



# AAC

## Accessibility Advisory Committee

### Meeting (Virtual) Minutes: October 6, 2025

#### Attendees

Present: Patrick Sheehan (Chair), Susan Bowmaster, Tino Calabia, Vanessa Coles, Rico Dancy, Tajuan Farmer, Debby Fisher, Marcie Goldstein, Steve Kaffen, Phillippa Mezile, Sandy Neuzil, Phil Posner, Sarah Radt, Paul Semelfort, and Philip Weintraub.

#### Call to Order

Anupama Sharma, AAC Coordinator, welcomed everyone, shared helpful tips, read the agenda, thereafter, Chair Sheehan moved the meeting forward.

#### Approval of Agenda, Board Report, and Prior Meeting Minutes

The October 6, 2025, meeting agenda approved as presented. The September 2, 2025, Meeting Minutes were approved as written. The Board Report was approved as written.

#### Motions Made; Motions Passed:

Dr. Posner presented a motion that the AAC Elections get tabled till November 3<sup>rd</sup> AAC meeting. In the meantime, the nominations should be sent to Ms. Sharma, she will share the nominations with the AAC ahead of the November meeting, and the voting process will occur on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. The motion was accepted and passed by the Committee.

#### System-Wide Accessibility (SWACC) Update:

Maggie Butler, Vice President, System-Wide Accessibility, shared three updates. Firstly, at the Hyattsville Crossing, SWACC worked closely with community members and internal stakeholders to implement an accessible shuttle service. This ensures continued access for customers while the elevators leading to the pedestrian bridge at Hyattsville Crossing are closed. Secondly, we were scheduled to host a two-part training with the U.S. Access Board for Metro employees on October 8th and 22nd, focused on implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act in the built environment. Due to the federal government shutdown, the October 8th session will likely be rescheduled. Lastly, we are planning to host an in-person AAC meeting in December. As talked to Chair Sheehan, this is to reflect on our progress and express our appreciation for your continued contributions and partnership in advancing accessibility across Metro. We thank the AAC for their advocacy and commitment to ensure Metro remains a leader in accessibility for all customers.

Dr. Butler stated the in-person meeting will be held on December 1<sup>st</sup>, when the AAC will have the Hedding Award. Thus we want to make this a big celebration of the awardee, you all and your contributions to the Authority. It will be at the L'Enfant Plaza Head Quarters building, at the same time of the AAC meeting with a hybrid format.

Ms. Radt asked if the AAC members could attend future training by the U.S. Access Board. Dr. Butler stated the U.S. Access Board asked the audience was Metro employees.

Though, she sees a collaborative partnership with the AAC and engaging the U.S. Access Board.

**Strategic Transformation Plan Upcoming Hearing:**

Kimmy Feldbauer, Chief of Staff, discussed Your Metro, The Way Forward Strategic Transformation Plan Update (2025). Purpose of the Strategic Transformation Plan: Your Metro, The Way Forward was adopted in FY23 to guide Metro's strategy and actions over the next five or more years. This updated plan continues that role, serving as both a long-term strategy and a tool for annual priority setting as Metro works to meet the evolving needs of its customers, employees, and the region. We have made significant progress in the past three years, and this is an appropriate time to Refresh our strategic transformation plan to ensure we are aspirational in our Goals, Objectives, and Key Results. Board, staff, and community input have shaped updates to Strategic Transformation Plan that includes visioning workshops with Board and Staff, over 40 interviews with Board and Staff, Surveys, Staff town halls, Benchmarking from transit peers, Conversations with regional partners and community groups.

Ms. Feldbauer shared a few noteworthy accomplishments since WMATA adopted the Strategic Transformation Plan in 2023. About Service Excellence: Maintained more than 85% customer satisfaction for rail & bus in FY24/FY25, reduced Part 1 crime by over 50% since FY23, and implemented Tap/Ride/Go for Rail. Concerning the Talented Teams, WMATA established the MTPD Criminal Justice Academy, accelerated hiring through job fairs, is helping fill frontline roles quickly, and launched tech-driven employee training for critical safety roles. Regarding the Regional Opportunity and Partnership, WMATA launched Better Bus Network in 2025, served 250M trips in 2024, broke ground on five transit-oriented development projects. With regards to Financial Stewardship and Resource Management, WMATA reduced fare evasion on rail by about 82% since FY23, approved new subsidy allocation formulas for bus and rail, and identified \$532M in cost savings over the past two years.

Sharing the Highlights of our refreshed STP, Ms. Feldbauer stated WMATA reinforced our ambition to provide world-class transit and be the primary connector of people and places across the DMV Region. We have elevated and expanded Metro's focus on achieving Financial & Organizational Efficiency as a core goal. We recognized Regional Partnership & Long-Term Transit Planning as a critical cross-cutting enabler across all three goals. We elevated "Continuously Improving" as a new guiding value and set new standards for customer service including internal processes. WMATA refreshed how we activate the plan to emphasize community engagement and ties to the capital plan. We streamlined priorities to focus on critical programs empowering our team to deliver on our ambition.

Ms. Feldbauer stated Metro's vision to be the region's trusted way to move more people safely and efficiently, is guided by three refreshed aspirational goals. The first goal is service excellence - to deliver safe, reliable, convenient, accessible, and world class service that customers can trust, across modes. The second goal is to have talented

teams by attracting, developing, and retaining world class talent where individuals feel valued, supported, and proud of their contribution. The third goal is financial and organization efficiencies, to steward public resources and efficiently allocate resources where they drive the most value, to ensure service delivery.

Ms. Feldbauer discussed the Strategic Transformation Plan updated framework and stated WMATA's values are safe, customer centric, ethical, innovative, and continuously improving. The Mission is what we do and why we exist, which is Your Metro: Connecting you to possibilities. Our vision is what we aspire to be - the region's trusted way to move more people safely and efficiently. Our Goals are how we will achieve the vision and that includes service excellence, talented teams, and financial and organization efficiencies. The Objectives & Key Results are our priorities and targets to achieve our goals, that include Safety & Security, Reliability, Convenience; Recruitment and Retention, Learning and Development, Customer Service Mindset; and Financial Responsibility, Organizational Efficiency, as well as Energy Management. Activation is core cross-cutting enablers and practices to deliver on key results including Regional Partnership & Long-Term Transit Planning by Streamlined Reporting & Performance Management, Investment Prioritization, Risk Management, and Community Engagement.

Ms. Feldbauer stated we have refocused goals and objectives to reflect progress to date and new aspirations and priorities. The first goal is service excellence and the objectives include safety and security, to ensure all customers and employees feel safe and secure using and delivering services; reliability, by providing dependable service that the community trusts; and provide convenience by delivering frequent, accessible, and easy to use service to enhance the customer experience; The second goal is talented teams, and the objectives include recruitment and retention by attracting and retaining the best talent to deliver Metro's future vision; learning and development - train and equip staff to excel and continuously improve; and customer service mindset, make the process of delivering service as easy as possible for internal and external customers. The third goal is financial and organizations efficiencies, and the objectives include financial stewardship by ensuring Metro's long-term financial health and stability; organizational efficiency by streamlining operations and efficiently allocating resources where they drive the most value; and energy management by optimize energy usage and steward natural resources.

Ms. Feldbauer asked the AAC some questions for discussion as to how Metro can further deliver world class transit service to the region and what should Metro prioritize to deliver on this ambition over the coming years, for our customers and teams, with our regional partners and for the broader community. Ms. Feldbauer invited questions from the AAC.

Mr. Weintraub asked if more elevators could be added in the system. Ms. Feldbauer stated there are certain areas that might be harder to retrofit than others. Chair Sheehan stated we have redundant elevators in all the stations however adding a third elevator would be extremely costly. Elevator and Escalator Department ensures elevators are tracked and get routine maintenance to avoid breakdowns. Ms. Feldbauer added that there are some

areas where there is no public right-of-way or availability of additional elevators as the system was built over 50 years ago. Dr. Butler stated elevator innovation is one of the areas that we are exploring, we are working with infrastructure to identify ways that we can enhance the already accessible features that we excel in at WMATA. That is one of the areas that is on our list to explore what is happening across the country but also seeing what is happening globally that we could integrate here, to move forward.

Mr. Kaffen made a few recommendations: review the location on the website of the customer comment webform and the number of items requested before the individual can submit comments. He also recommended to add credit card to pay bus fares. Ms. Feldbauer stated we launched the Tap Ride Go on our rail system. We are working through technology as our buses are not on a fixed system connected to Wi-Fi constantly. We hope to launch it this fall. About the customer comment form, Ms. Feldbauer stated the specifics Mr. Kaffen provided, are helpful. She stated our website is being renovated and accessibility is one of the key drivers of that overhaul.

Ms. Neuzil hopes that consideration continues for a good network of bus transportation coverage especially in counties outside of DC, where transportation across and within counties, into DC, becomes very important. She hopes for a coordinating plan with DMV Moves not to reduce bus routes in Fairfax and Prince George's counties. With Purple Line opening, Ms. Neuzil hopes for good integration with WMATA and Maryland bus systems.

Dr. Posner asked in lieu of Denise Rush: when WMATA will make information available about stations with accessible restrooms. The new bus system is creating bus deserts in Prince George's County. When will the hearings be held or analysis be done as to where the new bus stops are, and where the old bus stops used to be. There was supposedly always an analysis of people using MetroAccess near a bus stop to ensure, that bus stop does not disappear because WMATA would love to have people using MetroAccess use the bus. Dr. Butler stated for the bathroom accessibility, we will have a report out to the Bus and Rail Subcommittee (BRS) on October 14th. Chair Sheehan stated we received a project plan from Prince George's County on their upgrade to their systems within Prince George's County, which we are tracking through BRS and it consists of infrastructure, micro transit, and additional buses. The regional project DMV Moves looked at as did the Better Bus Network. We expect to get updated information over the next couple of months on that.

Mr. Calabria shared information about a restroom he visited at a Metro Rail Station which was very neat and clean. He mentioned about the corridor leading to the restroom where there were stacks of used tiles. It might be a little difficult for a person in a wheelchair to go down that corridor to that restroom. Ms. Feldbauer stated the team is working hard towards being able to share a more holistic document and update.

Mr. Weintraub recommended improved wayfinding signage at Metro Center, identifying various exits to different venues, will be helpful. Ms. Feldbauer stated clear signage is a part of the scope, thus, we will ensure to include that in the update.

Mr. Kaffen asked about the morale at the headquarters and among the operators. Ms. Feldbauer stated the morale is pretty good. We measure the morale by a net promoter indicator. On a scale of 1 to 10, would you recommend Metro as a place to work for your family or friends. On the scale, 9 and 10 are attractors; 7, 8 are neutral, and then anything 6 and below are detractors. We are not where we want to be. Given the number of people, variety of roles and fields we have, keeping everyone happy and engaged is quite the task. Ms. Feldbauer stated we feel confident in increasing those numbers every year.

Mr. Dancy asked about getting the tap, swipe, and go (Easy Pay) feature for Metro buses. Ms. Feldbauer stated Easy Pay could be investigated. Chair Sheehan stated within MetroAccess, Easy Pay account is a prepaid account that automatically gets subtracted for paratransit rides through Metro Access. Chair Sheehan stated we are moving in that direction, particularly with fare coordination and fare simplification, making it seamless, almost, for you to be able to use a credit card to get through the system.

### **Remembering Thomas Mangrum, AAC Member:**

The AAC held a moment of silence in the memory of Thomas Mangrum. Chair Sheehan remembered Mr. Mangrum brought forth concerns and pushed for the trip to New York related to open gangway trains - 8k rail car series. Mr. Semelfort stated Mr. Mangrum was a fierce advocate of people, especially with mobility issues, being assertive but kindly. Ms Neuzil stated Mr. Mangrum was there for site visits, and he particularly made an effort for the trip to New York, to make a difference. Mr. Calabria stated Mr. Mangrum was on DC's advisory committee along with other organizations dealing with accessibility issues. Ms. Mezile stated she met Mr. Mangrum in 2008, and she was always impressed with his commitment and determination to stand up for people like himself and for others.

### **AAC Elections:**

Ms. Neuzil began by suggesting a slate for the AAC leadership, i.e., she nominated: Mr. Sheehan for Chair; Ms. Denise Rush for First Vice Chair; and Ms. Radt for Second Vice Chair. Ms. Neuzil asked if there were other nominations. She recommended that the AAC first decide on the AAC Chair.

Mr. Calabria voiced opposition to Ms. Neuzil's nomination of Mr. Sheehan for Chair because Mr. Sheehan had already long dominated the top position. Instead, Mr. Calabria nominated Ms. Rush whom he had much earlier e-mailed about taking over the chairmanship if she felt ready. Mr. Calabria added that he tried reaching Ms. Rush twice the very morning of election day about the matter but received no response. In any case, Mr. Calabria objected to the AAC members' having already repeatedly allowed the chairmanship of the AAC to be headed by males. Mr. Calabria said he especially objected now because Mr. Sheehan

had himself mentioned that he had already been on the AAC at least 25 years and had previously served as Chair for years before.

So, instead, Mr. Calabria nominated Ms. Radt for the Chairmanship, adding that Ms. Radt might be relatively new, but had shown she has the "smarts" for the job. He then nominated Mr. Sheehan for Vice Chair. Mr. Calabria referenced two recent October events where women for the first time ever replaced men in the highest positions of their ancient institutions -- as Archbishop of the Church of England and as Prime Minister of Japan. Mr. Calabria stated that it was likewise long overdue for the AAC to follow suit and finally enable a woman to assume the top leadership role on the AAC.

Dr. Posner stated, as a former AAC Chair and the current Emeritus Member, he would not nominate anyone. However, he recommended for Mr. Sheehan and Ms. Rush, both to step down and serve as advisors. He recommended Ms. Neuzil, Ms. Radt and others to step into the leadership roles. He also shared some of the responsibilities of the AAC Chair.

Responding to Mr. Calabria, Ms. Neuzil stated in her opinion, we pride ourselves on being disability-blind, race-blind, gender-blind, rather than specifically looking for a woman for the positions. Responding to Dr. Posner, Ms. Neuzil explained that due to other obligations and time restrictions, she declined the offer to serve as the AAC Chair. At the same time, she feels awkward suggesting Ms. Rush for a position if she has not agreed to it. Dr. Posner reminded the members that First Vice Chair Rush substituted as chair of the AAC for a year during his tenure.

Mr. Farmer stated he believes in growth. He talked about a transition period with having experienced person as Chair to strengthen the next leadership and thus nominated Ms. Radt for Vice-Chair. Mr. Calabria shared his disappointment that no other member seems interested in the AAC Chair position and recommended Ms. Radt for AAC Chair, if Ms. Rush does not consent. Ms. Radt thanked everyone for their confidence in her however, at this time, she agreed for Second Vice Chair as she does not feel comfortable for any higher role, yet.

Ms. Bowmaster stated the person being nominated deserves the opportunity to accept or decline. If they are not present, they are not able to do that. Mr. Farmer stated Ms. Rush is not present thus she may not accept or decline the nomination. He further stated that he nominated Ms. Radt for Vice Chair. Although she declined the Chair nomination, she did not decline the nomination for Vice Chair, and he still stands by his nomination.

Ms. Fisher recommended to look for growth of the next leadership by providing training and mentoring the Vice Chair and Second Vice Chair to be the next Chair and Vice Chair. Chair Sheehan informed that he spoke with Ms. Rush, and she agreed for Vice Chair role. He also stated that he and Ms. Rush, both, get termed out in 2027. Dr. Posner presented a motion that the Elections get tabled until the November 3rd AAC meeting. In the

meantime, nominations get sent to Ms. Sharma who will share the nominations with the AAC, and the voting occurs on November 3rd. The motion was accepted and passed by the Committee.

**Hedding Award 2025:**

Chair Sheehan stated Richard Hedding Award 2025 will be held at the beginning of the December 1<sup>st</sup>, AAC meeting. The nomination packets were sent to the Committee along with the award criteria. The nominations need to be submitted by October 31<sup>st</sup> and the voting process needs to be completed at the November 3<sup>rd</sup> AAC meeting.

**DMV Moves Update:**

Chair Sheehan stated the DMV Moves had its final meeting in September. The task force will have additional couple of meetings. The final report is due in November. The Community Partners group and the Government Partners group have finished their recommendations. It has been agreed that DC, Virginia, and Maryland will be contributing \$450 million a year with additional 3% growth rate for capital improvements. The capital improvements including the changing of track signals, will be prioritized over the next 20 years. The Task-Force meetings will be open, and information is available on DMVMoves.org website. Chair Sheehan stated there will be more emphasize on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Bus Prioritization. The Automatic Train Operation (ATO) has already been implemented and WMATA is able to track the results throughout the system.

**Public Comments:**

There were no public comments for this meeting.

Public Comments can be received via phone at 202-962-1100, or via email at [MetroAACChair@wmata.com](mailto:MetroAACChair@wmata.com)

**Bus and Rail Subcommittee Report:**

Mr. Calabria stated the following topics were discussed at last month's BRS meeting:

- Prince George's County Bus Service Update
- Navy Yard ELES Capital Project
- Next Big Transportation Bill

**MetroAccess Subcommittee Report:**

Mr. Semelfort stated the following topics were discussed at last month's MAS meeting:

- Metro Performance
- MetroAccess Subcommittee (MAS) Work Plan
- MetroAccess Service Updates

**The meeting was adjourned at 7:30p.m.**