

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE
April 16, 2008
9:30 a.m.-11:40 a.m.
BLDG 2, MEZZANINE RM 5, WORLD TRADE CENTER
25 SW SALMON, PORTLAND, OR**

CAT minutes may be obtained in alternate formats by calling TriMet's Accessible Transportation Program Administrative Offices: (503) 802-8200/TTY 802-8058, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm weekdays

Attendees: Jan Campbell, Chair; Lina Bensel, John Betts, Bill Brown, Tom Ciesielski, Michael Levine, Stan Lewis, Jay Dionne Markey, Zoe Presson, Albert Rouse, Marie Sowers, Margaret Stallman, Terry Watson, Robert Williams

Staff: Steve Banta, Jim Bledsoe, Commander Vince Jarmer, Steve Kautz, Kathy Miller, Tom Mills, Allen Morgan, Ted Newton, Susan Storm

Guests: Leon Chavarria, Evette Farra (ATU), Judy Mattingly, Susan Stoner (ATU)

Jan Campbell, Chair, called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND 02-20-08 and 03-19-08 MINUTES

Jan asked for approval of the agenda.

Bob Williams made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded and passed.

Jan asked for approval of the February 20th meeting minutes.

Michael Levine made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and passed.

Jan asked for approval of the March 19th meeting minutes.

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Tom Ciesielski made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and passed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

Jan announced that there would be a political candidates' forum today from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Senior Center at Martin Luther King Boulevard & 53rd.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Lina Bensel received a letter from Patricia Kepler addressing two complaints about recent LIFT service. Regarding the first complaint, Patricia had been dropped off 45 minutes late to work at the wrong address. On a second ride, the bus didn't arrive within her pick-up window. She had called Dispatch and learned that a cab would be sent to provide her trip. She ended up getting a ride from a third party because the cab hadn't arrived and the facility that had closed for evening. Patricia indicated her experience with LIFT Customer Service was also unsatisfactory and that she rarely receives written responses to her complaints.

Jan stated that she has been in contact with Patricia regarding her concerns, and the issue would be addressed at the Work Session meeting.

Kathy Miller said that she would follow up.

Albert Rouse asked if LIFT CSI's are handled through the Customer Service office for fixed route. Kathy responded that LIFT uses the same CSI process as fixed route but takes calls through their own customer service center.

STAFF COMMENTS

None

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PUBLIC COMMENT

Judy Mattingly commented on her need for LIFT service and staff read a letter she had submitted. Judy is considering moving to Country Village Estates and would have access to standby service if she would be able to wait at the park office, which is about one mile away. She is unable to walk to the office due to her medical condition, and has seen the LIFT service at other homes nearby. The opportunity for her to move to Country Village Estates would increase her ability to be self-sufficient in her home.

Bob Williams stated that he had spoken with staff and this location is under review.

Leon Chavarria commented on several items including:

- 1) he suggested speaking to more business people about the advantages of riding TriMet instead of using their own vehicles;
- 2) he has observed that fare inspectors have been helpful with keeping the younger crowd in line;
- 3) he commented that people that want to monitor operators on calling stops should go through a training to learn about monitoring criteria; and
- 4) he has noticed people on the light rail tracks at Saturday Market, and that the MAX operators have had to use the horn to alert people to move. He suggested using a railing or fence to control access to the tracks.

REVIEW OF CAT ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS REPORT – Jan Campbell, Chair

None

CAT REPORTS

Fixed Route – Michael Levine, Facilitator

Michael reported that the CAT had forwarded a recommendation for a letter to be sent regarding the use of audible announcements for Transit Tracker.

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Michael Levine made a motion that the CAT send a letter to staff requesting audible announcements with the Transit Trackers at the stations. The motion passed.

Jan said that the CAT had also forwarded a recommendation to send a letter recommending that the new buses should have a third mobility device securement area.

Michael stated that encouraging more people with disabilities to use fixed route when possible might increase capacity constraints on the use of priority seating areas.

Bill Brown stated that the CAT should urge management to get out into the field to see how service is running, and how to make things better.

Michael Levine made a motion that the CAT send a letter to staff recommending that the new buses should have a third mobility device securement position.

Michael reported that CAT members are participating on missions with Operations staff as part of the criteria development for monitoring stop announcements. The missions have shown positive results, but there is still room for improvement. ASA's have varying volumes, which is still a concern.

Michael added that there has been inadequate involvement by Field Operations management staff and he feels that these are the staff who should be measuring criteria and working with supervisors. He suggested that the supervisors in the field should show some enthusiasm about the work and minimize their use of personal cell phones, texting, etc.

Steve replied that while supervisors are not managers, they are part of the management team and are one of the most important resources for operators because they have more contact with the operators on a daily basis. He added that supervisors carry multiple pieces of equipment to communicate using their radios, Nextels, etc. It is inappropriate for staff to make personal calls and TriMet does monitor the use of personal cell phones.

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Discussion

Bill stated that he has noticed an increase of operators not using the microphones to make stop announcements, and the announcements are difficult to hear past the middle of the bus.

Terry Watson noted that the ATU was represented in the audience, and asked if a date has been set for the ATU president to speak to CAT. Steve replied that he has spoken to Jon Hunt, ATU President, and he has been very involved in labor negotiations throughout the state. Staff will continue to work to schedule a meeting.

Susan Stoner, ATU General Counsel, stated that it would be helpful have a list of the issues for discussion.

Jan responded that she wasn't aware of any specific questions but that the CAT might be able to discuss at the next Work Session. She said that she would like the discussion to be informal and focus on how the two can partner to address issues.

Susan said that she would be willing to assist with facilitating Jon's presence at a future CAT Work Session.

Jan encouraged members to participate in the stop announcement missions scheduled for later today and tomorrow. She said that she had participated on earlier missions and they had been fairly useful. Michael stated that the missions are currently monitoring external announcements.

Jan suggested that members who are unable to participate could record their observations as they use the system and share with CAT at future meetings.

LIFT – Jan Campbell, Facilitator

Susan Florentino is working with LIFT contract managers to determine how to involve CAT members with disability awareness training for LIFT operators.

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GREEN LINE SERVICE PLAN PROCESS – Steve Kautz, Manager, Service Programs

- The Green Line Service Plan has been developed in anticipation of the reopening of the transit mall on 5th and 6th next spring-summer period and the I-205 Green Line. The reopening date has not yet been determined.
- The Green Line will operate between the South Transit Mall and Clackamas Town Center and is anticipated to open in September 2009.
- The plan process will be introduced at the Transit Investment Plan (TIP) Open Houses scheduled for May 19th and 20th. The open houses provide an opportunity to talk about the process, and the status of the project work to complete the construction. Information about WES, the new commuter rail service in Washington County, will be included.
- Technical work in reviewing service options has begun. Service assessments, ridership impacts, costs, and operations will be reviewed through the summer.
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- Staff will be back to speak to CAT in June or July with a preview of the draft mall operations plan including information on LIFT operations.
- The public outreach for the draft service plan is expected to take place in September with another set of open houses.
- During October, staff will compile all of the public comment on the draft plan, and complete follow-up work on any specific outstanding questions. Additional open houses would be scheduled in November as needed.
- The final opportunity for CAT's review and comment would be at the November meeting. The Green Line service plan would be completed by early 2009.

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- TIP Open house dates & locations
 - Monday, May 19th from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Portland Mall Information Center at SW 6th & Alder.
 - Monday, May 19th from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the City of Tigard Public Works Building Auditorium at 8777 SW Burnham St. in Tigard.
 - Tuesday, May 20th from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Oregon Institute of Technology Conference Center at 7726 SE Harmony Rd. in Milwaukie

- The need for additional outreach activities will be determined.

Discussion

Bob asked about the location of South Transit Center. Steve replied that it is the end of the Green Line service in the downtown area near PSU.

Bob suggested distributing information about open houses using the Clackamas County School District. Steve agreed, and stated that the school district would also be a good source for the distribution of advance safety information.

Stan Lewis inquired if this work is being completed through a joint effort with Capital Projects and if the appropriate number of personnel would be available. Steve replied that there are several internal working groups involved and that they meet regularly.

Albert asked what is being done to deter theft of the metal at the work sites. Steve Banta, Executive Director, Operations, was in the audience and replied that the contractors are increasing their security forces at night, and TriMet field staff has placed barriers over the cable to deter thefts.

Bob asked if TriMet is looking at improving service on Sunnyside. A large number of homes have been built between 53rd and 172nd. Steve K. replied that TriMet opened the Happy Valley Town Center at 162nd and Sunnyside last August. Line 155 was extended to 162nd, and the number of frequency buses on the line was doubled. Ridership has increased over 50 percent. The Sunnyside corridor is also a part of longer-range plans.

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Jan inquired if there is a contact number for people who may need accommodations at the open houses. Tom Mills stated that the contact information would be printed on the handouts.

OPERATIONS – Steve Banta, Executive Director, Operations; Ted Newton, Director, ATP; Vince Jarmer, Transit Police Commander

Steve introduced Ted Newton, the new director of ATP. Ted has solid transit background and has worked with fixed route, paratransit, and school transportation systems.

Ted stated that with his extensive background in transportation, his first focus is on the customer. He looks forward to working with CAT, and welcomes input for any situation that may involve service to the disabled community. He plans to attend as many of the meetings as possible.

Steve also introduced Vince Jarmer as the new transit police commander. He is a 23-year veteran of the Portland Police Department, and most recently came from the Traffic Division. He added that Vince has already developed an appreciation for the importance of keeping the transit system in operation.

Vince said that he appreciated the opportunity to meet with the CAT and he intends to continue to build on his strength of developing relationships to work with others to address issues. He added that he appreciates that TriMet has provided the resources and support necessary to address transportation issues as they arise.

Regarding stop announcements, Steve stated that he would provide interior drawings of the various buses and denote speaker locations for the CAT's review. Michael said that staff had indicated that speakers would be installed on the 1700 series and the first nine of the 1800 series, but he was unsure where they would be mounted. Steve said that he would follow-up.

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Discussion

Jan said that CAT would like to work with staff regarding LIFT operations on the new transit mall.

Bill asked if there was a definite schedule for when Transit Police would be deployed on the transit system. Steve replied that each local precinct would determine their deployment strategies, and that Vince would coordinate the process. He guaranteed that customers would see an increased presence of transit police on the system.

Stan welcomed Commander Jarmer to the meeting and informed the CAT that the next meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee would be Wednesday, May 28th at 5 p.m. at the Transit Police Office at 210 NW 1st Avenue.

Terry Watson inquired if management is still considering using Wackenhut staff to check fares. Steve stated that TriMet is in discussion with the ATU regarding Wackenhut's role related to fare enforcement. He said that they are also being utilized in various deployment strategies. He added that there has been a positive response from rail operators in terms of Wackenhut's presence on the system and their role in addressing customer behavior issues.

Albert stated that the criminal activity might decrease if TriMet could make everybody pay a fare. Steve responded that staff is considering ways to control platform activity. These methods might include moving the ticket machines off the platforms, using fencing or walls to address access, providing personnel to check fares on the platforms, and/or using more permanent barricades to create a controlled access to the platform.

Steve said that he has heard questions at a variety of meetings about whether or not management staff members ride the transit system. He assured the CAT that ridership at the management level is high, and that the customers are always the first consideration when staff makes any decisions about the service.

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RIDEWISE PROGRAM – Susan Storm, Manager, *RideWise* Outreach; Jeff Ellers, Coordinator, Elderly and Disabled Transportation Services

Susan Storm, Manager, *RideWise* Outreach, said that she would be providing an overview of the TriMet portion of the *RideWise* program. Susan introduced Jeff Ellers, Coordinator, Elderly and Disabled Transportation Services. Jeff works with Susan in providing consumer education outreach. He provides fixed route transit orientations and also works with Ride Connection in their work with school transitional programs.

Susan said that *RideWise* is a collaborative effort between Ride Connection and TriMet to promote independent travel for older adults and people with disabilities by providing free access to training, support, and ongoing informational sources.

Highlights of the report included:

- The approach is to offer all resources to people, from LIFT service to fixed route.
- Fixed route orientation allows potential transit users to come to the transportation facilities to experiment boarding and deboarding vehicles while using mobility devices, and trying the different kinds of lifts and ramps to allow them to become more comfortable with the system.
- The goal is to emphasize that the entire system is safe, convenient, and easy to use.
- Staff works with the Oregon Commission for the Blind to familiarize service animals with vehicles.
- The Transit Resource Specialist Program provides training at senior centers and brokerages with one-on-one communication with people that are anxious to learn about the system.
- Staff works with community groups such as Elders in Action and AARP to get distribute information about the program.

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- *RideWise* is working to increase its presence at community outreach events.

Susan said that staff is interested in developing some type of peer support program and using more individuals to increase outreach about the program.

Discussion

Stan inquired if there is a network in place in case of emergency evacuations. Susan said that she would be attending the CTAA Conference in June and a portion of that conference would address emergency evacuation planning and she would report back.

Terry thanked Susan and her staff for working with staff at Ride Connection to provide some outreach for the new Beaverton shuttle service, a local service that assists individuals with shopping in the central Beaverton area. Susan said that she enjoyed the one-on-one contact with customers and that there has been a very positive response to the service.

Lina asked about the number of shuttles and if there are plans for any new shuttles. Terry stated the Red Cross operates a shuttle in King City that runs from 8 am to 4:30 pm daily. Another shuttle in the South Park Blocks area in downtown Portland serves The View (formerly Lone Plaza). A third shuttle in the Gateway area provides transportation to and from the Gateway Shopping Center. He added that all of these shuttles provide service to fixed route transit, shopping, etc.

Bob asked if the program extends to Clackamas County. Terry responded that the Clackamas County Consortium operates several programs that provide regular trips for shopping, to meal sites, or volunteer opportunities, etc. He added that in the entire Ride Connection network, the volunteers in Clackamas County contribute the largest percentage of volunteer hours in the tri-county area and he thanked them for their support.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:40 a.m.