



Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
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METROACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: June 15, 2015

In attendance: Mr. Paul Semelfort (Chair), Ms. Denise Rush (Co-Chair), Ms. Phillipa Mezile, Mr. Edward McEntee, Ms. Heidi Case, Mr. Charles Crawford, Ms. Marisa Laios, Dr. William Staderman, Ms. Doris Ray, Dr. Tappan Banerjee, and Mr. Patrick Sheehan.

Call to Order

Chair Semelfort called the MetroAccess Subcommittee (MAS) meeting to order at 4:01pm.

Review of June 2015 Agenda

The agenda was approved with the following changes: the addition of information shared by Ms. Case regarding topics of discussion at a disability conference she attended; a discussion of proposed bus changes; and the deletion of the Long Term Sustainability Study discussion.

Review of May 2015 Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved without amendments.

Customer Service and Outreach Report

Ms. Sara Morris, Senior Administrative Coordinator, MTM, reported that all public comments from the previous meetings have been addressed.

Ms. Janice Carpenter, Service Monitor, MetroAccess, reported that there were no outreach events to report for the month. Ms. Carpenter said staff looks forward to presenting a report on an upcoming outreach event during the next MAS meeting in July 2015.

MetroAccess Employee Recognition

Ms. Carpenter recognized Mr. David Atcherson as the Michael Wilson Staff Recognition Award winner. A detailed description of Mr. Atcherson's accomplishments can be found in the document titled "Michael Wilson Staff Recognition Award" located under the June 2015 heading at

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

TransportDC Program

Mr. Christiaan Blake, Director, Office of ADA Policy and Planning (ADAP), outlined the TransportDC program. He stated that it began as CAPS-DC, part of Metro's Coordinated Alternatives to Paratransit Service initiative. TransportDC provides a same day, customized travel option to MetroAccess customers who reside in DC, and are traveling within DC. Mr. Blake continued by comparing the TransportDC service to MetroAccess by stating that the TransportDC program can pick-up a customer from a location and

take them directly to their destination and it offers a flat fare. Though Metro created the concept, the program is run by the District of Columbia Taxicab Commission (DCTC). Similar programs in Maryland and Virginia are being discussed.

Questions/Comments:

Ms. Rush says she has heard the advertisement for TransportDC on the radio. She said the advertisement reports that the program is specific for medical trips only. Ms. Rush said what she is now hearing is that customers may be transported for other trips as well. She suggested consideration be made for non-DC residents who travel within DC.

Mr. Blake said that as of May 2015, the program provides trips from any location in DC to any other location in DC for \$5. At the moment there are two cab companies that provide this service, Capital Cab and Yellow Cab. The drivers of these companies are required to have sensitivity training to understand how to serve customers with disabilities. If there is an issue, customers are encouraged to contact DCTC, but can contact ADAP as well. Letters and brochures have been sent to DC residents with information about the program.

Ms. Case added that the driver is guaranteed \$25 for each of these trips, which is an incentive for the drivers to do a good job. She said that the DCTC has an Accessibility Advisory Committee, which she serves on, and they are in need of disability advocates. Ms. Case said that Karl Muhammed, DCTC, said that a MetroAccess customer who does not require a vehicle equipped with a lift is able to be picked up within twenty minutes of the request for service. She said he also commented that there are discussions with Montgomery and Prince Georges County to extend the service to those areas. She also stated that in order to get the \$5 rate customers must mention that they are MetroAccess customers when scheduling trips with the TransportDC program.

Mr. Blake clarified that the discussion is to enable cabs to drop customers off outside of DC, but they could not pick them up from areas outside of DC due to regulations. The funding for MetroAccess trips are paid for by that jurisdiction's government. He urged MetroAccess riders to advocate for this program in their jurisdictions.

Dr. Staderman asked about extending the program to Arlington.

Mr. Blake said that Arlington has not been considered, as Arlington has been an area that has done a great job providing alternative services. He said that he would present the model to Arlington if invited to do so.

Mr. Banerjee asked for clarification on the fare. He also asked if he travels on Yellow Cab from Fairfax to DC, why can't Yellow Cab DC take him back to Fairfax County?

Mr. Blake stated that each trip is \$5. He again explained the funding for the different jurisdictions in the area.

Ms. Rush asked how this program is affecting the other MetroAccess service providers.

Mr. Blake stated that paratransit must maintain service as it is a requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act. He explained that the current MetroAccess ridership and the projected increase in ridership indicate that demand for MetroAccess service will not go away anytime soon.

Ms. Mezile asked if a voucher is needed to utilize the TransportDC program.

Mr. Blake explained that there is no voucher. A customer just needs to contact the program to schedule a trip and show a MetroAccess ID.

Proposed Bus Route Modifications

Ms. Rush asked about the bus route modifications that will affect MetroAccess customers.

Ms. Case asked if the modifications to bus routes involved changes in jurisdictional responsibility.

Mr. Blake said there are proposals to have some current Metro service be provided by locally operated transit services. These proposals, in which Metro would yield the bus route to the local bus services, would not impact the MetroAccess service area. There is a proposal to have some Metro service be provided by commuter bus service. Such a change would impact the MetroAccess service area. There are other proposals that could increase MetroAccess service on the weekends in areas not currently served by MetroAccess. Mr. Blake stated that Metro is committed to bringing the information to the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) to receive feedback related to the proposed changes.

Ms. Case stated that the local operating transit could cut service when there is a budget crisis.

Mr. Crawford asked what would be the motivator for Metro to discontinue bus service in a particular place because the local authority would provide it.

Mr. Blake stated that there are financial and coordination benefits, with one goal being more efficient connections to Metrobus and Metrorail.

Ms. Case stated that she was thankful that the AAC will have the opportunity to hear in advance the proposed changes. She also said that there will be a different advocacy opportunity to go to the Board sooner than has been in the past.

Work Plan

Dr. B. Moore-Gwynn, AAC Coordinator, said that the Board has an expectation that the MAS be more innovative. Mr. Sheehan stated that considering the budget, how is the MAS to put a plan together not knowing what finances are available.

Dr. Moore-Gwynn said that in planning ahead, some of the topics may not have funding at the time, but Metro may consider moving on it into the future and plan funding around a particular topic.

Ms. Case suggested creating a deliverable list of concerns coming from topics that have had no resolution to be presented to the Board.

Mr. Blake asked that the MAS document what is being requested and provide information regarding the deliverable.

Dr. Banerjee asked about items on the plan that continue to be listed.

Dr. Moore-Gwynn explained that some items are listed as updates as items may not ever be totally completed and will require updates to the status.

Chair Semelfort asked to revisit the eligibility for reduced fare cards for Conditionally Eligible customers.

Public Comments

Comments received were with regard to fare changes on weekends, issues with staff, no-Shows, trip movement, and no door-to-door service by some drivers.

Committee Member Comments

Committee members' comments were with regard to the grandfathering policy, seatbelt waiver, seatbelt extensions on new vehicles, scheduling, safety issues on fixed route transportation, record of concerns raised during public comments, request that public comments be extended from two minutes to three minutes, and policy on ID requirements for military and other closed installations.

For detailed descriptions and resolutions of public comments made during the meeting, please refer to the June 2015 Complaint Resolution Report located at http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/advocacy_policy/subcommittee.cfm.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00pm.