



Access Advisory Committee to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

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Wednesday, May 25, 2011

AACT Meeting Minutes

- **NOTABLES**

Election Results

<u>Position</u>	<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Elected</u>
Chair	Philip Beaulieu	12	x
Write-in	Ellen Frith	4	
Vice-Chair	James (Jim) White	15	x
Executive Board			
	Beverly Rock	10	x
	Mary Ann Murray	11	x
	Marilyn MacNab	9	x

Correction: As requested by Ms. Piccard her name should be corrected from Katherine to Kathryn (as seen on page 9, line 6). The correction has been made to the April 27 minutes and reposted on the website, www.bostonmpo.org

- Comments and questions concerning AACT should be directed to Chairman Philip Beaulieu by contacting the AACT Coordinator, Ms. Janie Guion, at 617-973-7507 (voice), 617-973-7089 (TTY), 617-973-8855 (fax), or at AACT@ctps.org (e-mail).
- Do you have concerns, compliments, or complaints regarding THE RIDE or Fixed Route Services? Please provide information such as: Who? What? When? Where? Why?

- Chairman Beaulieu recommends that members needing service information or wanting to inquire about MBTA services, do so through the MBTA Customer Communications and Marketing Department at 617-222-3200 (voice), 800-392-6100 (voice, toll-free), 617-222-5146 (TTY), or the MBTA website at www.mbta.com/customer_support/feedback/
- AACT has a page on the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's website at www.bostonmpo.org. Links can be found there for the following items: agendas, upcoming meetings, past meeting minutes, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MBTA and AACT, and the AACT bylaws, the AACT brochure, and ADA regulations. There are also links to the MPO's newsletter, *TRANSREPORT*, the MBTA's Office for Transportation Access, and the AACT Coordinator.
- The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meetings are conducted in accessible locations, and materials can be provided in accessible formats and in languages other than English. If you would like accessibility or language accommodation, please contact the MPO at (617) 973-7100 (voice), (617) 973-8855 (fax), (617) 973-7089 (TTY), or publicinformation@bostonmpo.org (e-mail).
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the date on which the person believes the discrimination occurred.

- 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 would be appreciated.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Philip Beaulieu, Richard Mahoney, Cheryl Ravalli, Paul Barresi, Angela Manerson, Kathryn Piccard, Tammy Perrault, James White, Reggie Clark, John Cappuccio, Barbara Garlington, Don Summerfield, MaryAnn Murray, Georgia Feronberg, Beverly Ann Rock, Marilyn MacNab, Ellen Frith, Thomas Gilbert, Betty Solderholm, Merrian Williams, Margaret Crowdis, Jocelyn N., Deanne Sisco, and Marybeth Enright

MassDOT - MBTA Representatives

MBTA Transit Police Chief Paul MacMillan, Dorothy Winn, Tangela Burgess, Marla Hoffman, Frank Oglesby, Mike Hulak, Carol Joyce-Harrington, and Kathy Cox

Vendor Representatives

Kevin MacDonald and Jon Cristina – Veterans Transportation LLC
Victor Herrera – Joint Venture of Thompson Transit Inc. and YCN
Raymond Croft – Greater Lynn Senior Services

Other Representatives

Kathy Roach-Devin – Massachusetts Office on Disability

***Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)/
Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)***

Sree Allam, Sean Pflazer, Alicia Wilson, Pam Wolfe, Walter Bennett,
and Janie Guion

MEETING

Chairman Beaulieu called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM

Members, friends and guests introduced themselves.

Approval of the AACT Meeting Minutes

The April 27 meeting minutes were approved with corrections submitted by K. Piccard. She requested that the minutes be amended on page nine to reflect the following corrections:

The Name of each nominee, each nominator, the office to which they were nominated, and a complete response made by each nominee should be added (see attached)

Her name correctly should be added. Correction has made to April 27 minutes and reposted on the www.bostonmp.org website

Chairman Beaulieu's Report

He discussed the following:

- Former AACT Chairman Ben Haynes has resigned quite suddenly due to a family illness that needed his full attention. I know you all join me in wishing the best for him and his family
- Philip Beaulieu will take over Chairmanship of AACT until June 30, 2011, when the Chair elected at this meeting will take office
- Regarding the Governor's Commission for the Reform of Community, Social Service and Paratransit Transportation Services in the Commonwealth which was discussed at the last

meeting, he is anxious to know more than what was presented at the meeting, such as the following:

- What are the criteria to be used in choosing the members?
 - When will the Commission name the members?
 - Will AACT be named to the Commission?
 - When will the public have a chance to express their concerns?
- He attended the Rider Oversight Committee (ROC) meeting at which a heard about the MBTA's series of public meetings to discuss the expansion of Single Person Train Operation on the Red Line.
 - He was invited to speak at the State Street Blue Line Modernization Project Official Ribbon cutting ceremony, Thursday, May 26 at 11:00 A.M. (at the new entrance located at 60 State Street). He thanked Deputy Director Laura Brelford of System-Wide Accessibility for the invitation.

He then asked for questions. There were none.

MBTA Transit Police Chief Paul MacMillan

He gave an overview of the MBTA's Transit Police Department which is 270 members strong, their responsibilities, the area they cover, and the modes of transportation they cover including the THE RIDE. They are also responsible for investigating all crimes that occur on MBTA vehicles and are assigned to ride trains undercover. He also gave an update on the Bus Stop Bill; his visits to MBTA bus garages to encourage operators to take advantage of the "transit master box" to report illegally parked vehicles and to get driver input. He also discussed the national ongoing "If you See Something, Say Something" campaign.

He then asked for questions.

D. Summerfield: There is a chronic parking violator on the Route #73 outbound in Belmont at School and Belmont Streets. This spot was once a legal parking spot but at my urging it was removed. The bus cannot pullover to the curb.

Chief MacMillan: I will contact the Belmont Chief.

E. Frith: My issue is the “transit master box”; whenever I approach the operator to push the button they either refuse or they appear to have no clue as to what I am talking about. I feel there needs to be retraining. There are plenty of violations happening. I would like to submit this list of “hot spots” in Somerville.

Chief MacMillan: Please e-mail me, your list at Chiefofpolice@mbta.com. I continue to visit bus garages and speak with operators to hear about their issues and concerns regarding bus stops. Many of the operators are happy to have the transit master button resource while many others didn't know about the button. They often feel powerless. I will contact Bus Operations about their training.

R. Mahoney: Do you know what the cities' or towns' numbers are for parking violations?

Chief MacMillan: I recently sent 48 to 50 letters out to the cities and towns, but I didn't follow-up to get their enforcement data.

T. Gilbert: There are two frequent violators on the Route 71 inbound to Harvard Square. They are in two locations: Brighton with a repeat offender, and Oakley and Mount Auburn Streets in Watertown outbound near the school around 4-7 pm.

Chief MacMillan: I will look into this.

A. Mannerson: Is it the operator or public that pushes the “transit master” button? I am happy to know that the bus numbers are now in Braille.

Chief MacMillan: No, not the public; it is the responsibility of the bus operator.

M. Murray: How is the money from tickets split?

Chief MacMillan: The fine is \$100; the town gets to keep the money if they write the ticket. If the transit police write the ticket in that town then the transit police and the town will split the fine.

J. White: It's just not pushing a button at the "transit master" box. The operator needs to have the code. It might help a lot if you would send a memo to Bus Operations asking them to give the operators the code. The classes are very small and it may be a while before all drivers take the class.

E. Frith: Getting the enforcement data from the local police would be extremely helpful. Medford and Somerville police refuse to tag and tow. It would be helpful if you could share that data with us.

M. MacNab: How are you and the local police going to ensure that during the Government Center Station reconstruction that shuttle service parking will not be impacted by violators?

Chief MacMillan: Once the temporary bus stop is designated it will be enforced with "no parking signs."

Chairman Beaulieu: I'd like thank you for speaking with us today.

Chief MacMillan: I appreciate the opportunity. Thank you.

Election

Chairman Beaulieu: Candidates for the Board of Directors were given two minutes to speak to the members on why they would make a good Board Member. (see the attached)

Beverly Ann Rock
Mary Ann Murray
James (Jim) White
Marilyn MacNab
Ellen Frith
Philip Beaulieu

Chairman Beaulieu: Ms. Frith the members have nominated Board Members according to the bylaws. Ms. Frith, I will now give you the

same amount of time given to the other candidates so you can tell us why you would have made a good Chairperson. (see attached)

At the direction of the Chair ballots were distributed, collected and counted. There were 18 people eligible to vote. The results were announced. (results page one)

K. Piccard: Chairman Haynes at the April meeting was wrong when he said the bylaws prohibit write-ins. actually, the bylaws do not address write-ins. There is nothing in the bylaws, so Roberts Rules of Order is what we go by, therefore anyone who wishes to write-in, including Ellen Frith for Chair, may do so.

Chairman Beaulieu: AACT has never allowed write-ins. The process is clear. It is explained in Article VI - Section 5: C, "Nominations": how nominations are opened and how they can be made. There is nothing in the bylaws about write-ins.

K. Piccard: Exactly, Roberts Rules is what we go by. If anyone wants to write Ellen Frith's, or any other name for Chair, people can write-in who they want to write-in.

Chairman Beaulieu: They can but it will not count.

K. Piccard: I would like the minutes amended so that Ellen's paperwork is included since it was in order. People can write in what they like. Yes, nothing is stated so we revert to Roberts Rules.

A. Mannerson: I would have to agree with Ms. Piccard. Write-ins during a city election are always permissible at the voting machines.

Chairman Beaulieu: According to the AACT Bylaws, to be nominated all candidates for office must meet the requirements set forth in Article VI-Section 5: C, Nomination papers must be signed by at least five (5) eligible voting members and must be received by the Secretary/Clerk, or his/her designee, at a date, time, and place to be determined by the Board of Directors. Nomination papers must also be submitted in a standard format as determined by the Board of Directors.

K. Piccard: This is not a question of whether she was nominated; it is a question of write-ins. The bylaws say nothing about write-ins. Therefore we revert to Roberts Rules of Order.

Chairman Beaulieu: There have never been write-ins in AACT's elections ever.

J. White: Ms. Piccard, you are missing a very important section of the bylaws Article VI-Section 5: C, Nomination papers must be signed by at least five (5) eligible voting members and must be received by the Secretary/Clerk, or his/her designee, at a date, time, and place to be determined by the Board of Directors. Nomination papers must also be submitted in a standard format as determined by the Board of Directors.

E. Frith: I turned in both my summary and my nomination papers on time. There are five people sitting here who could verify my papers. Everything was turned in on time.

Chairman Beaulieu: I'm not disputing the fact. You did turn in the paperwork. We discussed this yesterday in a lengthy phone conversation. We discussed your self-nomination. I told you about the documentation I had in front of me and the recordings made available to me. This is the end of this discussion.

Kathy Cox, MBTA Manager for Fixed Route Services and System-Wide Accessibility (report attached)

Ms. Cox made the following announcements:

- There will be a ribbon cutting the opening of the State Street Blue Line Modernization Project all AACT members are invited
- The Wayfinding Committee will be making a presentation at the June MBTA Board of Directors meeting
- The consultant is still working on the wayfinding manual
- The Assistant General Manager Gary Talbot, System-Wide Accessibility, has approved making a Wayfinding presentation to AACT members.

She then asked for questions.

M. Crowdies: I came in on bus Route 459. When the bus arrived at South Station it unloaded a block away from the station. Why not have the stops at Summer Street and Atlantic Ave? This would be better for people to cross to South Station. The stop is located a block away; a very long walk to South Station. Would you please put a bus stop in front? Bus Routes 459 and 455 schedules have been changed and they are terrible. They have taken one bus off. The MBTA has money for computers to tell you where to find buses. Instead of telling us to go buy computers the MBTA should just run the buses on time and change the schedules back on Routes 459 and 455. Now we have buses that leave every hour. It is just more convenient for persons with vision problems to have buses to leave ten minutes to the hour and twenty minutes past the hour. Add another bus between six and seven o'clock. The train comes in at 6:04 the bus is scheduled to leave at 6 o'clock the next bus is not until 7 o'clock. There should be a bus every half hour. This can be done by having the buses deadhead to the Lynn garage and have one go up Warren Avenue. Thank you.

K. Cox: I will pass this information on to the Service Planning Department. The MBTA has no money. It is in serious financial troubles and has been for years. The software applications were developed (free to the MBTA) so any individual with a handheld device can now find when the next bus is due to arrive. The winner of the contest received a free monthly pass. The MBTA shared all their data so that these geniuses who wanted to could develop the application. The MBTA just recently started sharing data.

E. Frith: Who is responsible for relocating bus stops during construction? Is it the municipality, the contractor, or the MBTA?

K. Cox: I will need to do research.

T. Gilbert: I have repeatedly called in to have my bus stop sign replaced with a destination number sign for bus Routes 87, 88, and 89.

K. Cox: The upgrade is still in progress. The goal is to replace all the signs. I will need to do research.

A. Mannerson: I came in on the Green Line and heard there was shuttle service to North Station. Would you explain what is happening and for how long?

K. Cox: Shuttle service between North Station and Lechmere will be going on through December. This was done due to the temporary closing of Science Station in order to complete the project more quickly to make the station more accessible.

M. MacNab: Jim Folk presented to AACT the Bus Stop Sign project. We were asked for comments on the sign and to send comments to his office. At a meeting I attended the group reviewed it and sent in a list of questions. According to the American with Disabilities Act accessibility guidelines there are certain rules and guidelines of how signs are to be designed. This was also presented to a national class to give us some guidance. My questions have never been answered. Would you bring the list in? There are other comments to be made. I have been told that they are now with your office. Please get this to me before it becomes a federal violation. We looked up the regulations and also presented them to the MBTA Board of Directors. The list should not be lost. We are wasting time and the MBTA is broke.

K. Cox: I will look up the status of the sign.

D. Summerfield: The Light Emitting Diode (LED) signs on the Red Line do not display announcements that go off the regular strip such as shuttle bus service.

K. Cox: I need to do research.

Frank Oglesby, MBTA Deputy Director of Paratransit Operations – The Office of Transportation Access (OTA), THE RIDE (reports attached)

He reported that the telephone service for Veterans was interrupted for many hours and appreciated the efforts they made to keep service running.

He then asked for questions.

K. Piccard: I would like to see a copy of the report including recommendations and actions for this vendor so that other vendors will not have a repeat of this problem. Will that be available to AACT members?

F. Oglesby: This actually was not the fault of Veterans Transportation. The telephone outage was due to a Verizon underground cable failure.

K. McDonald: We are taking action to see if we can beef up our response. There are two systems, both of which failed at about 11:30. Verizon was contacted and they told us we'd get next day service. It was discovered that another cable went down.

B. Rock: I was caught in the bad weather at Macy's when your phone system went out of order. I was unable to stay in the store due to their policy. There should be a backup plan for better communication when the phone systems go down. I know that during a storm the homeless are provided for. There should be transportation vouchers made available. I would hope that you would have a plan with first responders or another transportation agency in your future plan of action. There were people in poor health with severe disabilities waiting in the rain. It can be many days before you can recuperate when you are in poor health. While you are planning on getting a second set of cables I hope you can come up with a plan for better communication.

F. Oglesby: The future contract of THE RIDE may entail something like a voucher system.

E. Frith: I am addressing my comments to all the vendors. There are still big problems with THE RIDE drivers parking in MBTA bus stops, parking in handicap spaces and blocking wheelchair ramps. I don't know what is happening with the training. Maybe these people need to be brought in and retrained because they think this is okay. Oftentimes they are waiting for someone or just taking up the space. These vehicles have no placard and block those who have the legal placard to park. They also continue to park in bus stops. This is creating a real public safety issue. How can we work on this issue together?

R. Croft/GLSS: The handicap spaces, taxi stands, tow zones, and bus stops- all these areas are addressed and drivers are trained not to park in those areas. Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS) has 330 drivers; it is hard to make sure all drivers follow the rules. We do have operations supervisors on the road inspecting and looking for errors. We are trying to keep the communication open to inform the drivers that these actions will not be tolerated. We will continue to work on this and beef up our effort. We will make sure that when the drivers arrive in the morning they will see reminders.

M. MacNab: Several months ago a group of individuals attended a MassDOT Board of Directors meeting with concerns about the reorganization of THE RIDE. They were hearing little sound bites or reading about it in the newspapers. The whole MBTA is being reorganized and so is THE RIDE. They asked for a precise statement from the General Manager who is the person in authority. I supported the T-Riders from Chelsea's position. There is a representative here today. But we have not seen it anywhere. The General Manager did give us a precise statement as to why it is under reorganization. He noted the suggestions that are on the table and said that he would commit to a minimum of four public meetings, as well as meeting with the people from Chelsea and the disabled. I am still waiting for that. I don't feel you need to go to the transcript of the Board records to pull it out. This information should be separate so it can circulate here and to others. This will give everyone a chance for input, give comments and make other suggestions (even

ones you may not have thought of). There are probably things you may not have thought of. We, the riders, know what we need and we know what we don't. I'd like you to bring forth the General Manager's statement and circulate it here, so that people can be thinking of their suggestions. The MBTA is reorganizing the bus routes and the subway lines. The Chairman just mentioned a series of public meetings to discuss the Red Line Single Person Train Operation. Everything is being reorganized to save money. There are three areas of THE RIDE that are being looked at: taxi cabs, certification, and recertification.

F. Oglesby: These are proposals that we are looking at for the future. This is in development. This all will be subject to a public process. You will see them in due time.

J. White: Is it possible that other vendors can assist when this type of catastrophe happens?

K. MacDonald: The problem is communication, we had the manpower. We had no idea where drivers were. We depend heavily on knowing where our drivers and customers are. Communication is the key. We need to be assured that a customer has been picked up. We were assisted by other vendors and we thank them.

K. Piccard: When I asked that AACT members get a detailed report of what happened, and the steps that are planned to prevent such a thing happening again, I was not assigning blame. Looking at the whole process, I would hope that the findings could help other vendors and all future contracts. You mentioned adding another cable for redundancy. Whatever the findings, they may help others in future contracts if this happen again. My concern is not just with Veterans but the other vendors also. Whatever the findings are, some may be appropriate for all vendors in future contracts. There are all kinds of different possibilities. I would like for us to be informed. Is this information you can share?

F. Oglesby: It could be lessons learned for future contracts and best practices.

K. Piccard: You haven't answered my question. I want to know what kind of things will be done in the future to prevent this from happening again. Maybe people should be prioritized; for example whether they are out in the rain as I was for five and half hours. There are all kinds of things that should be listed. Not only should we be informed we should also be able to identify things that would enhance the findings. That is why I would like a copy of the report. Is that possible?

F. Oglesby: Well sure; this problem is a first for me. I'm all for hearing his report; it could help us in the future.

K. McDonald: If it is okay with OTA I will provide you a synopsis? We thought we had backup but in a perfect storm we did not. I would caution that different problems may manifest themselves differently. Although we will be providing four levels of redundancy the next problem may be different. How you continue to be able to communicate with people in the face of a problem of that magnitude is something we can work on.

F. Oglesby: I am open to the report being shared.

K. Piccard: Thank you.

E. Frith: There needs to be some emergency preparedness drills to look at what happened. We can look at this as an opportunity. What happened was maybe a mistake. I would invite you to please think about how we can see this, as well as what happened with the cable, as an opportunity for emergency preparedness.

B. Rock: I was told that I needed to wait three hours between trips. What is the wait time between trips?

K. McDonald: It should be no more than one hour.

Open Discussion:

M. McNab: President Obama has just appointed a local Boston woman Deborah A. Ryan to the United States Access Board (USAB). She has served at the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) for over 25 years with 15 of the years as Executive

Director. It's great to have a local person serving on the national board. I look forward to dealing with someone who knows what to do.

K. Cox: Gary Talbot, MBTA Assistant General Manager of System-Wide Accessibility, has been on the USAB for a number of years. He is in his final appointment to the USAB.

Announcements: See page one for election results.

Discussion of the Election results:

K. Piccard: I challenge the results of this election in regard to the position of Chair due to bias and parliamentary error. I move that an investigation be conducted by a neutral group, which can hear evidence and that (if necessary), reopen nominations for this position and that the election for the position be redone.

Chairman Beaulieu: The election results stand based on AACT's Bylaws. We have endlessly discussed this today.

K. Piccard: I don't think that we need to take the time up in the group. There are other elements that have absolutely not been mentioned. I think there needs to be a review by an outside group like the Rider Oversight Committee. This is my motion. I think there is parliamentary bias. I think that it has an effect and that the Board members may not be in a position to see it. There have also been parliamentary errors. This is my motion and I hope people will vote for it.

Chairman Beaulieu: This will be my final comment for this meeting. AACT does not have any outside organization that oversees it, no one; not the MBTA, the vendors, nor any other group you can think of to name. This election was conducted under guidelines of our current bylaws. Therefore the election stands.

E. Frith: The motion is still on the floor. It was stated that I did not ask for a copy of the meeting recording. I did; I was absolutely refused. You said I would get a copy of the recording after the election. I also asked (Janie) for a copy of my attendance, neither of which was provided. Therefore all of the information given was

classified as hearsay. There was no record available for me. I think the law would declare this as hearsay.

K. Piccard: There is a motion on the floor.
Chairman Beaulieu called the motion. The vote was six to six.
The motion did not pass.

The meeting was dismissed at 3:00 P.M.