



**AAC**

**Accessibility Advisory Committee**

600 Fifth Street NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
202-962-6060

**AGENDA**  
**MetroAccess Subcommittee**

September 15, 2014, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

*Please silence your mobile devices.*

*The audio of this meeting is being recorded and is made part of the public record.*

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| 4:00 p.m. | Call to Order  |
| 4:05 p.m. | Review of Agenda & Minutes from Prior Meeting  |
| 4:10 p.m. | Customer Service & Outreach Reports  |
| 4:15 p.m. | MetroAccess Customer Satisfaction and Knowledge & Usage Surveys: Discussion with Jason Minser                |
| 5:00 p.m. | Bus Service/Bus Stop Consolidation:<br>Impact on MetroAccess Service – Oxon Hill Area Bus Study: James Hamre |
| 5:30 p.m. | Public Comment Period  |
| 6:00 p.m. | Adjourn  |

*Date of Next Subcommittee Meeting:*

**Monday, October 20, 2014**



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## Accessibility Advisory Committee

### **METROACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: August 18, 2014**

In attendance: Mr. Paul Semelfort (Chair), Ms. Denise Rush (Vice-Chair), Ms. Carolyn Bellamy, Ms. Heidi Case, Ms. Doris Ray, Dr. Phil Posner, Dr. William Staderman, Mr. Elver Ariza-Silva, Mr. Edward McEntee, Mr. Roger Stanley, Ms. Marisa Laios, and Mr. Charles Crawford.

#### **Call to Order**

Co-Chair Rush called the MetroAccess Subcommittee (MAS) meeting to order at 4:05pm.

#### **Review of August 2014 Agenda**

The agenda was amended removing the Consolidation/Elimination of Bus Service: Impact on MetroAccess Service – Oxon Hill Area Bus Study topic. Ms. Rush asked if this information would be available before the public hearings. Mr. Christian Kent, Assistant General Manager, Access Service, stated that staff is committed to ensuring that the committee will have the opportunity to weigh in on this topic before the public hearings. The agenda was approved with the amendment.

#### **Review of July 2014 Meeting Minutes**

The minutes were approved without amendments.

#### **Customer Service and Outreach Report**

Ms. Stephanie Audette, Program Manager, MTM, reported that all public comments from the previous meetings have been addressed.

Ms. Jacqueline Quander, Service Monitor, MetroAccess, reported that there were no outreach events to report since the previous MAS meeting. She shared that there are two upcoming outreach events.

Ms. Case shared an outreach event she attended for the ANC at Berry Farms in SE, Washington, D.C. She stated that there were discussions pertaining to MetroAccess, which were appropriately answered by Ms. Lorraine Taylor.

#### **MetroAccess Employee Recognition**

Ms. Janice Carpenter recognized Thomas Clary as the Michael Wilson Staff Recognition Award winner. A detailed description of Mr. Clary's accomplishments can be found in the accompanying document titled "Michael Wilson Staff Recognition Award" located under the August 2014 heading at

[http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/advocacy\\_policy/subcommittee.cfm](http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/advocacy_policy/subcommittee.cfm).

**Ms. Rush requested an update regarding alternate formats of the customer guide for visually impaired customers. Mr. Semelfort asked if the customer guide was available on audio.**

Mr. Omari June, Director, Office of MetroAccess Service, reported that the customer guide was being recorded and will be available in audio format for mailing within the next few weeks.

**Ms. Rush asked if customers that have not received the customer guide in accessible formats will be held responsible for knowing and understanding the policies in the customer guide.**

Mr. June stated that all customers will be held to the same standard as the guide has been made available electronically on the website.

**Ms. Laios asked if the new seatbelt policy information could be put on the IVR.**

Mr. June stated that there is a large amount of information that could not be consolidated for use on the IVR. He said for that in an effort to get the information out to everyone, it was placed on the vehicles and electronically on the website.

Ms. Rush expressed her disappointment with the distribution of the written customer guide without the completion of the audio version.

Ms. Ray asked that a motion by the Accessibility Advisory Committee to request accessible formats of the customer guide and other written policy changes be made.

**Ms. Case stated that she witnessed a driver make reference to the seatbelt policy which was on the vehicle. She agreed that having the information on the vehicle was a great avenue to provide the information.**

Mr. June stated that once the policy letter is removed from the vehicle, a customer guide will remain on the vehicle for reference for the driver.

### **MetroAccess Stops on non-Metro Property**

Mr. Christiaan Blake, Director, Office of ADA Policy and Planning, reported that this topic is a follow up to work that has already been done. In an effort to reduce confusion at properties with multiple pick-up locations, Metro made a decision to establish designated MetroAccess stops at high density locations such as hospitals, malls, etc. Metro began with placing stops at Metro stations. There are currently 46 MetroAccess stops at stations and bus bays. Mr. Blake states that this phase has been very successful and has eliminated confusion regarding locations of drop-offs and pick-ups. He stated that the next step in this effort is to extend beyond Metro property. In deciding on other properties Metro has established a set of criteria for an allowable MetroAccess stop. The requirements are, (1) must have a flat and firm landing surface; (2) be at least five by eight feet wide; (3) it must connect to the curb; (4) have an accessible pathway from the stop to the first exterior door of the building at the

destination, and (5) the stop must be within 150 fifty feet of the first exterior door entrance.

A partnership between Metro and the Montgomery County Government has determined that the County Courthouse building at 101 Monroe St. Rockville, Md would be an ideal location for a MetroAccess stop. This will be the first MetroAccess stop on a non-Metro property and will be completed in March 2015. A second location being considered is the Rockville Town Center.

Questions/Comments from the committee:

Mr. Semelfort expressed his appreciation for the standards that have been set to complete the work for the MetroAccess stops.

**Ms. Case asked if the benches and shelters will be standard for MetroAccess stops in other places.**

Mr. Blake said that benches and shelters are not part of the standard due to the fact that MetroAccess customers are provided door-to-door service and they may elect to wait inside the first exterior door.

**Ms. Ray asked if Metro has accessible signage at the MetroAccess stops and if so what, and what the standard is at the Metro stations.** She asked about the tactile or raised letter signs. She expressed her feeling that the signs should not be placed high on a pole. Ms. Ray also expressed concern with having one stop at large properties.

Mr. Blake stated that the lettering and contrast meet the ADA requirements. The red background has not been addressed as yet, but will be considered. Mr. Blake stated that consideration will be made to have multiple stops at large properties.

**Ms. Bellamy stated that she is concerned that customers don't have the right to decide where they would like to be picked-up.**

Mr. Blake agreed with Ms. Bellamy's comments. He stated that safety of the customer is first and for most in determining the MetroAccess stops.

Ms. Owen commended the decision to centralize stops for MetroAccess.

**Dr. Posner commented that Grosvenor is also Strathmore Metro station. He stated that there are Metro stops that should have more MetroAccess stops. He specifically cited Grosvenor and Silver Spring stations. He asked that the effort that has already begun with some of the stadiums continue to include Verizon center, George Mason Patriot Center, RFK Center, FedEx field, National airport, Kennedy Center. These areas have multiple entrances and exits.**

Mr. June stated that FedEx field has partnered with MetroAccess to provide multiple locations for drop-off and pick-up.

Ms. Rush said she thought the MetroAccess stop were a good idea, however, when she books a trip she gives an address and prefers to be picked up at the address given.

Dr. Posner commented that some locations have one address for an area that could span a mile and a half. The MetroAccess stops give a central location for pick-up.

Mr. McEntee agreed that a centralized stop is helpful.

Mr. Stanley agreed with the need for MetroAccess stops at large properties, making reference to mall entrance.

Dr. Staderman is in favor of the idea of a standardized stop, utilizing Dulles airport as an example.

Ms. Laios stated that she is in agreement with centralized locations for MetroAccess stops but would like to ensure the Reservationists do not encourage a customer toward a particular stop.

Mr. Crawford suggested that placement of MetroAccess stops occur near the food court at area malls so that customers can sit and eat while waiting for their ride.

Ms. Case commented on the difficulty with pick-ups at the Veterans hospital/Washington Hospital Center/NRH as vehicles vie for the same space. She suggested that this location should have a MetroAccess stop that is away from the regular bus stops to alleviate the confusion and congestion of traffic in that area.

Ms. Ray suggested having several stops around shopping malls, allowing customers to decide specific designations for pick-up and drop-off. She stated that all high schools in Virginia have door numbers for designations.

Ms. Owen commented that requiring a driver to pick-up at a particular store at a mall is expecting the driver to understand the layout of the mall, which in her opinion is asking too much.

Dr. Posner suggested having numbered flags on the signage to identify the stop.

Ms. Bellamy suggested discussing changes or events occurring with MetroAccess customers with the jurisdictions where these events or changes will occur. She made reference to the Silver line celebration.

Ms. Rush commented that the Silver line celebration was not prepared for the disability community.

Ms. Ray looking research what taxis are utilizing for geocoding at mall entrances.

### **Work Plan**

**Ms. Case requested a discussion of travel training and MetroAccess eligibility.**

**Ms. Ray requested a discussion on permanent certification without reassessment for individuals who have a disability of condition that is not expected to improve.**

Mr. Kent commented that there is a longer certification for customers with disabilities or conditions that have a prognosis for continued deterioration or remaining the same. He suggested that a further exploration of the relationship between travel training and the promotion of the fixed routes system. A customer who is conditionally eligible has the option to choose which trips require the need to utilize MetroAccess and which trips can be navigated through fixed route.

Mr. Kent stated that customers are informed of the expiration of their eligibility in advance so that they may prepare to recertify. He also explained that extensions of eligibility are offered for up to 60 days when needed.

Mr. Crawford explained that there are many customers who are trained for specific routes and not necessarily are trained to navigate the Metro system independently.

Mr. Ariza-Silva asked if MetroAccess customers are eligible for the reduced fare program. He referred to the Omni ride bus service stating that he was told that they do not partner with Metro, other than use of the Metro smart trip card.

Ms. Ray explained the Omni ride service.

**Ms. Laios offered to assist customers with understanding conditionally eligibility.**

Mr. Kent stated that there is an intent to make the fare media interchangeable across the region. Prince William County is not a part of the WMATA compact. The free ride program on fixed route for MetroAccess customers only applies to areas where the compact members have jurisdiction. He said that there are differences between jurisdictions in how they interpret WMATA policy.

Mr. June stated that the Prince William guide explained that individuals that are eligible must pay with cash or with the WMATA senior smart trip card. It also states that passengers meeting reduced fare eligibility may apply for reduced fare eligibility card directly with PRTC.

Mr. Kent stated that the reduced fare disability card is very helpful to individuals who are not eligible for MetroAccess.

Dr. Posner suggested providing the card to conditionally eligible individuals.

Ms. Ray commented that Fairfax County has adopted the WMATA fare structure and that the MetroAccess card will be honored on connector buses. She said that Dash will not honor all of the discounts. She said the state of Virginia honors each other ADA paratransit eligibility and perhaps there is a way to link into that.

**Public Comments**

Comments were received with regard to: Scheduling, and coordinating trips, issues with dispatch department, late and circuitous trips, unexplained change in customer pick-up window, disrespect of a driver by their employer, a commendation for the incentive program offered by the service providers to drivers.

For detailed descriptions and resolutions of public comments made during the meeting, please refer to the August 2014 Complaint Resolution Report located at [http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/advocacy\\_policy/subcommittee.cfm](http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/advocacy_policy/subcommittee.cfm).

**Meeting adjourned at 5:55pm.**