

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION
World Trade Center, 25 SW Salmon
July 18, 2018
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

CAT minutes may be obtained in alternate formats by calling TriMet's Accessible Transportation Program Administrative Offices: (503) 962-8200/TTY 711, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm weekdays

CAT Members Present: Lori Bauman, Jan Campbell, Leon Chavarria, Annadiana Johnson, Diana Keever, Patricia Kepler, Rebecca Miller, Jerry Pattee, Zoe Presson, Claudia Robertson, Ryan Skelton

TriMet Staff Present: Max Calder, Eileen Collins, Cindy Deibert, Alan Lehto, Kathy Miller, Margo Moore, Bella Nguyen, Patrick Preusser, Tyler Snyder, Tia York

First Transit Staff: Damon Blocker, Ricardo Boulware, Ples Bruce, John Joseph, Nichole Morrow, Ben Sawyer, Lea Seeber, Blake Vaughn

Visitors: Johanna Brenner, Dave Daley, Michelle Neiss, Cheryl Noonan, Justin Norton-Kerston

Jan Campbell, CAT Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Approval of the Minutes. The CAT passed a motion to approve the meeting minutes for May 16, 2018 with three changes noted by Claudia Robertson. Those changes were as follows: 1) Changing "Imminent" to "Eminent" which was the intent for Eminent Domain; and 2) Changing \$150 million to \$175 million on page 9 that results in the sentence reading "This project is an FTA Small Starts project with a hard-capped \$175 million."; and 3) on page 7 changing 2019 to 2020 that results in the sentence reading "construction is to begin at the beginning of 2020."

Public Comment

- Chris Walker introduced himself and expressed concerns about CAT Members who are transitioning from member to non-member. Non-

members are not covered by the free pass program that is a benefit of members. This can present a huge financial shock and unreasonable turn-around time to find an alternative. Chris noted the challenges the voting cycle places on this by becoming aware of elected member status only days before the potential end of membership. One option would be a single-month free pass financial bridge to alleviate the strain.

- Justin Norton-Kertson introduced himself and identified his employer as Portland Jobs with Justice (PJJ). This is a coalition of over one-hundred labor, community, faith, and student organizations that work to take action together for economic, racial and gender justice, and workers' rights. PJJ held a hearing in May 2018 in regards to Portland's paratransit service. The Portland area Workers Rights Board (WRB) hosted this hearing. The hearing was the result of concerning Paratransit issues such as a LIFT Paratransit driver allegedly being fired for using the bathroom. The Workers' Rights Board panel heard testimony from drivers, riders with disabilities and others. Copies of the report and finding were provided.
- Johanna Brenner introduced herself as speaking as the chair of the Workers Rights' Board Hearing. She noted that that they were truly shocked by at the conditions for drivers and riders on LIFT Paratransit. She further commented that they struggle to understand how it could be that TriMet has allowed First Transit to perpetuate such abysmal service. Concerns included violations of basic human rights, bathroom accidents due to infrequency of restroom access for drivers, stranded passengers, and unreliable employment transportation due to late service. The WRB recommended that TriMet encourage First Transit to negotiate in good faith with ATU 757, so that the identified problems can be resolved. Subsequently, if improvements have not been made, paratransit services should be brought in house.
- Jared Franz introduced himself as the Policy Coordinator for the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) 757 and as the representative for paratransit workers who were unable to attend the meeting. The ATU represents paratransit workers throughout the entire state of Oregon. Portland paratransit services were described as uniquely bad. The current contractor, First Transit, was identified as having a history of labor violations across the United States. Further, the service model in Vancouver, WA was pointed to as more worker and passenger oriented.

Announcements from Chair (Reviewed just prior to Intermission Out-of-Sequence)

- Max Calder mentioned the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Oregon Transit Association (OTA) Conference that will take place in Bend

Oregon in 2018. Every year CAT selects a couple members to attend. CAT selects who gets to go.

- Jan noted the importance of attendance and activism in CAT activities. She reinforced the importance of attending all meetings, and if that is not possible, to contact Max for an excused absence. The nominating committee is going to start looking at that more closely. Furthermore, if members are interested in running for an office, they should attend the Executive Committee. Max added that CAT members are important for the upcoming Bylaw review and revisions. Jan further added the different committees and working groups that CAT participates in including HB 2017, Special Transportation Fund Advisory Committee (STFAC), Division Transit Project (DTP), SW Corridor Expansion and others. Jan noted that with the STFAC there is a substantial amount of reading and analysis required to be an effective participant.
- Jesse Stemmler described the ongoing DTP. He noted the committee work that has been completed and noted that he could bring interested new members up to speed. Rebecca, Anna and Ryan expressed interest in participating on the DTP Project.

Written Correspondence

None

Nominating Committee and Elections

Jan introduced this item as the election of the vice chair and executive committee member-at-large. A nominating committee comprised of Deidre, Trish and Jan oversaw candidate selection. Deidre and Trish nominated themselves for both positions. Meanwhile, both incumbents, Claudia (Vice Chair) and Arnie (Executive Committee Member at large) agreed to be considered. This selection is for a two year term.

The first position opened for consideration was Vice Chair. Candidates included Trish Baker, Deidre Hall and Claudia Robertson (Incumbent). Jan read a prepared statement submitted by Trish and Claudia spoke on her own behalf. Deidre was not present. Jan opened nominations from the floor.

The nominations for the Executive Committee Member-at-large were Trish Baker, Deidre Hall, and Arnie Panitch (Incumbent). Jan read a remarks submitted Arnie and referred back to the statement submitted by Trish. She noted that Deidre has been on CAT for two terms. Zoe Presson arrive at this point, which increased the members present to 9. Max Calder passed out ballots and then collected them. The result was 8 votes in favor of incumbent Arnie Panitch and 1 for Deidre.

Transit Police Report – Lt. Rachel Andrew

Lt. Rachel Andrew notified Max that she was unable to attend and there were no other Sergeants available to send. She plans on attending in September.

Transportation – Fixed Route Operator Training Cindi Deibert, Manager, Transportation Training

Cindi Deibert introduced herself and noted that she did not have any major updates. However, she noted that over the last two months they have increased the number of students to 22 every three weeks, which has led to overlapping classes. The Operator Training class takes about six weeks. This leads to about 44 students in training at all times. There are 30 staff members and 27 training supervisors overseeing this activity. Additionally, retraining efforts are ongoing depending on incidents, accidents and general activity.

Jan noted the presence of new CAT members and asked that Cindi review training for people with disabilities and older adults. Cindi noted that training is divided between on-the-road training and classroom work. In Classroom Training, trainers cover ADA components, which include priority seating, using the lift/ramp appropriately, going through standard operating procedures (SOPS) and other activity. Cindi reviewed the testing, which include a midterm, final, and final drive test, which includes a component about priority seating and using the lifts/ramp.

Jan asked about the presence of a panel of people with disabilities. Cindi confirmed that they had a panel of three currently. Jan noted that if people are interested in participating, they could let Max know, who would refer those individuals to Cindi. Cindi mentioned that the individuals on the panel have been consistent participants and there had not been thoughts on rotating at this point. She added that some rotation could be looked at. Jan inquired as to whether CAT members could come and see that portion of training. Cindi confirmed that would be fine and that class schedules are available upon request.

Rebecca Miller asked about active bystander, de-escalation, and other potential mental health focused training modules. Cindi noted that this is a relatively new focal point. The first class was conducted and needs some review and tweaking. But, there is an assault awareness and de-escalation portion of both recertification and new driver training.

Claudia asked about experiential and simulation training. Cindi confirmed that in new hire training, students are out picking up customers and working with the

public, while in probation training they go through some of the simulation. Claudia mentioned that it can a big difference whether students are exposed to the sensitivity awareness, different mobility devices and situations of the experiences of passengers with disabilities. This can have a much bigger impact on the attitude of drivers compared to attending a classroom discussion led by a panel.

Anna Johnson inquired as to whether there any material pertaining to how drivers operate when they have a mobility device onboard. Cindi confirmed that it is the case. Anna noted that she would accumulate a list of people that need to be retrained. She added that fast stops and starts really impact individuals using mobility devices. Cindi and Jan confirmed that the best number to contact to report incidents is 238-RIDE. Everyone should initiate the process (CAT members included) through this centralized intake process, but if the impression is that concerns are not being addressed, it can be moved to CAT Exec Committee and Full CAT if necessary.

Kathryn Woods mentioned that she has had bus operators state “this bus will go much faster if you don’t use the ramp.” She has called such complaints in and mentioned that she would not ask for the use of the ramp unless she needed it. She has also experienced drivers proactively offer the ramp in a customer friendly manner. Ryan Skelton inquired about maintenance issues with wheelchair restraint straps not being functional and drivers taking 5-10 minutes trying to work with the equipment before saying “I’m not going to restrain you.” Bella mentioned that all drivers are required to perform a pre-trip inspection and should be checking restraints thereby becoming aware of any mechanical deficiencies. Meanwhile, post trip drivers should be noting any experienced mechanical issues and reporting those to the appropriate people for repair. Ryan also asked whether drivers are trained to instruct individuals in the mobility area to potentially move if they don’t have a disability, which Bella confirmed.

Bus Stop Signage, Tyler Snyder, Manager Customer Information

Tyler introduced this topic by identifying what his team does, including the difference between temporary signage, permanent signage and the future direction of the program. This work is completed by a team of six, including four information development specialists. Those Information Development Specialists change the static information in the system including BCIDs, pylon, plex and all those pieces that are public-facing information. Two new positions include Service Information Coordinators, and they work out of the OCC and send out real time emergency information that results in bus detours.

Temporary Signage: This type of signage is a core function and comes in two types, which are short term and long term. Short term is two weeks to a month and anything over that is long term. Short term can be for last minute construction and emergency bus stop closures and may include handwriting, etc. While long term are more formal, sent to contractors to print and readability is an important factor.

Meanwhile, wayfinding is moving toward universal design. This is a fundamental goal. This means using pictographs and doing bilingual messaging when possible. Hopefully, the amount of digital signage in the field will increase especially at bus stops, which will expose bus riders to the same opportunities for information as MAX passengers. Consistency is key. Currently there are a lot of different types of signage being used. New technology, including wayfinding and digital signage can significantly improve the passenger experience.

Member Comment

Leon mentioned that sign location is important for visibility and customer convenience. Tyler confirmed that this type of information is considered with new shelters and what will be selected in the future. Ryan noted that multiple stops along lines 9 and 20 have multiple stops that have handwritten IDs on them and no schedule information. He noted that this presents a safety issue when trying to collect stop information. Tyler confirmed the validity of those points. He added the challenges that having IDs at every single stop presents with 7,000 locations in the system.

LIFT Survey, Michelle Neiss, DHM Research

Michelle introduced the 2018 LIFT Customer Satisfaction Survey. It had been about ten years since the last survey. The survey included all LIFT Operations including Broadway Cab and as part of the strategic planning effort it gauged customer willingness to use ride-hailing services, such as Uber or Lyft and also schedule on-line. In terms of methodology, there were 503 LIFT customers surveyed who had used the service in the last three months. This was completed in January 2018. People were selected at random and the margin of error is about 4.2 percent.

The survey results were distributed to CAT members. In terms of interpreting the statistics, it is important to note that the 91% customer satisfaction response and 60% (very satisfied) is a really strong and unusually high number. Michelle noted

that for any government agency, 91 percent satisfied is almost unheard of. Big concerns for customers remain on time performance and ride time duration. Meanwhile, LIFT Customers are aware of fixed route service, but don't view it as an alternative source of transportation for themselves. Younger riders are more likely to use Uber or Lyft and scheduling online.

In summary, customers are super satisfied with LIFT, and that is unusual for a government agency. One of the biggest sources of satisfaction are their interactions with employees of LIFT. Nonetheless, timeliness is a concern. And a little bit more flexibility in the scheduling process might help address some of that concern, with online services possibly being a means toward that end.

Member Comments

Lori asked why it had been 10 years since the last LIFT Survey and whether there was a plan to increase survey frequency. Margo noted that looking forward there would be surveys every couple years possibly targeting certain areas as contemporary circumstances warrant.

Rebecca asked about breakdowns by race and ethnicity and the presence of oversampling. Michelle noted that there were not consistent statistically significant differences and that oversampling was not used for ethnicity.

Claudia noted that it could have been useful the PWRB speakers to have stayed and listened to the survey information is provides a different impression of LIFT when juxtaposed against their report. There was further conversation in regards to service gaps, but Michelle noted that this isn't the appropriate type of research to analyze that information. Diana Keever mentioned that her experience with Broadway Cab does not correspond with the slight increase in customer satisfaction over the last ten years. Meanwhile, customers clearly support First Transit to Broadway Cab.

LIFT Operations Report **Eileen Collins, Manager, LIFT Service Delivery**

Eileen referred folks to Attachment F, which were operating reports for May and June 2018. Highlights included year-over-year ridership decreasing by 3.6% in May, on-time performance increasing by 2.5% in May to 91.9% and a 4.4% increase in the call answer rate to 97.6%. Meanwhile, in June year-over-year ridership decreased by 6.7%. Furthermore, complaints increased by 3.6% and commendations decreased by 19.7%. Claudia asked what happened to cause this. Margo noted that there isn't a clear explanatory answer(s) at this point.

Ryan asked about the decline in ridership and whether there was a breakdown by county. Eileen responded that staff could look into that and do some research on stratification of ridership by county.

Margo introduced length of time on a vehicle and Eileen noted that a goal was to understand whether this was anecdotal, just experiential or if there were possible violations of ADA requirements in terms of fixed route comparability. The data bore out that 90% of LIFT trips are happening faster than fixed route trips, which is great. That leaves 10% at right at the fixed route travel rate or longer. The team is working on this 10% and is dealing with average trip distances that have increased from 6.7 miles 5 years ago to almost 9 miles in 2018.

Broadway Cab Provision of LIFT Service Cheryl Noonan, Operations Manager Broadway Cab and Eileen Collins, Manager LIFT Service Delivery

Eileen opened by noting that Broadway Cab performs about 10,000 trips per month for LIFT. Broadway Cab, like First Transit, is an important operating contractor for the TriMet LIFT Program. In terms of complaints incorrect dispatching comprises about 33% of the Broadway Cab complaints. Meanwhile, the biggest of concern is passenger safety issues. 40% of passengers are in the unattended passenger program. To correctly perform a trip for this market, drivers must receive the passenger from a responsible individual, transport them to the appropriate destination, and deliver them to a responsible individual. This market includes individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, memory issues and other special needs considerations. In March, when this issue came to a head, there were eight complaints related to drivers not ensuring that the passenger was dropped off with the responsible party.

Cheryl Noonan transitioned into explaining how everybody knows that the initial training that the drivers go through is the PASS training, passenger assistance, safety and sensitivity. This is the same program that Ride Connection uses. Subsequently, 60 – 90 days in Broadway Cab is completing a refresher with the drivers. Service Improvement Program (SIP) issues are used as retraining tools for drivers. If there is something trending across the team, reeducation and training will take place in more of a campaign manner for all staff.

Member Comments

Leon asked about instructions to drivers and Cheryl confirmed that specific needs, like “cannot be left unattended,” are used to ensure drivers have all of the tools needed to succeed. Jerry asked about a dedicated number and total number of

accessible vehicles. Cheryl noted that in the case of the latter, there are 80 accessible vehicles. Not all of those units will be on the road at the same time. Most vehicles have two drivers, so they will be out most of the 24 hours. Jerry inquired about the number of drivers who receive the PASS training. Cheryl confirmed that it is standard training for all drivers and accessible van drivers go through additional training.

Claudia asked about passenger assignment to vehicle in terms of disability. Eileen confirmed that the rider is scheduled on the vehicle type that meets their need. Eileen added that unattended passenger trips are inserted into the schedule just like other trips without priority.

Rebecca asked about no show policy. Eileen answered that drivers are required to announce their arrival. Meanwhile, LIFT has door hangers for First Transit that confirm the driver was there and help obviate finger pointing type disputes. This may be worth looking at for Broadway Cab.

Diana noted her frustration when she asks drivers to hang up their personal cell phone and they pretend like that don't understand what she is saying. She also experiences this insulting treatment when she requests assistance with seatbelt securement. Jan noted that it is important to bring individuals with different disabilities into the training program for the purpose of awareness, empathy and to develop an understanding of appropriate assistance techniques.

It was asked by several members about being designated First Transit only or "no Broadway Cab." Eileen confirmed that customers are scheduled on the most appropriate vehicle for their trip needs, access of the location and system capacity requirements. Jan asked about getting drivers to move their belongings from the clearing area on the passenger side for mobility devices. Cheryl asked anyone that experiences that to call in and report the driver. Jan also asked about the substantiation of driver presence in the case of finger pointing. Eileen noted that the AVL is examined and the driver is supposed to exit the vehicle and knock or ring the doorbell. This is largely honor system based and difficult to prove without evidence. However, Cheryl reminded how important it is to report as drivers who do not exit the vehicle or ring the doorbell are likely not to do this just once or twice.

Patrick requested the provision of documented complaints and a look back at three year trends as a regular part of the CAT Meeting. Eileen noted that would be provided in future reports.

The meeting closed with Claudia and Jan expressing thanks and gratitude to individuals that attend CAT Meetings, including members, staff and guests. It is really appreciated that people are interested in the service and how it's being monitored and run.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12 pm after a motion by Claudia, Second my Zoe and unanimous approval.