

*Access Advisory Committee to the Massachusetts Bay
Transportation Authority
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AACT Membership Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 26, 2015

Meeting opened at 1:05 PM

Board of Directors:

Chairman - James F. White

Vice Chairman - Rick E. Morin

Executive Board

Mary Ann Murray

Ian Perrault

Beverly Ann Rock

Lisa Weber

Introductions

Attendees: Lisa Weber, James White, Rick Morin, Mary A. Murray, Ian Perrault, Nancy Miller, Richard Mahoney, Debbie Weathers, Cheryl Ravalli, David Hogan, Rhoda Gibson, Ithia Larsar, Ester Minor, Reggie Clark, David Vieira, Alan Karon, Rob Dias, Bob Hachey, Deanne Sisco, Remon Jourdan, Miriam Cooper, Ellen Frith, Joe Quintanilla, and Gina Russo

MBTA Staff:

Mike Hulak, Carol Joyce-Harrington, and Rob Sampson

Vendor Staff:

Selena Walckner, Steven Epps, Kevin MacDonald, and Victor Herrera

Other: June Scott, Linda S. Salzer, and Yasri Adbol

MPO Staff:

Janie Guion and Matt Archer

Reading of the Agenda

Approval of Minutes

None were presented.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman commented on the following topics:

- He noted that on Wednesday, July 22, Boston celebrated 25 years of the Americans with Disabilities Act with activities taking place on the Boston Common. All AACT members were encouraged to attend the festivities.
- He read the Governor Baker's response letter to AACT concerning the specially created commission to review the MBTA operations last March (see the attached).
- He explained that the Department of System-Wide Accessibility (SWA) is initiating a survey that will focus on AACT's growth and outreach.
- He discussed the 85 Accessibility Initiatives compiled by the SWA. He made the following points: (1) AACT had no input in the compiling of the document nor did AACT know that process was taking place; (2) AACT did not know about the document which came as a surprise at Judge King's public meeting update; and (3) any accessibility related matters should be shared with the AACT chairman as a courtesy. He explained that input to initiatives were compiled with the help of the BCIL, and in response to complaints from consumers and other organizations. He noted that he discussed the matter with Laura Brelsford, SWA Assistant General Manager, who told him that he had given her approval to bypass the memorandum of understanding

(MOU) between the MBTA and AACT. Chairman White stated that he would never have done that without getting feedback from the full AACT membership. He noted that this is clearly a violation of the MOU between the MBTA and AACT. Chairman White asked that a letter be addressed to Ms. Brelsford detailing his concerns.

He asked for comments or questions. There were none.

Treasury's Report

Chairman White noted that Ms. Woodman was sent a letter explaining why the check donated by her brother was returned (see the attached).

MBTA Reports

MBTA System-Wide Accessibility Department (SWA)/Fixed Route Services

Rob Sampson, Manager for the Department of System-Wide Accessibility distributed his report and announced the following:

- Train countdown clocks were installed at Kenmore Station on August 13.
- Train countdown clocks were installed in all subway stops on the B-Line

- The accessible ramp at JFK Station has reopened after an eight-day closure for repairs

She then asked for questions.

R. Clark asked that he comment on the upcoming rally against the MBTA bus privatization. *Mr. Sampson* noted that he is not aware of any rally. He also stated that the MBTA is issuing a request for information to see how feasible it may be to take the next step toward privatization. He noted that the MBTA is looking to privatize buses on routes with low ridership and the weekend late night service.

B. Corcoran asked that Mr. Sampson explain why the ramp at JFK Station was not fully accessible. *Mr. Sampson* noted that ramp's canopy leaks. He offered to look further into the matter.

A. Karon asked about the fee structure that would be in place on the privatized routes. *Mr. Sampson* noted that fares and accessibility would be addressed.

Chairman White noted that he has complete faith in the staff at SWA and that he is sure they will leave no stone unturned looking out for the disability community. *Mr. Sampson* thanked him for the vote of confidence.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Sampson for his report.

Keolis Commuter Services

Selena Walckner, Equal Employer Opportunity and Title VI Manager, announced the following:

- The new customer service training is in progress and scheduled to end soon. The training includes teaching customer service representatives to gather enough information from customers to address complaints.

She then asked for questions.

A. Karon was asked about the timeframe for completion of the Route 128 Station elevator. *S. Walckner* stated that Keolis is working with SWA and that there is no specific timeframe at this time.

R. Clark asked for an update on the Fitchburg commuter rail line. *S. Walckner* commented that repairs are scheduled through Thanksgiving. She also recommended that people log on to the website at www.keoliscs.com for more information. She stated that she would give an update at the September meeting.

E. Minor commented that the Lowell Station is in desperate need of repairs. *S. Walckner* commented that there are a number of improvements in the MBTA's Capital Investment Program. She stated that she does not have

specific information on the Lowell Station. She stated that she would do some research and give an update at the September meeting.

Chairman White brought to Ms. Walckner's attention a concern that during off-peak hours consumers have been using the areas on trains that are reserved for those with disabilities. He asked how Keolis plans to address the issue. *S. Walckner* commented that she is aware of the situation. Keolis is working on a policy that will not offend anyone or refuse seating to people with disabilities.

Chairman White thanked Ms. Walckner for her report.

MBTA Office for Transportation Access (OTA) -THE RIDE Program

Mike Hulak, Manager, filled in for Frank Oglesby, Deputy Director; he submitted his report and shared the following:

- He thanked the staff at Veterans Transportation for their continued outstanding shuttle service to the Fourth of July concert on the Esplanade.
- He also thanked all the vendors who participated with the service to the ADA celebration on July 22 on the Boston Common.

He then asked for questions.

B. Hachey commented on a recent service delay of THE RIDE service. *M. Hulak* stated that there was a parade that they were unaware of which delayed service.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Hulak for his report.

Veterans Transportation (VT)

Kevin MacDonald distributed his report and announced upcoming trainings.

He then asked for questions.

A. Jourdan asked who participates in the training. *Mr. MacDonald* stated that the training is for drivers and it involves AACT members and others who come to observe.

J. Quintanilla asked what the training entails and what the consumer's part in the training is. *Mr. MacDonald* stated that there is an open offer for consumer participation. VT drivers are instructed by trained and certified University of Wisconsin instructors with video scenarios. He noted that the training is fairly broad and comprehensive and runs for about six to seven hours.

G. Russo commented that she has to go through several layers of staff before she is able to speak to someone about her complaint. *Mr. MacDonald* noted that if calls are made after hours that may happen.

He suggested that she call during normal business hours, unless she has an emergency.

Chairman White thanked Mr. MacDonald for his report.

Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)

Steven Epps, Director of Transportation, distributed his report with no further updates.

D. Hogan asked if consumers in mobility devices participate in training. *Mr. Epps* stated that they do.

B. Cochran asked how many complaints are received on a daily basis. *Mr. Epps* noted that it is difficult to know. *Ms. Joyce Harrington* explained, for those who are new to AACT meetings, that a monthly report which includes statistics on ridership numbers, complaints, etc. is produced by OTA and copies distributed at the meeting and to the AACT Secretary.

B. Hachey commented that he would like to have his response to his complaints be emailed to him since he is visually impaired.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Epps for his report.

National Express Transit (NEXT)

Victor Herrera, General Manager, distributed his report and announced upcoming passenger assistance training (PAT). He also noted that NEXT is in the process of moving their parking lot. He noted that the new lot will be more spacious and provide better access. It will have a new restroom facility and a new pull out area. He also encouraged members to attend and observe the PAT classes.

He then asked for questions.

D. Sisco asked about PAT class times. *Mr. Herrera* said the standard times are from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM and explained PAT details.

Chairman White emphasized the importance of attending a PAT and said that classes are very informative.

E. Minor asked if consumers must pay for their own trips to trainings. Chairman White commented that trips are free and that you should contact the AACT Coordinator, Janie Guion for assistance.

Chairman White thanked Mr. Herrera for his report.

Old/New Business

None was presented.

Adjournment

The meeting was abbreviated and adjourned at 1:50 PM to accommodate the subsequent MBTA Service Delivery Policy workshop for AACT members and friends.

Notables

The AACT Executive Board will meet from 10:00 AM to noon and the Membership meeting will be conducted from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM on the fourth Wednesday of the month, except when noted.

AACT can be found at on the MBTA website at www.mbta.com/aact. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MBTA and AACT; the AACT Bylaws; ADA Regulations, as well as agendas, calendar items, upcoming meetings, and past meeting minutes can be obtained by accessing those highlighted links on AACT's web page.

Comments and questions concerning AACT should be directed to the Chairman James White by contacting the AACT Coordinator, Ms. Janie Guion, at 857.702.3658 (voice); 617.570.9193 (TTY), 617.570.9192 (fax), AACT@ctps.org (email); or at c/o CTPS, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150, Boston, MA 02116 (mail).

The AACT meeting location is accessible to people with disabilities and is near public transportation. Upon request (preferably two weeks in advance of the meeting), every effort will be made to provide

accommodations such as assistive listening devices, materials in accessible formats and in languages other than English, and interpreters in American Sign Language and other languages. Please contact the MPO staff at 857.702.3700 (voice), 617.570. 9193 (TTY), 617.570.9192 (fax), or publicinformation@ctps.org.

The MPO complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other federal and state non-discrimination statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. The MPO does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, English proficiency, income, religious creed, ancestry, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or military service. Any person who believes herself/himself or any specific class of persons has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI, ADA, or other non-discrimination statute or regulation may, herself/himself or via a representative, file a written complaint with the MPO. A complaint must be filed no later than 180 calendar days after the date on which the person believes the discrimination occurred. A complaint form and additional information can be obtained by contacting the MPO (see above) or at www.bostonmpo.org.

Members needing service information or wanting to inquire about MBTA services should do so through the MBTA Marketing and

Communications Department at 617.222.3200 or 800.392.6100, TTY 617.222.5146, Monday through Friday 6:30 AM to 8:00 PM and Saturday/Sunday from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM, or the MBTA website at www.mbta.com/customer_support/feedback/.

Please sign in at all meetings.

Announcements are always welcome. Please be prepared to give as many details as possible: date, time, location, contact person, and phone number. A written notice is always appreciated.