Mr. Bonner's accomplishments can be found in the accompanying document titled "Michael Wilson Staff Recognition Award" located under the October 2012 heading at:

http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/advocacy_policy/subcommittee.cfm.

MetroAccess Fare Calculator Update

Christian Kent, AGM, Access Services, provided an update on the progress of the MetroAccess Fare Calculator. He stated that the original design of the Fare Calculator was for it to be an internet based tool. However, following discussions with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) and MAS, and a report to the Metro Board of Directors, it was decided that a tool only accessible by computer was not satisfactory. Therefore, Metro is moving directly to Phase 3 of the project, which will provide MetroAccess reservation agents with access to the Fare Calculator when booking trips for customers who call in as well as web-based access for customers. In testing, the Fare Calculator has had technical problems handling large traffic volume. As a result, Metro staff continues to work with Trapeze to address all technical issues, and ensure that the benefits of the Fare Calculator will be available to all MetroAccess customers.

Mr. Kent added that the Fare Calculator will be more empowering than anything available on the fixed route trip planning side. The Fare Calculator will provide a sweep of fares across a 30 minute window, whereas a fixed route customer would have to enter several different trip times into Metro's Trip Planner in order to see the lowest fare.

The MAS expressed an interest in whether the utilization of Trapeze was planned at the onset of the development of this tool. Mr. Kent stated that Metro's IT Department was designated to design the screen for inputting information, and Trapeze would provide the calculations. Information and guidance from MAS will be sought in the near future for ideas of what features to include in the product. Mr. Kent reported that the Fare Calculator is expected to be completed and operational in May 2013.

Customer Surveys

Alison Simon, Director, Customer Research, provided an update on the MetroAccess Customer Satisfaction Survey. A random sample of MetroAccess customers was used to assess overall customer satisfaction, driver satisfaction, customer satisfaction with in-person eligibility assessments, and if so, the primary reasons for any customer dissatisfaction. Ms. Simon's presentation included performance measures which showed a year-over-year increase in the ease of making a reservation, and an increase in the comfort level while traveling in MetroAccess vehicles.

The MAS expressed an interest in the performance measures of safety, service delivery, caregivers response, late pick-ups, and the reason for the decrease in "Where's My Ride" calls as compared to FY11. Ms. Simon reported that the percentage of customers who experienced service problems but were satisfied with the resolutions of the problems has increased between the current period

and FY11. She added that these customers also believed that MetroAccess did their best to help in the situation.

Driver Training and Passenger Securement

Antonio Hamlin, Manager/Chief Safety Officer, MetroAccess Field Operations, lead a discussion on MetroAccess driver training and passenger securement. He outlined the process that MetroAccess drivers are required to follow when securing passengers and their wheelchairs on MetroAccess vehicles. As Mr. Hamlin discussed the procedures, Kami Moody, Chief Safety Manager, MV Transit Capital Heights Division; Frankie Lee, Lead Training Supervisor, MV Transit Capital Heights Division; and Lemar McClain, Behind the Wheel Trainer, MV Transit, provided a demonstration of passenger securement procedures as it relates to securing wheelchairs on MetroAccess vehicles.

The MAS requested clarification on the use of the Posey belt and whether or not it is optional. Mr. Hamlin reported that drivers are trained to understand that the use of Posey belts is optional.

Customer Service Task Force

Regina Lee, Task Force Vice-Chair, provided a brief update on the work of the Customer Service Task Force. She stated that the Task Force is focused on seatbelt securement under the ADA and clarifying the policy of the MetroAccess courtesy call. Ms. Lee stated that the Task Force is also interested in developing a video, brochure or pamphlet outlining ten crucial points that MetroAccess customers need to know. Some of those points include the MetroAccess Fare Policy, the Door-to-Door policy, five minute vehicle wait time rule, mandatory seatbelt, abusive behavior policy, and the requirement for a clear path for pick-up at door-to-door serviceable locations during inclement weather.

Carolyn Bellamy, Task Force Chair, asserted that the Task Force believes that the MetroAccess Customer Guide should be re-written to reflect this information, and that Metro's Eligibility Office should incorporate these points into the education piece it shares with new customers. Additionally, Ms. Bellamy stated that MetroAccess vehicles should be equipped with some signage listing these points. She stated that Task Force can help develop the signage.

Omari June, Operations Manager, MetroAccess MetroAccess Operations Control Center, addressed Cheryl O'Konek, Operations Manager-Certifications, stating that Eligibility shares information, but could augment that information with the points being discussed by the Task Force. Members expressed the importance of the door-to-door service for visually impaired individuals. Mr. Petersen commented that it is mandatory for MetroAccess drivers to perform door-to-door when the location is serviceable. He stated that drivers are monitored periodically

to ensure compliance. He outlined the disciplinary procedure for MetroAccess drivers when they are found to be in violation of this policy.

Public Comment

Public comments were received pertaining to courtesy calls for visually impaired customers; driver feedback regarding the MV1 vehicle; late pick-ups; the door-to-door policy; the five minute wait time for a customer to be present for boarding a MetroAccess vehicle; lost/stolen ID card; fare; and vehicle no show. Additionally, a customer complimented MetroAccess service and presented staff with a certificate of appreciation for the service.

Some MAS members voiced concerns about the clarity of information regarding the MetroAccess service area and hours of operations to individuals in remote areas in Virginia. Some members questioned whether there were any members of the disability community involved in decision making process for the awarding of the new MetroAccess service contract. Patrick Sheehan, Chair, AAC, stated that he did not believe that members of the AAC could be a part of the procurement selection process due to the strict process of the contract selection. However, he added that the AAC assisted with the previous contract, and that has approached Mr. Kent suggesting the involvement of the AAC in this selection in at least an advisory role. Mr. Sheehan said that there has been no response to date. The MAS will seek an answer from Mr. Kent about this request for involvement in the process by the next meeting.

Mr. Sheehan commented that he would like to compare the performance matrix of the last contract with the current Request for Proposal (RFP). Dan O'Reilly, Director, MetroAccess, stated that the RFP is a public document and is available on Metro's website. Doris Ray commented that ADA requirements must be met and suggested the use of the information in the previous contract as a base line for the new contract.

Please refer to October's Complaint Resolution Report at located at http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/advocacy_policy/subcommittee.cfm for detailed descriptions and resolutions of the public comments.

Meeting adjourned at 6:16pm