

Paratransit Advisory Committee (PAC)

September 25, 2018 Minutes

Meeting commenced at 5:05 p.m.

PAC Attendees: Thomas Coppola, Lyudmila Demikhovskaya, David H. DePorte, Mindy Jacobsen, Katrina Hazell, Ellen Rubin, Jean Ryan, Tucker B. Salovaara, Ken Stewart, Sharada Veerubhotla, RueZalia Watkins, Stanley Weinblatt

PAC members on the phone: Sharlene Kraft

NYC Transit Staff Attendees: Brian Altschul, Brandon Anderson, Michael Cosgrove, Tom Chin, Lynda Edmond, Tammie Francisque, Donna Fredericksen, Eugene Griffith, Felicia Jones, Evan Kelly, John Morris, Paula Pelliccia, Genesis Rodriguez, John Salerno, Kenneth Stuart, Shirley Teran-Marty,

Guests: Judith Buckley (Deputy Chief ADA Officer), Victor Calise (Commissioner of MOPD), Edward Friedman (MOPD TLC Coordinator), Uwvie Obodo (PCA for Tucker B. Salovaara)

Telephone Conferenced Guest: Quemuel Arroyo (DOT Policy Officer for Accessibility & ADA Coordinator)

Introductions – David DePorte, PAC Chair

I. Approval of Minutes – David DePorte, PAC Chair
July 17, 2018 minutes were approved unanimously.

II. AAR Service Report VP Michael Cosgrove

As requested by the PAC, VP Cosgrove provided a summary of operating statistics in the Paratransit Report. A copy is attached to these minutes.

PAC Feedback

Mr. Stewart wanted confirmation regarding the difference between primary carrier and broker service. The broker is a metered service that is monitored by Taxi & Limousine (TLC). The primary carriers have vehicles and drivers dedicated to the provision of Paratransit service; the vehicles are white with a blue stripe.

III. Paratransit Topic- Care Initiative Donna Fredericksen – Deputy Director of Outreach

A PowerPoint presentation was made by Ms. Fredericksen regarding The CARE Initiative: Excellence in Customer Service. The CARE Initiative is the second in an annual “Train the Trainer” series that highlights the top concerns brought to the attention of Paratransit by customers, advocates, and public officials. This training program empathizes how care and courtesy must be taken during all “touch points” with Access-A-Ride customers to provide safe, reliable and timely service. The program is for carrier operators, dispatchers and road supervisors, as well as management, and supplements on-going training for new hires. The presentation provided detail on each aspect of CARE:

- Contact
- Ask
- Respond
- Empathize

Discussions and Member Feedback

Ms. Rubin suggested the training include reminders to drivers not to grab a customer's cane or the harness of a service animal. The driver should ask the individual if assistance is needed or communicate effectively.

Ms. Jacobsen recommended that when a customer is visually impaired, the driver should provide some details regarding the trip before they begin the route. Also, drivers should not be condescending when responding to customers inquire; they should be compassionate and informative.

Ms. Veerubhotla commented how customers should also be educated on how to communicate effectively with drivers.

Mr. Salovaara suggested everyone have on-line access to the Excellence in Customer Service training so it can be viewed at any time. Drivers/Dispatchers should take a short quiz at the end of the training to successfully pass.

IV. PAC Topic- E-hail program

VP Cosgrove explained that the initial Pilot Program comes to an end in October 2018. However, as part of the evaluation process, the program is being extended to April 2019. The 1,200 users already enrolled in the on-demand, same day reservation program will continue as before, but will now choose a provider of the service rather than using only CURB. AAR customers who call for a reservation one to two days in advance and want an e-hail will also be given a choice of providers.

Discussions and Member Feedback

Ms. Watkins inquired if there was an increase in trips since the program began. VP Cosgrove explained trip scheduled for dedicated carriers decrease while the increase of E-hail, broker and taxi increase. Access-A-Ride is working with Arro as another e-hail provider company in which customer can use to perform on demand trips.

V. New/Old Business

Ms. Ryan asked could the topic of lost item be a topic of discussion. She is certain that a central location for lost items would make it easier for customers to retrieve their items.

Mr. Freidman advised that customers who lose items on TLC vehicles should call 311.

Closing

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm.