



Accessibility Advisory Committee

300 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

December 5, 2022

Dear Chair Smedberg, and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the AAC report for the month of November 2022. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) AAC Election, 2) Vice President and Chief of Police Visit, and 3) Policy of Open Strollers on Metro Buses.

Issues of the Month

AAC Election:

After Phil Posner resigned from the AAC in October, the AAC initiated its election process. The members were provided with the nomination process after it was discussed at the October meeting. The members submitted their nominees for the following positions: AAC Chair, AAC First-Vice-Chair, AAC Second-Vice-Chair. On November 7, 2022, during the AAC Meeting, the members had an opportunity to hear the views of the nominees, the nominees thanked the committee for being nominated and some withdrew their names as they may be more suitable at the subcommittee level. The Committee completed the election process at the AAC Meeting and elected officials unanimously. The elected officials are as follows: Patrick Sheehan, Chair; Denise Rush, First Vice-Chair; and Kelley Simoneaux, Second Vice-Chair. The elected AAC Officials look forward to meeting with the Board Members at various meetings. The elected officials also look forward to working with the Board, as well as the General Manager and Chief Executive Officer, along with WMATA staff.

Vice President and Chief of Police's Visit:

Michael Anzallo, Vice President and Chief of Police, informed AAC about the crimes on Metrorail, Metrobus, and MetroAccess, and stated it is slightly up than the last year. He informed that majority of the crimes involve theft of bicycles and motorized scooters. Chief Anzallo stated indecent exposure is down. He stated the crime rate is down per million rides. Last year it was 6.4 crimes per million rides whereas this year it is 5.7 crimes per million rides. Discussing crimes against customers with disabilities, Chief Anzallo stated our crimes on buses was same this year as it was the last year, i.e., 4 crimes per million rides. Chief Anzallo stated we have restarted fare evasion enforcement as of November 1st, after a month-long campaign. As a result, 35 citations have been issued along with two arrests till November 14. He further stated that police officers are visible in the system to prevent fare evasion as well as crime, rather than enforcing it. The goal is to get compliance by educating riders about various programs as well as reduced fares.

The AAC appreciates all the efforts being made to make the system safer for all riders.

Open Stroller Policy:

Leroy Jones, Senior Vice President, Bus Services; and Chaya Dowtin, Director, Bus Transportation, discussed the policy of open strollers on Metrobuses. Ms. Dowtin stated the WMATA Bus Operator Stroller Policy has been in the pilot state since March 2020. She stated the operators went through a training on this policy, which allows open strollers

in the priority seating of Metro buses, only if space allows. The pilot has been very successful. At this stage, WMATA is getting ready to communicate moving this policy from pilot stage to permanent with the public.

Mr. Jones stated we take the issue of serving customers with disabilities very seriously and are committed to ensure that policies and procedures we have in place to ensure proper service are followed. He stated if a bus pulls up to the stop and a person with mobility device needs to ride, however, there is no vacant space, the operator is supposed to politely ask customers aboard to relocate themselves on the bus. If they do not, the operator is supposed to contact the Bus Operating Control Center (BOCC) to inform of the situation. The operators are also supposed to inform the passenger at the stop and provide information about the next scheduled bus. Mr. Jones further stated that the same procedure is to be followed if there is already a customer using mobility device aboard the bus, and there is no space for another passenger using mobility device to be boarded. Mr. Jones further stated if any bus operator does not follow the procedure, we encourage customers to report those issues as those complaints are taken very seriously and reviewed further for corrective actions as well as used for lessons learned for preventive measures.

The AAC was pleased to hear that the Open Stroller policy will not conflict with or supersede policies and procedures aimed at serving customers using mobility devices.

The AAC wishes Peace and Joy for the entire WMATA Board as well as the General Manager and Chief Executive Officer, and the Staff, for this Holiday Season!

Sincerely,

Patrick Sheehan
Chair