

# **Memorandum for the Record Access Advisory Committee to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (AACT) Membership Minutes**

**Wednesday, December 20, 2017, Meeting**

1:00 PM–3:00 PM (called to order at 1:07 PM), State

Transportation Building, Suite 2150, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

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## **Board of Directors**

Chair—James F. White

Vice Chair—Lisa Weber

## **Executive Board**

James Tozza

Nadine Jones

Mary Ann Murray

Beverly Ann Rock

## **Reading of the Agenda**

## **Welcome and Introductions**

## **Attendees**

Lisa Weber

Jennifer S. Workman

Lynn Hutchins

Sylvia Mekler  
Mary Davis  
Lisa Weber  
Debbie Weathers  
Deane Sisco  
Angela Manerson  
Mary Dennesen  
Bob Hachey  
Jim Tozza  
David Viera  
Nadine Jones

## **Meeting Minutes Approval**

Lisa Weber, Vice Chair, asked for a motion to approve the minutes of November 15, 2017. A motion was made and carried unanimously.

## **Chair's Report**

Vice Chair Weber, standing in for Chairman White, reported on the following items.

- The Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB) meetings take place on Mondays. They are now being streamed live. Persons interested in watching the proceedings can connect to the stream via the [mbta.com](http://mbta.com) home page.

- Discussions regarding the restructuring of AACT are ongoing. The goal of this process is to form a “super group” with plaintiffs in the MBTA/BCIL settlement agreement and other stakeholders in the community. All AACT members will be able to stay involved.

## Open Forum

Vice Chair Weber opened the floor to an open forum for members to share complaints, questions, concerns, and announcements.

B. Hachey asked about changes to the Uber/Lyft pilot program. He stated that his number of trips was reduced from 20 to 10 without sufficient notice. He noted that the MBTA should provide at least a 10- to 15-day notice of policy change. T. McHenry, Transportation Innovation/Office for Transportation Access (OTA) noted that there have been no changes in the pilot program, and it will continue until April 1, 2018. He agreed that B. Hachey should have been notified sooner.

D. Vieira described difficulties that he has experienced with THE RIDE Access Center’s (TRAC) phone system. Some calls have been disconnected, and the system repeatedly prevented him from cancelling a RIDE trip. M. Hulak reported that there have been other complaints regarding disconnected phone calls, though he is uncertain the cause. There have been no major outages or technology issues. M. Hulak stated that he will investigate.

L. Hutchins reported that she received two automated calls from Veterans Transportation (VT) that she assumed were in regards to her trip to the AACT meeting. The first caller did not leave a voicemail; the second caller left a seven-second message. J. Christina replied that VT had been experiencing issues with its callback system beginning at 6:00 PM. The IT department is continuing to work on the issue. M. Hulak explained that the first call did not register as a completed call, which resulted in the second call.

B. Hachey stated that customers unable to cancel a trip due to technical issues should not be listed as a no-show. M. Hulak agreed, and would remove the no-show status if this occurred.

D. Sisco asked whether or not transfers still occur between Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS) and National Express Transit (NEXT). M. Hulak responded that transfers indeed still occur, and clarified that while dispatch for GLSS and NEXT has been consolidated, the two vendors operate their vehicles independently. He added that depending on availability, some vendors may have their vehicles travel outside of their service area.

J. Maloof reported that private carrier buses frequently obstruct the bus stop across Beacon Street from the State House, particularly during holiday periods. Recently, two Massport buses were parked in the bus stop, and the operators instructed her to stand in the street if she needed to hail a MBTA bus. She added that they treated her disrespectfully. M. Hulak suggested calling

the MBTA customer service number to provide details about the incident; MBTA Transit Police can then investigate the issue.

D. Weathers described an incident in which her RIDE vehicle was delayed; the reservationist could not provide an explanation. When she was transferred to dispatch, she was repeatedly disconnected. When she managed to speak with dispatch, she was informed that her pick-up was pushed back to the time her medical appointment would begin. In turn, her medical appointment was delayed. Following her appointment, her pick-up was delayed repeatedly. M. Hulak apologized for the incident, and acknowledged that her formal complaint had been filed and was currently under investigation. Following this investigation, Global Contact Services (GCS) will contact her.

A. Manerson complimented the MBTA bus drivers for their patience at bus stops.

M. Davis stated that a RIDE driver knocked on her door aggressively, and when she opened her door the driver criticized her at length. The driver continued to criticize her in the vehicle, which resulted in an argument between the two individuals. After filing a complaint, she received a response letter that she felt misrepresented the incident. M. Hulak stated that the complaint has been investigated.

M. Dixon stated that the global positioning system (GPS) units in RIDE vehicles frequently miscalculate the correct location of an address. M. Hulak acknowledged several occasions where this

has occurred. If customers experience this repeatedly, he asked that they contact OTA; they can then point code the address. He added that the GPS assists the driver, but they should also possess map-reading skills.

D. Vieira, noting that he has raised this issue before, stated that he encountered luggage blocking the doorway on a commuter rail train. The response he received to his formal complaint did not include the name or phone number of the respondent. Including this would allow a point of reference for the consumer. R. Sampson stated that using the complaint reference number will allow Keolis to determine the respondent.

## **MBTA and Vendor Reports**

### **1. MBTA System-Wide Accessibility (SWA)**

#### **Department/Fixed Route Services**

**Rob Sampson, Manager for SWA**, provided updates on the following points.

- The MBTA website has been redesigned, and work is ongoing to ensure its accessibility. If customers find issues with the website, he asked that they contact the MBTA.
- The MBTA has reached an agreement with a vendor to update its automated fare collection (AFC) system, known as AFC 2.0. All fare gates, fare vending machines, and validators will be replaced. The new system will improve the current system's accessibility.

- All 178-station surveys for the Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI) are complete. SWA is developing prioritization criteria for removing barriers at these stations.
- The construction at Wollaston Station will begin January 8, 2018, and will continue for approximately 20 months. All information regarding the project is located on the MBTA website. A shuttle will travel between both North Quincy and Quincy Center stations.
- The replacement elevator at Park Street will open in January 2018. All elevators at Tufts are under construction and will open in the spring of 2018.
- Elevator designs for Harvard, Central, Andrew, and Alewife stations: Designs are at 100%; construction to begin in 2018.

R Sampson opened the floor to questions and discussion.

Vice Chair Weber asked whether or not customers will be able to purchase fare media for AFC 2.0 at vending machines. R. Sampson stated he will investigate.

B. Hachey asked whether or not AFC 2.0 will accept current Transportation Access Pass (TAP) cards. R. Sampson replied that TAP cards will likely be replaced. T. McHenry stated that there will be an initial phase-out period; there will not be a complete elimination of all the current AFC equipment, and certain gates will accommodate the current TAP card. AFC 2.0

will move toward an account-based system; customers will be able to use a variety of media to pay their fare, as opposed to only a CharlieCard or CharlieTicket. B. Hachey noted potential issues for visually impaired MBTA users during the phase out; R. Sampson stated that SWA will be closely involved with the transition.

J. Tozza asked when the elevators at Oak Grove will be replaced, noting mechanical issues with the doors. R. Sampson stated replacement plans are at the 100% design phase, but a replacement date is unknown.

A. Manerson expressed concerns with switching to a new fare payment system. M. Hulak acknowledged her concerns, and noted that the system needs to remain current. Vice Chair Weber noted that AFC 2.0 will accept multiple payment methods.

Vice Chair Weber asked if AFC 2.0 will allow for all-door boarding on buses and the Green Line. She explained that this would allow passengers to pay at all entrances, potentially reducing dwell times. R. Sampson stated it will.

A. Manerson asked if the fare vending machines will be updated with correct Braille. She also asked when the replacements will begin. R. Sampson stated the machines will have Braille. He added that equipment installation will likely begin in 2019, and will take five to six years to complete.



D. Vieira noted that MBTA bus inspectors frequently remain in their booths when crowds are attempting to board buses, specifically referring to the Route 32. In this situation, the inspectors could easily open the rear door.

J. Maloof asked about the status of the escalator at Park Street station. After researching the issue, R. Sampson stated that the escalator will resume service on December 22, 2017.

B. Hachey noted a lack of complaints regarding stop announcements in the October-November SWA reports, and asked whether or not this was accurate.

R. Sampson responded that that there were no complaints received about subway stop announcements.

J. Tozza complimented the MBTA for the dedicated bus lane from Roslindale to Forest Hills.

D. Weathers complimented the MBTA transit ambassadors at Park Street.

A. Manerson requested clarification regarding MBTA assistants. R. Sampson explained that customers in red coats are MBTA transit ambassadors, who assist customers within stations. Transit ambassadors are located at all major stations, and will expand to Copley, Back Bay, and Tufts stations in late December 2017 or early January 2018. Assistants dressed in purple are Keolis employees, who assist people with the Commuter Rail details.

A. Manerson asked about the Christmas day MBTA schedule.

R. Sampson stated that buses and trains will operate on a Sunday schedule.

## **2. MBTA Office for Transportation Access (OTA) - THE RIDE Program**

**Mike Hulak, Manager of Paratransit Contract Operations,** submitted the OTA report and provided the following updates.

- On December 12, 2018, Sprint experienced a major outage within the Greater Boston area. This affected all drivers' Global data computers, preventing them from seeing pick-up locations. He apologized for the inconvenience.
- The MBTA will sever ties with GCS and seek a new contractor to operate TRAC, who will begin in June 2018. GCS will continue with its contracted obligations until this time. OTA will continue to work with GCS and THE RIDE vendors to improve service.

M. Hulak opened the floor to questions and discussion.

Vice Chair Weber asked if AACT will be a voting member during contract selection. M. Hulak stated this will be discussed.

D. Vieira noted continuing problems with TRAC reservations that are unable to identify the locations of major landmarks. He added that VT has less difficulty locating landmarks and determining drop-off locations. M. Hulak stated that TRAC and

VT use different databases. R. Croteau stated he will investigate. M. Hulak complimented D. Vieira for assisting him with RIDE signage at Back Bay Station.

### **3. MBTA Transit Police Department**

**Dana Nye, Community Outreach**, stated that there were fewer reports of blocked bus stops, indicating a decline in the offenses.

D. Nye opened the floor to questions and discussion.

Vice Chair Weber asked whether or not the MBTA See Say app is an effective means of reporting blocked bus stops. She praised the app's effectiveness. D. Nye stated that blocked bus stops can be reported through the See Say app. A group of civilian dispatchers were recently hired.

Vice Chair Weber requested that buses have the necessary equipment to verify blocked bus stops. D. Nye stated she will pass the information to the Bus Operations.

J. Maloof reiterated her incident with the Massport bus near the State House. D. Nye stated she will investigate.

### **4. Keolis Commuter Service**

A representative was unavailable to attend meeting.

## 5. Veterans Transportation (VT)

**Jon Christina, Operations Manager**, submitted his report and announced a Passenger Assistance Training (PAT) class on January 10, 2018.

J. Christina opened the floor to questions and discussion. There were none.

## 6. National Express Transit (NEXT)

**Kevin Morrissey, Assistant General Manager**, submitted his report and announced a PAT class; dates for January 2018 were currently undecided.

K. Morrissey opened the floor to questions and discussion.

J.S. Workman suggested that some older vehicles should be decommissioned because of their loud axles. M. Hulak stated that the MBTA recently purchased 100 new vehicles. NEXT and GLSS have received their allotments; VT has approximately half of its new vehicles. The vehicles should be in service within the next two weeks, though not all older vehicles will be decommissioned.

B. Hachey asked if the Crown Victoria sedans will be replaced, noting problems for persons with mobility issues. M. Hulak stated that the Crown Victoria is no longer manufactured. The MBTA needs to replace sedans, though the schedule has not been determined.

## 7. Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS)

**Mike O'Toole, Safety and Compliance Manager**, distributed his report and answered questions. He noted that the next PAT would be on Wednesday, February 7, 2018. Due to an unforeseen technicality, the audio equipment malfunctioned preventing the GLSS information to be reported.

## 8. THE RIDE Access Center (TRAC)

**Ray Croteau, General Manager**, distributed his report and opened the floor to questions.

J.S. Workman expressed concern about drivers bidding on certain shifts, stating she does not want drivers to have little time between their shifts. M. Hulak stated that drivers were previously asked to bid upon certain runs. The drivers did not like this system, and another bid will begin in the second week of January. This process has the full cooperation of the drivers and the union. No one will work beyond the parameters that are allowed by the law. K. Morrissey added that there will be at least nine hours between shifts.

A. Manerson asked which phone numbers to call to schedule a RIDE trip. M. Hulak stated that the older, pre-TRAC phone numbers still work; for instance, if a person called the old GLSS phone number, they would be redirected to TRAC.

B. Hachey requested Braille versions of all reports, including the TRAC report, in the future.

## Announcements

P. Mendez announced that the City of Boston Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities invites people to complete a survey aimed at making Boston more accessible for persons with disabilities. The Commission's mission is to increase opportunities for people with disabilities by facilitating full and equal participation in all aspects of life within the City of Boston. This includes reducing barriers related to architecture, procedures, attitudes, and communication, in addition to promoting equity in housing, education, employment, transportation, and civic activities.

P. Mendez explained that the survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. The goal is to discover accessibility-related needs for Boston to shape the City's strategic priorities. The survey is divided into three sections based on the Commission's ability to directly affect policy within each area. Any identifying information provided in responses will remain confidential.

The Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities Accessibility Survey can be accessed at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CityofBostonAccessibility>.

## Old Business/New Business

There were none.

## Meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM.

### Notables

The AACT meeting location is accessible to people with disabilities and is near public transportation. The AACT Executive Board meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month, except when noted, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM (noon). The Membership meeting follows immediately from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

Notices of AACT meetings are posted on the MBTA website at [http://www.mbta.com/about\\_the\\_mbta/public\\_meetings/](http://www.mbta.com/about_the_mbta/public_meetings/). Visit the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) calendar page at <http://www.bostonmpo.org/calendar/month> to find AACT agendas, meeting minutes, and past meeting minutes. For more on AACT, see the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MBTA and AACT, the AACT Bylaws, and ADA regulations at <http://www.mbta.com/aact>.

Also, find articles about topics discussed at AACT meetings in the MPO's newsletter, TRANSREPORT, at <http://www.bostonmpo.org/transreport>. For more information on accessibility at the MBTA, please visit <http://www.mbta.com/accessibility>.

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

The MBTA has advised AACT that Interpreter Services will be canceled the Friday before each Wednesday monthly meeting unless otherwise notified. To ensure **interpreter services** are scheduled, please contact the **AACT Coordinator, Janie Guion**, by close of business on the Friday prior to the Wednesday meeting at [AACT@ctps.org](mailto:AACT@ctps.org) or leave a voice message at 857-702-3658.

Upon request 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.

*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 her or himself or any specific class of persons has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI, ADA, or other non-discrimination statute or regulations may, her or 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](http://www.bostonmpo.org).*