



Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

METROACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: January 17, 2018

In attendance: Mr. Paul Semelfort (Chair), Ms. Denise Rush (Co-Chair), Mr. Edward McEntee, Mr. Elver Ariza-Silva, Mr. Charlie Crawford, Ms. Carolyn Bellamy, Mr. Steven Kaffen, Ms. Hazell Brooks, Mr. Anthony Oberg, Mr. Tino Calabia, Dr. Phil Posner, and Dr. Tapan Banerjee.

Call to Order

Chair Paul Semelfort called the MetroAccess Subcommittee (MAS) meeting to order at 5:01pm.

Review of January 2017 Agenda

The Agenda was approved without amendments.

Review of December 2017 Meeting Minutes

The Minutes were approved without amendments.

Customer Service and Outreach Report

Mr. Carlton Brown, Quality Assurance Administrative Services Manager, MTM, reported several customers provided public comment at the previous meeting, all customers were contacted, and resolution efforts were provided to address each service issue.

Employee Recognition Award

Ms. Denise Rush presented the Rush Recognition Award to Transdev operator Ms. Doris Parks for her dedication to MetroAccess service and commitment to the customers of the service.

New MetroAccess Vehicles

Mr. Donald Scruggs, Assistant Director, MetroAccess, introduced Mr. Eddie Hemp the new MetroAccess Fleet Maintenance Officer. He advised that Mr. Hemp, and representatives from Sonny Merryman, Transit Works, and Braun Mobility would provide an update on the new vans.

Mr. Hemp stated Mr. Brady Childress from Sonny Merryman would provide a detailed overview of the new van modifications. Following the presentation, the van was viewed with a demonstrator in front of the JGB Building.

Mr. Childress stated two months ago, his team met with AAC to discuss recommendations to improve the new MetroAccess vans. The first item discussed during the meeting was the height of the rear seat. To resolve this issue, two single seats have been added to replace the extended seat. The right-side seat knee room space has been increased with the installation of a fold tip seat. Overhead grip straps were added to the front and rear of the van to assist customers with steadiness while being transported, along with entry, and exit from the vehicle. The vertical stanchion with assist handles has been repositioned to provide better customer assistance while boarding and disembarking the vehicle. The extended metal step on the exterior of the van has been redesigned. A slip resistant coating has been added, and the edge of the step has been modified to better assist visually impaired customers with boarding. Signage and padding has been added inside the passenger door, advising customers to watch their head when boarding. Concerns were also brought forth regarding the surface of the ramp and the prevention of slips and falls. Braun Mobility, the wheelchair lift manufacturer, has a representative onsite collecting data for a potential slip resistant coating. Each seat on the van has been equipped with an armrest to provide more comfort to the customer.

Mr. Childress distributed a corrective action sheet to the committee outlining each concern, resolution efforts taken, and a photograph of modification undertaken.

Mr. Christian Kent, Assistant General Manager, Access Services, advised Mr. Childress that a customer in the audience inquired if there were any recommendations to assist visually impaired customers with watch your head awareness upon boarding.

Mr. Childress stated a potential option for visual impaired customers may be the use of sensors. This would require further evaluation from team members.

Ms. Carolyn Bellamy stated drivers are unable to reach Drivecam when seated. She inquired if it could be moved closer for accessibility.

Mr. Hemp advised that he will review the positioning of the Drivecam and report back with his findings.

Mr. Semelfort stated the committee will view the van in the front of the building following the public comment period.

Public Comments

Comments received were with regard to: Trapeze trip scheduling, the new MetroAccess vehicles, the Abilities-Ride program, late trip insertions, and circuitous routing issues.

For detailed descriptions and resolutions of public comments made during the meeting, please refer to the January 2018 Complaint Resolution Report located at http://www.wmata.com/accessibility/advocacy_policy/subcommittee.cfm.

Comments from the Committee

Ms. Bellamy stated customers traveling from their place of employment should not wait until they receive the call upon arrival to begin leaving their building. This is an inconvenience to both the driver and the subsequent customer being picked up. Customers require education on the door-to-door, and 5-minute policy to alleviate these delays. The committee should also be kept apprised of complaints presented in this forum and how the issues were resolved.

Ms. Rush inquired if the call upon arrival was a courtesy or required call.

Mr. Christiaan Blake, Director, Office of ADA Policy & Planning, stated that the call is not a requirement by FTA standards; however, MetroAccess has been providing this service and a reduction of this feature would be in violation of the customer's rights.

Mr. Kent stated the call upon arrival has been listed as a courtesy in the MetroAccess Customer Guide for a reason. Non-dedicated vehicles such as taxi do not have the capability to issue the call upon arrival; therefore, it is not communicated to customers that this call will always take place. He stated the representative from Braun Mobility will be available outside to accept feedback related to the lift.

Meeting adjourned at 6:04pm.