Paratransit Advisory Committee (PAC)

April 3, 2025

Meeting Minutes

The PAC meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom.

1. Welcome from PAC Leadership

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson RueZalia Watkins at 5:03 p.m.

2. Confirmation of participants and approval of minutes

PAC Members
Thomas Coppola, Luda Demikovskaya, Billy Mitchell, Jean Ryan, Sharada Veerubhotla, RueZalia Watkins, Tucker Salovaara, Ketrina Hazell, Jose Hernandez, Sharlene Kraft, Mark Anthony Phifer

MTA/NYCT Paratransit
Patricia Ibarguen, Diane McFarlane, Frank Camp, Eugene Griffith, Beverlyn Richards, Lynda Edmond, Nathasha Parris, Rachel Cohen, Tejpal Prajapati, Simone Harvard, Steve Scott, Kevin Flores, Sean Fitzpatrick, Chris Messina, Brian Stein, Ben Dupuy, Tania Tomopoulos, Bradley Lewis, Marcel Dixon, Tammie Francisque

April 3, 2025, meeting minutes were approved.

Moment of silence for former PAC member David DePorte.

Chair Watkins asked that focused discussions remain on the agenda regarding efforts to address drivers not speaking English. Also, shared by Paratransit at these meetings is confidential and should not be made public.

3. AAR Service Updates / Dashboard AAR Report

R. Cohen acknowledged PAC's concerns about language access and broker driver communications. Paratransit team will adjust the agenda for future meetings.

R. Cohen delivered the Paratransit Performance Report (An accessible version of the PowerPoint presentation was shared with PAC via email on March 31st).

S. Veerubhotla suggested Paratransit visit senior centers to provide hands-on training on the MTA App. P. Ibarguen shared training modules will be created by May. The outreach team will schedule training classes (20-30 customers, two or three classes per week). S. Veerubhotla added that small videos for each task could be added the mta.info website for reference.

J. Ryan suggested voice-over classes for people who are blind. Sharada volunteered to assist. Library for the Blind was offered as a resource for cir*cul*ating information about training classes.

PARA Topics

a. <u>Update on AAR OMNY</u>: presented by Brian Stein

AAR OMNY pilot was a success - 83 customers participated. Eighteen thousand cards have been issued to date and continue to be dispersed. 10% usage of that total for this newly introduced program. Call centers have provided support to customers, and any reported issues are investigated.

S. Kraft asked if OMNY can be used for broker trips and whether customers can fund accounts using cash. B. Stein confirmed OMNY can be used on dedicated and broker, provided funds have been added to the account (which can be done at authorized OMNY retailers (see OMNY website), and vending machines at subway stations that accept cash. R. Cohen noted there are no validators (tapping) on AAR vehicles. It is all account-based (a cashless fare payment system).

Chair Watkins would like to have further explanation at another time about the difference between the various cards (laminated ID and MetroCard moving into AAR OMNY card, Reduced Fare OMNY, Fair Fares OMNY card).

T. Salovaara asked when booking an AAR trip on the App, how does a customer specify they want to use OMNY and not cash. B. Stein will review the account and provide feedback.

b. <u>Update on Dedicated Fleet/EV (Electric Vehicles) Pilot Discussion</u>: presented by C. Messina.

AAR currently has 991 active vehicles (down from 1,150 with the elimination of MV). Now transitioning vehicles and drivers to other carriers to bring the total back up to 1,150. All MV1 vehicles were eliminated. All older vehicles (five ambulatory/two wheelchairs) were also eliminated. The fleet is now less than 7 years old, with the procurement of another 460 vehicles over the next few months with delivery projected over 12-18 months. Eleven out of 15 EVs have been purchased. 10 are in service and doing well with full routes (10 hours of service). Equipment has changed with Q-Straint One vs. the previous four retractor systems, shoulder harnesses remain the same. As older vehicles are retired, the new vehicles with Q-Straint will replace them. PAC feedback on EVs is welcome. J. Ryan asked if PAC can be invited again to demonstrate the vehicles before purchase. C. Messina agreed to schedule a review of these test vehicles. J. Ryan and DIA met with Q-Straint company and suggested broker vehicles offer this feature. R. Cohen acknowledged the suggestion and offered to take the feedback for discussion.

Note: <u>EV Pilot Discussion</u>: (see above)

4. PAC Topic

<u>Broker Driver Communications</u>: E. Griffith

E. Griffith provided an overview of the onboarding process and process thereafter for broker drivers:

- AAR uses a Federally mandated drug and alcohol program (a higher standard than TLC requirements).

- Training for door-to-door program.

- Wheelchair securement program

- Ensuring there are enough wheelchair accessible vehicles

- Identify customer accounts for those who cannot use high vehicles (ex: SUVs).

- All vehicles must be equipped with a GPS system.

System in place to ensure compliance:

- On-Board Ride Checkers

- Daily Surveys (presented by Director of Broker Unit – Bradley Lewis)

- Site Visits to Brokers (at least two per month) (Tanya Tomopoulos)

- Campaigns to addressing Customer Concerns (i.e., those who are visually impaired – drivers have picture of passengers for identification, decals on vehicles.

- Fraud Detection

  (Note: B. Lewis and T. Tomopoulos were unable to complete presentations due to time constraints.)

E. Griffith shared that, because of PAC feedback, and after meeting with the broker companies, efforts are being put in place to use the broker voice activated App which can provide a two-way communication system for customers who may not speak English and drivers who also don't speak English (or whatever language is being used can be translated to the appropriate language for both driver and customer may communicate effectively).

S. Veerubhotla shared she is familiar with this technology, and with proper training it could be effective. She raised the question about how non-smart phone users would participate. The app/technology would be in the vehicle, not on a smartphone.

S. Kraft expressed concerns that her constituents have never received surveys. E. Griffith explained live phone calls are made to customers from random surveys. Brokers receive daily score card results and must respond to Paratransit with any plan for corrective action.

K. Hazell asked if there was another way for customers and their caregivers to provide feedback. R. Cohen replied that Paratransit can compile a list of the different ways feedback may be shared.

Dates for the remaining 2025 PAC meetings will be sent out to the PAC via email.

Jean moved to end the meeting, which was seconded.

5. New Business

No new business. Meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Paratransit Report

Statistical results for the month of January 2025 are shown below.

			Current Month: January 2025			Chg Prev Month	Chg 2024	Chg 2023	12-Month Average		
Category	**Performance Indicator**	**December'24**	**2025**	**2024**	**2023**				**This Year**	**Last Year**	**% Change**
Ridership	Total Trips Completed*	803,110	804,529	657,961	582,223	+0.2%	+22.3%	+38.2%	780,846	642,641	+21.5%
	Total Ridership	1,146,704	1,138,610	932,149	836,676	-0.7%	+22.2%	+36.1%	1,123,846	940,132	+19.5%
On-Time Performance	Pick-up Primary 20 Minute	86.0%	92.0%	92.0%	94.0%	+6.0%	0.0%	-2.0%	87.7%	89.4%	-1.8%
	Pick-up Broker 20 Minute	94.0%	95.0%	91.0%	89.0%	+1.0%	+4.0%	+6.0%	93.5%	86.9%	+6.6%
	Pick-up Primary 30 Minute	93.0%	97.0%	97.0%	98.0%	+4.0%	0.0%	-1.0%	94.2%	95.3%	-1.2%
	Pick-up Broker 30 Minute	98.0%	98.0%	96.0%	96.0%	0.0%	+2.0%	+2.0%	97.4%	94.3%	+3.2%
	Appointment OTP Trips Primary - 30 Min Early to <1 Late (On-Time)*	54.0%	57.0%	47.0%	47.0%	+3.0%	+10.0%	+10.0%	51.7%	47.4%	+4.3%
	Appointment OTP Trips Primary - Early*	27.0%	33.0%	45.0%	48.0%	+6.0%	-12.0%	-15.0%	35.1%	44.4%	-9.3%
	Appointment OTP Trips Broker - 30 Min Early to <1 Late (On-Time)*	51.0%	50.0%	49.0%	38.0%	-1.0%	+1.0%	+12.0%	51.3%	42.7%	+8.7%
	Appointment OTP Trips Broker - Early*	35.0%	42.0%	40.0%	53.0%	+7.0%	+2.0%	-11.0%	36.8%	46.3%	-9.4%
Ride Time	Ride Time Variance Performance: Actual Trip Duration vs. Planned Trip Duration - At or Better Than Plan	75.0%	80.0%	83.0%	79.0%	+5.0%	-3.0%	+1.0%	78.9%	81.0%	-2.1%
	Average Actual Trip Duration in Minutes	38	35	35	35	-7.9%	0.0%	0.0%	37	38	-1.6%
	Max Ride Time Performance Primary	98.0%	99.0%	99.0%	98.0%	+1.0%	0.0%	+1.0%	98.3%	98.2%	+0.2%
	Max Ride Time Performance Broker	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	99.0%	98.9%	+0.1%
Customer Experience	Frequent Rider Experience Primary*	82.0%	87.0%	87.0%	86.0%	+5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	83.3%	84.2%	-0.8%
	Frequent Rider Experience Broker*	90.0%	91.0%	88.0%	95.0%	+1.0%	+3.0%	3.0%	90.4%	87.3%	+3.2%
Provider No-Shows	Provider No-Shows per 1,000 Schedule Trips Primary	1.80	0.60	0.43	0.54	-66.7%	+39.5%	+11.1%	1.07	0.65	+65.0%
	Provider No-Shows per 1,000 Schedule Trips Broker	1.20	0.70	1.00	4.40	-41.7%	-30.0%	-84.1%	0.86	2.24	-61.7%
Customer Complaints	Passenger Complaints - Transportation Service Quality Per 1000 Completed Trips	4.6	3.9	3.8	0.7	-15.2%	+2.6%	+457.1%	4.0	3.4	+18.1%
	Passenger Complaints - Non-Transportation Service Quality Per 1000 Completed Trips	1.5	1.3	1.1	3.8	-13.3%	+18.2%	-65.8%	1.3	2.0	-36.8%
Call center	Percent of Calls Answered	97.0%	99.0%	98.0%	97.0%	+2.0%	+1.0%	+2.0%	97.3%	95.8%	+1.5%
	Average Call Answer Speed in Seconds	38	8	15	36	-79.0%	-46.7%	-77.8%	32	45	-28.7%
Eligibility	Total Registrants	176,931	n/a	176,455	174,840	n/a	n/a	n/a	178,268	176,309	+1.1%

*** For all Paratransit performance metrics, visit https://metrics.mta.info/

Note: 1) The percentage comparisons are the percentage point change instead of the percentage change.
2) Trip data and resulting metrics are preliminary and subject to adjustments.
3) Total Registrants data for January 2025 is not available in this report.