

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION
March 15, 2017
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

Attendees: Lori Bauman, John Betts, Jan Campbell, Leon Chavarria, Deidre Hall, Diana Keever, Arnold Panitch, Paul Pappas, Zoe Presson, Claudia Robertson, Chris Walker, Trish Baker, Patricia Kepler,

TriMet Staff: Eileen Collins, Dion Graham, Kim Keenan, Kathy Miller, Margo Moore, Doug Kelsey,

First Transit Staff: Jon Joseph, Ricardo Boulware, Eric Vaughan, Ken Brown, Damon Blocker, Ben Sawyer, Blake Vaughn

Guests: Lt. Rachel Andrew (Transit Police)

Jan Campbell, Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone and asked that for the next couple of meetings that the First Transit and TriMet attendees include their titles so that we can get familiar with their roles. Trish Baker apologized for missing the meeting last month because she was subpoenaed to be in court.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND MEETING MINUTES. Deidre Hall made a motion to approve the February 15, 2017 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and passed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR. Jan had no announcements at this time.

STAFF COMMENTS. Kathy said that the CAT meeting in May will continue to be at the World Trade Center, Building and reminded members to mark their calendars on Wednesday, June 21st, for the annual CAT luncheon. More details to follow when more information is available. Dion Graham shared that TriMet is working with C-TRAN to arrange a time for the committee to tour their newly implemented Bus Rapid Transit service called "The Vine." He explained the

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service to be similar to the BRT service in Eugene and that TriMet is currently in the process of developing an enhanced service that will replace the current No. 4 service on Division with a 60 foot BRT type service

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS. Kathy Miller reminded the committee of the e-mail from Chris Walker and that it was entered into the System Improvement Program for staff to follow-up on and will be discussed further at the upcoming executive meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT . There was no public comment.

TRANSIT POLICE REPORT. Lt. Rachel Andrew provided an update on Transit Police activity. She reported that they have been adjusting some shifts and having officers working Saturday and Sundays to mix-up their presence on the system. With spring break coming up, the goal is to increase visibility. The public can expect specialized missions with increased presence in the evening times, specifically at Gateway, at Holladay Park, and those areas where juveniles gather.

Transit Police are planning a full-scale mission with the Department of Homeland Security who will be coming to Portland to run a mission similar to the recent exercise with the WES commuter rail service. Once the details are determined, they would like to invite members of the CAT committee to participate as volunteers. This is still in the early planning stage. Lt. Andrew will work with Mr. Graham to get the word out when more information is available.

Lt. Andrew also reported that the Transit Police are preparing for the upcoming Starlight and Rose Parade. She discussed how there does not appear to be any new trends on the transit system but there are still more disturbances by young folks and people experiencing a mental health crisis. They are making the effort to work closely with the operators out in the field. Transit police are also working closely with TriMet's fare enforcement teams to check identification, do enforcement missions, check for warrants and provide a presence.

Lastly, Lt. Andrew informed the committee that the parade routes for the Rose Festival have been changed this year to allow the Streetcar to continue their service.

CAT REPORTS. Jan asked if there were any questions regarding the Executive Committee Report, specifically regarding those positions on the

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committee that are up for renewal – including her own as committee chair. A request was solicited for a volunteer to participate in the nominating committee along with Claudia and Arnie. Zoe Presson volunteered herself. All members whose terms are up and want to continue were encouraged to resubmit their applications to Kathy by March 31st.

Jan shared the responsibility of those from the committee that are on outside committees to report out to the committee. This will be added to future agendas. Arnie shared that he is on the Light Rail Citizens Advisory Committee and recommends others come and participate. The committee meets once a month at the Multnomah Arts Center on Monday night at 6:30p. Jan Campbell will serve as his substitute.

Mr. Graham was asked to discuss issues related to this past winter's inclement weather events. He shared comments with regards to the bus stops being blocked by snow from the efforts of the snow plows. It is the responsibility of the agency to ensure that accessibility equipment is maintained in a timely manner even though there is no specific time limit established. The goal is to do the best we can to maintain accessibility while realizing that weather is not entirely predictable. TriMet is working on its self-evaluation/Transition Plan which may help to develop partnerships with the city departments in advance of future snow events and have a plan in place to increase awareness of the areas that are consistently affected by adverse weather and/or the plowing of snow into key travel areas for our citizens with disabilities and seniors.

Committee members shared their experiences related to difficulties getting to various curb cuts and suggested working with Commissioner Saltzman with PBOT who has expressed concern and has curb cuts on his agenda as well. Discussions were shared regarding reporting blocked drains, connecting with the city's disability project coordinator, and involving adjacent property owners to assist in keeping bus stops clear. Committee members were encouraged to share any contact with Dion to assist in establishing relationships between TriMet and communities in an effort to be proactive to reducing the effects of inclement weather blocking accessible pathways.

FY18 BUDGET PROCESS –

Jan reviewed the recommended budget priorities for Fiscal Year '17 to see if anything needed to be added or if it should remain "as-is." Trish suggested that the schedules in the shelters are difficult to read due to either the fonts printed being too small and/or the lighting is not strong enough making it difficult to read

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at night. Lights are solar and not much sun during the winter season. Dion will share this with the bus stop improvement program. After reviewing the budget priorities for Fiscal Year '17, Jan suggested that all should be included in the FY '18 budget and then determine if they need to be kept equal.

Discussion

The group requested that we do a follow-up on the inclement weather issues in September. Jan shared that she plans to start attending the transportation meetings to express any concerns amongst the group. Patricia shared that there is a need to improve communication when there are unexpected interruptions in service such as the mayhem caused by the protests in downtown Portland. Margo discussed how Lift has begun using the pilot program that sends out reminder calls to riders and plans to review something similar for inclement weather notifications. Patricia mentioned that there were some Lift riders delivered to closed offices and she hopes that the notification program can prevent that. Margo assured the committee that Lift may not know when buildings are closed so possibly a miscommunication. Jan suggested that an improvement on communication on the total system should be continually evaluated when it comes to inclement weather issues.

Deidre shared that it wasn't just Lift service but Fixed Route as well since she was told by the driver that they were at the end of the line which the route normally goes further, yet she was expected to deboard. Arnie suggested that the committee get on the TriMet alert list in order to receive updates, also stating that it worked for him. Arnie also shared that the TM website was useful for planning his trips. Jan added that these issues should also be written up on an improvement plan for TriMet; "Improved communication between TriMet and customers during service disruption." Jan suggested that the committee leave the list of priorities at eight and take off fixed route service plans for now but also felt that the improvement of the bus stop schedules in the shelters be a priority. The improvement should include improve the position of the schedules and clarity.

Patricia motioned to accept the list of recommendations from CAT and Ms. Baker seconded it.

Hop Fastpass – Kathy Miller

Kathy provided a general presentation on how the Hop Fastpass will work on LIFT as an update to the presentation provided by Chris Tucker and Tom

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Strader several meetings ago. The goal is to make it easier and faster to pay for LIFT rides and have customers gain the ability to get the savings of a monthly pass without having to pay for a trip that wasn't taken. No need for paper fares on LIFT. Customers will pay with a Fastpass or with cash. LIFT customers will not have to show their Hop Fastpass on LIFT because there are no validators on the LIFT buses. But will have to show it on fixed route, and use the same validation system as fixed route customers are using. Once we're ready to launch Fastpass on LIFT, all existing customers will receive their Fastpass card by mail.

There's no charge for the initial Fastpass card. There will be a \$3 charge for any replacement cards. LIFT customers will not be able to purchase the passes at retail outlets due to the eligibility requirement. LIFT customers will be able to load funds to their Fastpass card at retail outlets. Once we've distributed those initial about 10,000 cards, all applicants who become customers will be issued their Fastpass card at the time their eligibility determination letter is sent.

All customers will have the option to register their cards, even though they're not required to do so. If your card is registered in the system, it will allow you to set up an automatic payment onto your account every month. It will also enable you to see a history of your recent trips and your transactions. If you register your card and it gets lost or stolen, you report it, and the funds that are existing on your card will be transferred to your new card. On the Web site there's a place where you can register your card. Or if you'd rather, you can call the Hop Fastpass call center. They'll handle all the Fastpass activities, as well as for fixed route and LIFT. Or you can visit the TTO in Pioneer Square and they'll also help you register your card.

In review:

All LIFT customers are eligible for the honored citizen fare on fixed route, MAX, Portland Streetcar, and C-Tran. On MAX, you'll just tap your card on the validator and that will give you a signal that yes, you have enough funds and you can take your trip, or no, you do not have a sufficient balance to ride the service, either service. There will also be a toll-free number you can call or an app that you'll be able to add funds with. You can also do it on the Web site, once you've registered that card. "Proof of fare payment" – There won't be any more paper transfers issued because your Fastpass card is going to track the activity on your account. Even though LIFT doesn't have validators on the buses, we will also be in a better position to track fare payment to ensure all fares are paid on the LIFT service as well.

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Customers can pay their way to a pass one trip at a time, or you can add \$20 every couple days to your pass, depending on how many trips you think you're going to take. And you won't have to show a fare instrument on LIFT, but instead your fare will be automatically deducted from your account at the time you take the trip. And you will have to use your Fastpass if you're using the honored citizen fare, and then tap the card on the validators, just like everyone who is using fixed route. We hope to have a pilot project with some LIFT customers to see how it's all going to work, probably in the fall.

Doug Kelsey assisted in the explanation of the Fastpass by stating that there is no change to how an operator will enforce the fares. Their primary job is to inform, not enforce. If they feel someone is not paying they can ask that person to leave the bus or the train. So their primary job is to inform the policy, not enforce, but there is latitude.

Discussion

After continual discussion, it was clear that a follow-up discussion should occur at a later date once the process is developed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Eligibility Process Update – Kathy Miller, Manager Lift Eligibility & Community Relations

We started the in-person Lift eligibility process in Fiscal Year 10 and have been doing it now for seven years with a total of 18,259 new applicants in the last seven years. In FY09 we had over 3800 new applicants per year. We are continuing to see a decline in new applications. We've gone from 3,184 in FY11, down to 2,634 in FY16. We're still seeing about 40 percent unconditional determinations. There are 20 to 25 percent, per fiscal year, that do not complete the process. We recertify every three years. Customers are notified 90 days in advance that their eligibility is about to expire and they need to recertify. We've notified almost 17,000 people for recertification in the last seven years and we are seeing an increase where more and more people are declining recertification. It's pretty significant that 46 percent of them over the average of these years have not applied for recertification. Over these years, over 75 percent have not seen a change in their eligibility status.

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With regards to eligibility determinations, there is an appeal process if people do not agree with the determination that was made. They have 65 days to appeal. Over the past six years, we've had 9,068 decisions that could have been appealed. We've only had 229 appeals over 9,000 determinations. Kathy shared that she participates, through the Transit Cooperative Research Board, on a panel that's doing research on the appeals process nationwide.

Discussion

Trish inquired about when riders were given their recertification papers on the same day that they went for recertification. Under what circumstance does that happen? And is there a certain population of individuals with a certain disability that don't even have to come into the center? Kathy replied that we are able to make determinations on about a fourth of the people on the same day, if we have all the information in front of us, particularly people with confirmed permanent disabilities such as Alzheimer's, dementia, etc. However, they still have to go through the application process and make sure we've got their emergency contacts updated and that they fill out an application. But TriMet has identified a group of people that we do not have to bring in if we have all the information in front of us, and the person doesn't necessarily have to complete a functional assessment -- about half of the people that apply complete an assessment.

Arnie asked if Kathy could remind the committee about the differences between unconditional, conditional, and temporary eligibility status. Kathy shared that unconditional means that the determination has been made that a person's functional abilities do not allow them to use fixed route independently for their trips. Conditional means that maybe in some circumstances they could use fixed route, but depending on how far the distance is, or how accessible the bus stop is, they may need to use LIFT for those particular trips. The ADA allows for temporary eligibility up to -- we set a year's limit on temporary. That's for people who maybe have had surgery, recovering from strokes, is working with someone who's helping them to improve their functional ability. We do have a number of stops in our transit system that are not accessible.

Second question from Arnie: What is the makeup of the hearing panel?

Kathy responded that at TriMet we have a three person panel consisting of a member of the legal department, Mr. Graham as the ADA Coordinator and then the third member is usually a garage manager that represents as the subject matter expert for the fixed route system.

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Ms. Hall asked for clarification on how customers move from unconditional to conditional eligibility. Kathy shared that it can be people that have recovered from major surgeries or injuries. Or, it can be as simple as someone who's gone from using a manual chair to a power chair. We actually have people that don't want to be unconditional because they do use fixed route, so they are looking for just that service for just those certain rides.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

LIFT OPERATIONS REPORT – JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2017 – Eileen Collins, Manager, LIFT Service Delivery

Eileen Collins reviewed LIFT Operations performance for the months of January and February. She said that much of the highlights that will be discussed include services challenges around inclement weather. There were five code-red days that resulted in canceled service and six additional severe weather days due to dangerous driving conditions. Ridership was down on weekdays, holidays, and weekends attributed to inclement weather. No-shows and cancellation percentages were higher than usual as a result of the weather.

January resulted in 4.3 percent of trips scheduled resulting in a no-show, and 21 percent resulted in a cancellation. Lift on-time performance fell 5.3% lower than the previous year to 85.9%. Lift is working with central dispatch partners and the transportation partners to identify ways to improve. The call center answer rate was 2.3 percent higher than last year at 94.6 percent. The month of February brought lots of rain which impacted service resulting in decreases in overall ridership by 9.6 percent. Cancellations and no-shows were about 20 percent in February totaling 409 for complaints, and 85 for commendations. The complaint rate of 5.1 per 1,000 rides is the highest on record since February of 1999. Eileen explained that the reports are broke down a little differently than in the past due to the complaints about cab service being pulled out for a separate view and central dispatch (reservations, scheduling, dispatch, and customer service is now in one category in order to see more clearly any patterns). Complaints around transportation services are separated as well, for a clearer picture regarding issues.

These adjustments demonstrate the issues surrounding our partner in cab service so we are working actively with them to address that. Staff will meet with

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them on a monthly basis and will stay aware of the issues as we move in to the bid process for the new supplemental service contract.

The call center hovers around 3-4 complaints per thousand which is slightly higher, again, due to inclement weather.

Discussion

Arnie asked if the cab companies are paid based on their meters like their regular customers. Eileen agreed and shared that the cab service is about \$38 per trip which she recalls this to be about the same price as it takes to operate fixed route services.

Arnie expressed concern that other DBE's have the opportunity to compete with the big corporations. Eileen shared that she hoped to have a very competitive environment to gain a responsive bidder. Paul asked Eileen why the cab complaint rate is so high. Eileen responded that that the patterns are usually related to late trips & pickups generally night and weekends in the outlying areas where we have the greatest challenges. And there are times when the cab service is low on accessible cabs.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

CAT MEMBER COMMENTS

I forgot to announce about the Transit Day down in Salem. And it's on April 11th. Ride Connection will be providing rides with accessible vehicles, so you can give them a call. And just call their main number and say you would like a ride to Salem on April the 11th. It will be an opportunity to meet with your legislators to talk to them about why funding transit is important.

Jan asked if Deidre could speak a little about her experience while helping out the training department. Deidre shared that she has been working with Ricardo in developing customer sensitivity training for Lifts reservationists, dispatch, and customer service people. Lifts general manager of Lift Central Dispatch, Ricardo Boulware, introduced himself and his team members, Eric Vaughan (Dispatch Manager), as well as Ken Brown, (Technology Liaison). Ricardo shared that they have been partnering with Deidre on the customer sensitivity training initiative and it has been going very well.

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Deidre shared her involvement with training was basically a presentation, interactive training, about customer service in general, how to be a good -- how to project yourself over the phone. Because so much of communication is nonverbal, that when you're dealing with somebody over the phone, you've only got a certain amount of ways that you can project positive things with your caller. We go over different types of disabilities and tips on how to interact with people with different types of disabilities. And then I open it up to them to talk about experiences and just kind of bounce ideas off of each other.

TriMet does disability sensitivity training for a day and a half with their fixed route drivers, new drivers for TriMet, and they have -- on the last day of that piece of the training, they have a panel of people with disabilities who talk about their experience riding fixed route, and what it's like for them, and kind of giving those drivers tips on how to interact with people with disabilities.

And they need some volunteers to be on that panel. Right now there's only three total, including myself. So I wanted to open it up to you guys to say if you're interested in that, let me know and I can provide you the contact information. There's kind of an informal interview that you go through, and then you can start speaking. And it's typically once a month; sometimes they have two sessions a month.

Margo discussed the progress of the pre-day reminder calls and thanked those who have participated with the survey. The next target group we're going to be working with are those who are showing a very high number with cancellations and no-shows. We're hoping to reduce that number by targeting those folks with the pre-day reminder calls and seeing if that has a shift in the paradigm for high cancellations. And then finally after that we should be opening it up to all of our LIFT service customers, because we've been having a lot of questions about that coming through the reservations lines.

Paul commented that he didn't know this program existed. Margo explained how with every paratransit service that she is aware of, there is always an inquiry desk and that's primarily what they're to do. They're there to answer calls about the eta of their ride. The new system will provide an interactive voice response. So when you call the phone, call into the line, you can actually choose a specific number to get an idea of where your ride's going to be.

Paul shared that the Division Transit Project Advisory Committee will be meeting at the Jade/APANO Center, that's 8114 Southeast Division. That's Division and 82nd. If you're interested in learning more about this project, which

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will have a high-speed bus transit from downtown Gresham to downtown Portland, a 14-mile run. And there are going to be some extreme changes in service along that route, replacing the No. 4 line. The meeting is open to public observation and starts at 6:00 p.m. to 7:30p.m. The committee meets at 8114 Southeast Division Street on the first Monday of the month.

Zoe shared an experience while riding LIFT with a customer that said the cab service fails to come into the dialysis center, and leave after five minutes causing her to miss rides. The drivers don't always know the type of riders that they are dealing with.

Arnie shared that he has witnessed an incident where the MAX train failed to arrive at the airport platform with the doors open. Instead arrived and then immediately. Normally, it arrives and waits about 10 minutes. This has happened multiple times where the train arrives, waits for about a minute and departs. Each time people were left holding their bag in the airport.

Chris commended Margo and her team on the phone reminders stating that "it's a good thing that they repeat them, because sometimes they'll start their message in the middle of what they're saying and they won't start at the beginning. He also shared that on the fixed route buses, drivers don't always allow enough time for him to sit before they take off. And lastly, Chris expressed concern that sometimes in neighborhoods the vehicles that are supplementing for the cab service wake people up due to loud engines.

Arnie shared an observation that he has witnessed bus drivers of fixed route operating without their seatbelt on. He will, occasionally report this to customer service. It is required for bus drivers in Portland to have a seat belt on, and I'm seeing anecdotally a lot of violations of that. And a new one I found now is ear buds, which is also a violation of TriMet rules. Dion acknowledged their concerns and expressed that they are all required to follow TriMet SOP's as well as the law.

Jan shared her concern about Lift operators who do not always wear their uniformed shirt with their badge to identify themselves as the driver of the Lift vehicles. John Joseph concurred that they need to be in correct uniform. The high vis vest is required, but they do sometimes take it off.

ACTIONS TAKEN

There no actions taken.

ITEMS FOR FOLLOW-UP

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.