

Paratransit Advisory Committee (PAC)

July 18, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Meeting commenced at 5:10 p.m.

PAC Attendees: Thomas Coppola, David H. DePorte, Edward S. Friedman, Ellen Rubin, Ketrina Hazell, Tucker B. Salovaara, Sharada Veerubhotla, RueZali Watkins, Sharlene Kraft

PAC Attendees by Teleconference Call:

Lyudmila Demikovskaya, Mindy Jacobsen, Stanley Weinblatt, Ken Stewart

PAC did not attend: John Moynihan

NYC Transit Staff Attendees: Brandon Anderson, Michael Cosgrove, Lynda Edmond, Donna Fredericksen, Raymond Gaillard, Felicia D. Jones, Amanda Hill, Steven LoPiano, Eunice Poku, Cassandra Lubin-Richards, Kenneth Stuart, Chantal Sealy Walker, Brenda Walker

Guests: Quemuel Arroyo (NYC DOT on the phone), Victor Calise (Commissioner of MOPD), Judith Buckley (NYCT ADA), Uwvie Obodo (PCA for Tucker B. Salovaara),

Prior to the meeting, PAC members were able to board the new Ford Transit vehicle which was parked outside of 33-00 Northern Blvd.

Introductions – David H. DePorte, PAC Chair

Mr. DePorte introduced the newest PAC member Ms. Sharlene Czaja-Kraft. Ms. Czaja-Kraft informed everyone she serves on

the Queens Advisory Board of Visions and coordinates book discussion at Andrew Heiskell Braille and Talking Book Library.

I. Approval of Minutes – David H. DePorte, PAC Chair

Mr. DePorte called for the approval of the May 16, 2017 minutes. Ms. Watkins moved to approve the minutes and Ms. Rubin seconded the motion.

II. AAR Service Report – Vice President Steve LoPiano

As requested by the PAC, VP LoPiano provided a summary of the Paratransit Report.

VP LoPiano thanked Judith Buckley from MTA NYCT, ADA Compliance for attending and explained to the committee that Ms. Buckley was there to observe the Paratransit Advisory Committee. VP LoPiano also thanked Commissioner Calise for attending the meeting.

Registrants increased 3.1% comparing 144,795 in May 2016 to 149,306 in May 2017.

Trips Requested increased 1.6% comparing 681,317 in May 2016 to 691,946 in May 2017.

Early Cancellations increased 0.8% comparing 86,106 in May 2016 to 86,826 in May 2017.

Trips Scheduled increased 1.6% comparing 589,664 in May 2016 to 598,981 in May 2017.

Late Cancellation increased 10.5% comparing 17,726 in May 2016 to 19,583 in May 2017.

Trips Completed remained consistent at 540,218 in May 2016 and 540,268 in May 2017.

Customer No-Shows decreased 5.3% comparing 8,352 in May 2016 to 7,910 in May 2017.

Carrier No-Shows decreased 26.9% comparing 1,678 in May 2016 to 1,227 in May 2017.

No-Fault No-Show decreased 2.5% to 3,454 in May 2016 to 3,368 in May 2017.

Total No-Shows decreased 7.3% comparing 13,484 in May 2016 to 12,505 in May 2017.

On Time Performance increased 0.4% comparing 89.4% in May 2016 to 89.8% in May 2017.

Appointments On Time remained consistent comparing 81.0% in May 2016 to 81.0% in May 2017.

Late Trips by Carriers decreased 11.8% comparing 41,848 in May 2016 to 36,917 in May 2017.

Complaints per 1,000 Trips decreased from 7.4% comparing 6.1 in May 2016 to 5.6 in May 2017.

Commendations decreased 12.7% comparing 827 in May 2016 to 722 in May 2017.

Total Boardings decreased 1.0% comparing 780,812 in May 2016 to 788,592 in May 2017.

PAC Comments

Mr. Coppola asked if the statistics included voucher and broker service and added that customers in Staten Island are being told by the voucher companies that they do not have available vehicles. When a customer calls for ETA's they are told the vehicle will arrive in 15 minutes and that may continue after a few calls. VP LoPiano stated that certain numbers calculate Dedicated Carrier, vouchers and brokers. However, customers that encounter problems should let us know by contacting the AAR comment line so that we are aware of the lack of service and we will investigate the issue.

Ms. Watkins expressed how customers who travel from other boroughs also experience service issues from broker companies and AAR may want to track those issues. Mr. Cosgrove and Mr. Stuart explained that internally we also track these companies. We regularly review 5 key areas as part of the service monitoring.

Ms. Ryan had concerns regarding the statistic for On-Time Appointment which reported a fifth of customers are not arriving on time. She arrived late today. VP LoPiano explained that he has received many complaints about receiving an early pick up time at the time of reservation. The Scheduling Department made adjustments however this impacted the appointment time. Scheduling continues working on improving the exact time to meet everyone needs.

III. PAC Topic

Discussion of the Ford Transit vehicle

Mr. DePorte opened the floor to discuss and solicited feedback from PAC members regarding the two new Ford test vehicles that were viewed before the meeting. Mr. Salovarra inquired about how a wheelchair customer would exit the vehicle in the case of an emergency since the back door doesn't have a ramp. Mr. Calise explained if there is an emergency the fire or police department would physically take a person out. It should also be

noted that any vehicle placed in service has to meet DOT standards.

Mr. DePorte and Mr. Coppola stated when entering the large Ford vehicle it didn't have any handrails to hold onto and the seats were hard and uncomfortable. Ms. Veerubhotla mentioned we should consider not getting fabric for the seats since the upkeep is more expensive.

VP LoPiano and Mr. Cosgrove explained that configuration of the seats and surface can be modified depending on the design we choose. Also, adding a higher roof is available for both the smaller and larger vehicle.

Ms. Kraft concurred with previous comments and added how the steps were high when getting into the vehicle. Mr. Coppola stated the steps were also narrow. Ms. Kraft also prefers the higher roof which accommodates taller customers. Some of the members were also pleased at how the configuration allowed for wheelchair customer to be secured in the front without interfering with other customers entering and exiting the vehicle.

Mr. Friedman questioned if the MV1 is being phased out and is this the reason why Paratransit is testing these new vehicles. VP LoPiano clarified that we want to create a test program which allows us to lease different vehicles so we can test them and get customer feedback. If and when we are ready to purchase a new vehicle we have the ability to choose from different vehicles. We are paying close attention to the chassis of the vehicle to see if they hold up in the New York City environment. The PAC was interested in how we planned to get borough wide exposure during the test lease period. VP LoPiano stated that we initially intended leasing 2 of the vehicles shown today but based on PAC question we would move to lease 5 of the vehicles.

Ms. Ryan stated she had difficulty turning her wheelchair around once on the vehicle and the seatbelt strap was too high which pressed against her neck. However, she likes how AAR will have the ability to configure the seats and provide customers more space. The larger vehicle allows customers to look out the window because you are facing the front of the vehicle. Ms. Ryan also mentioned that the training of drivers is essential.

Mr. Quemel questioned if the capacity of these vehicles are compatible to what we currently have. VP LoPiano explained since the configuration can be changed at any time they can accommodate the same or more.

Commissioner Calise asked about the possibility of testing a vehicle with a rear lift. This would allow a larger step on the side door which would make it much easier for an ambulatory customer to exit the side entrance.

IV. PAC Topic **AAR Bill of Rights**

VP LoPiano explained to the committee the genesis of why the Bill of Rights were being developed. Paratransit Staff solicited information from different cities such as Miami, Boston, and Los Angeles to assist in developing this draft. Once the feedback of the Paratransit Advisory Committee is provided, it will be revised again and ultimately sent to the MTA for final review and comments.

Mr. Weinblatt believes the Bill of Rights draft he reviewed was well prepared. Ms. Kraft agreed, but added the need for additional driver training when assisting visually impaired customers.

VP LoPiano ensured that comments and concerns dealing with the drivers will be addressed in a new training refresher course that we

are working on now. This will be implemented to both our Dedicated Carrier and Brokers service drivers. The Taxi & Limousine Commission will provide handouts to all taxi drivers. We hope to have this completed by the next PAC meeting for the feedback of the Advisory Committee.

There was further conversation regarding the Bill of Rights and possible edits. Mr. DePorte offered to assist personally on this project.

Discussions and Member Feedback

Mr. Salovaara expressed how drivers aren't entering certain hospital, colleges and university locations which makes it difficult to connect with AAR. Mr. LoPiano informed committee that we may have to reach out to institutions concerning the entering of AAR vehicles.

Ms. Fredericksen explained how she works with Standard & Compliance, Operations Planning and different venues throughout the city to establish designated AAR bus stop locations. However, locations like NYU Langone have precluded AAR from entering their property. There are also issues where often ambulances or cars are stopped in designated AAR stops and when this happens we look to the local precincts to enforce the parking rules.

V. New/Old Business

Mr. Friedman wanted to discuss old business which dealt with the PAC Guidelines. He wanted to know if the suggestion he had recommended about required in person attendance was being considered. Mr. Stuart informed the committee that there is an expectation that PAC members are required to attend in person PAC meetings. However, if the committee wants to establish an

attendance requirement they may come to an agreement and Transit will considered it

Ms. Rubin, Mr. Friedman and Ms. Watkins will work together to propose revisions to the current By-Laws. They will seek concurrence of the Advisory Committee. Once the committee is agreement, VP LoPiano and Commissioner Calise will review the proposed revisions for possible adoption.

Ms. Watkins still would like to discuss emergency procedures when a customer is on a vehicle and there is an incident. Additionally, it would be helpful to understand how trips scheduled later on the effected route are dealt with.

Closing

Ms. Watkins moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Czaja-Kraft seconded the motion. Motioned carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned just before 7:00pm.