

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION
February 20, 2013
9:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.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: Jan Campbell, Chair; Claudia Robertson, John Betts, Leon Chavarria, Harold Cheeks, Diana Keever, Beth Nagy-Cochran, Arnold Panitch, Zoe Presson, Chris Walker, Terry Watson

Staff: Drew Blevins, Susan Florentino, Diane Goodwin, Corrinna Griffis, Kathy Miller, Allen Morgan

Guests: Lina Bensel, Jane Doyle (Portland Parks), Jeanette Hatcher, Commander Mike Crebs (Transit Police)

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND MEETING

Jan Campbell, Chair, called the meeting to order and asked for approval of the minutes.

Claudia Robertson made a motion to approve the January 16 minutes. The motion was seconded and passed with abstention.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None were received.

STAFF COMMENTS

Corrinna Griffis, LIFT Quality Administrator, responded to a question from the January meeting regarding the ability to provide LIFT service in the Old Town area during the street closures on Friday and Saturday nights. She contacted City of Portland staff to confirm that LIFT vehicles would have access.

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Corrinna said that the pilot project is scheduled for three months but may be extended. There will be one point of entry on NW 3rd and Everett that will be manned to provide access to the area. She encouraged customers to contact LIFT Customer Service if they experience any issues with service to this area.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeannette Hatcher commented on a recent LIFT ride. She said the operator had provided more assistance than required by grabbing her around the waist and pushing her on the bus. She added that upon arrival at the destination, the operator told her to stay seated until she told her to get up. Jeannette reported the incident to Customer Service but questioned who provides the training for the operators. Operators should be trained to ask customers before they provide any physical contact to assist.

Jan said that the contractor provides the training and the CAT reviewed the training program.

Lina Bensel commented on today's LIFT ride. She had a 7:15-7:45 a.m. pick-up window for an 8:45 a.m. appointment time. She was picked up by a cab at the beginning of the window and as a result, arrived very early. Also, the cab operator parked in the LIFT designated stop area but declined to escort Lina to the door of the Portland Building. He said he would be fined if he left his cab unattended.

Kathy said she would forward both comments to LIFT Operations for follow-up.

CAT REPORTS

CAT Executive Committee

There were no questions or comments regarding the CAT Executive Committee meeting minutes.

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PMLR Ad Hoc Committee

Zoe Presson reported on the PMLR Ad Hoc Committee meeting on February 14, 2013. Diana Keever and Leon Chavarria also attended. Capital Projects staff reviewed the Clinton, Rhine and Holgate Stations. Leon and Zoe both shared their concerns about having to cross the freight/Amtrak train tracks.

Jan asked who has responsibility for maintaining the train tracks at Union Station. She said they are in very poor condition.

Allen said that the Clinton Station is located next to the Union Pacific line and that the entire intersection and crossing will be upgraded as part of the PMLR work. Both TriMet and Union Pacific maintain their respective areas.

Arnold Panitch said he serves on the PMLR citizen's advisory committee. Committee. He said that all of the PMLR stations will be located close to the Union Pacific line which increases the needs for safe crossing designs since pedestrians and bicyclists will be in close proximity to both lines when approaching MAX stations.

Corrinna informed the committee that LIFT staff initially worked with the PMLR design team to identify LIFT stops at each of the stations. Corrinna will continue the work going forward.

FY14 BUDGET OUTREACH AND PROCESS – Drew Blevins, Director, Marketing and Customer Information Services; Diane Goodwin, Manager, Public Affairs)

Drew Blevins provided an update on the plans for outreach for the FY14 budget process and reviewed the *TriMet Annual Report for 2012, 2013*. Highlights of the presentation included:

- 2012 changes included a fare increase and “go-anywhere” fares, the end of the Free Rail Zone, administrative cuts, minor service cuts, and the implementation of a low-income fare discount program.
- These changes resulted in closure of the \$12 million budget gap for now.

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- Results have included a reduction in MAX ridership of seven percent, likely due to the fare increase and end of the Free Rail Zone. Bus ridership increased by 2.9 percent and WES increased 8.9 percent during the same period.
- No additional service cuts or fare increases (other than a scheduled LIFT Paratransit fare increase) are expected in this fiscal year.
- If the labor contract is not reformed to address the unsustainable health care benefits for union employees and retirees, TriMet will be forced to dramatically cut service and/or raise fares starting in 2016-17.

Current investments and improvements include:

- the purchase of 55 new buses to improve efficiency and customer comfort. An additional 70 buses will be in service by the end of this year with at least 40 more in the next few years;
- elimination of the confusing zone system and switched to “go-anywhere” fares;
- mobile ticketing options for customers who use Smart phones should be available by summer;
- ticket printers will be installed in all buses beginning in the spring with completion by summer. All transfers, bus and rail, will be for two-hours;
- 26 full-time employees now do fare inspection which is an increase of ten employees over last year; and
- planning efforts continue to consider bus rapid transit for corridors that include Portland to Sherwood and Powell/Division.

Drew said the last section of the report talks about the challenges ahead for TriMet beginning as early as 2017 out to 2025 if changes aren't made to address the costs of health care benefits.

Diana Goodwin invited CAT members to participate in the Oregon Transportation Commission's "Transit Day" on April 10th in Salem. All transit properties in the state will participate and attendees will have an opportunity to meet with their local legislators to tell their personal stories about what transit means to them. This will most likely be an all-day event with travel time. Interested members are asked to contact Larissa

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Armitage at 503-962-4830 by the first week of March. Staff is working with Ride Connection to provide transportation.

Discussion

Arnold asked about the status of payroll tax receipts and if the employment levels were back to levels prior to the beginning of the recession. Drew responded that there is a lag between any improvements in employment and any increases in the payroll tax to TriMet. He understands that the economy is slowing improving. Diane added that it would take several years to reach the earlier levels but the current payroll tax is close to what would be received in a normal year.

Kathy reminded CAT members that the January meeting packet had included information on the state of the budget prepared by Claire Potter, Director, Financial Analysis. She suggested they reference that document for further information.

Arnold commented that he sees value in continuing to support the transportation for high school students in Portland. He feels it provides an educational opportunity to promote the use of transit as young people move into adulthood.

Harold Cheeks asked if the implementation of Obama care in 2014 would help reduce health care costs. Drew said that he understands that those reductions have already been taken into account.

Claudia Robertson asked if any legislative bills are under consideration to move from the binding arbitration to the ability to strike and if passed, would it be retroactive. Diane responded that there are bills in circulation in committees and that it is one option that the legislature is considering. She added that it is unclear if it could be retroactive to the current contract that is in negotiation.

Claudia also asked about the cost of the student pass program. Drew estimated it is about \$2.9 million total split three ways between TriMet, City of Portland and Portland Public Schools. The cost to TriMet is lost revenue as opposed to out-of-pocket cost.

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She said while she lives in Portland, there are many school districts in the City limits that do not receive any subsidy. There are also many suburbs that also pay the payroll tax that do receive any assistance for school transportation. She added that LIFT service was reduced to assist with the budget gap and she feels the City should provide its own school transportation system.

Drew reviewed a survey document on transportation that was included as part of Metro's Opt-In survey program with nearly 20,000 participants. Periodically, Metro sends out surveys regarding the livability in the region to assist them in setting project priorities.

The transportation survey is designed to measure how participants perceive TriMet in terms of the agency's performance within the region. He encouraged CAT members to participate if interested and said they could sign-up for panel participation at www.optinpanel.org.

Chris Walker suggested that TriMet might have some regional meetings in different locations to identify how to assist low-income LIFT customers with the upcoming fare increase.

Claudia asked about the level of coordination between TriMet and Metro on the development of Metro's active transportation plan. Drew said that TriMet provides assistance. He suggested that Alan Lehto, Director, Planning and Policy, who is TriMet's liaison with Metro, might provide an update to the CAT at a future meeting.

Arnold complimented TriMet's General Manager, Neil McFarlane, on his daily use of transit on Lines 43, 12, and 17. Arnold suggested that other TriMet staff might identify the routes they use regularly as part of their signature line including on their business cards to demonstrate their use of the service. Drew and Diane thanked him for the suggestion.

TRANSIT POLICE REPORT - - Commander Mike Crebs

Commander Crebs provided an update on the use of a certification for a service animal. He had mentioned at the January meeting that Los Angeles might be requiring some kind of the certification. He has since confirmed that they do not have any program in place at this time.

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Commander Crebs reported that he participates in a peer advisory group that is comprised of all the law enforcement commanders and chiefs nationwide. The group discusses transit issues and shares ideas on resolution. It is his goal to continue to identify ideas to improve the transit ride for all.

Fare missions using plainclothes officers are underway. This allows the officer to possibly observe activities that normally would not be seen by a uniformed officer. They can then intervene and either exclude or arrest depending on the situation. To date there has been one mission on the west side and one on the east side.

Discussion

Claudia expressed appreciation for Commander Crebs' efforts and for his reports to and interactions with the CAT.

Arnold asked for an update on the state of the safety of the TriMet system. Commander Crebs replied that it is staying about the same. He added that there has been a substantial decrease in the number of iPhone and laptop thefts due to the arrest of the thieves and expanded customer education.

CAT PRIORITIES FOR FY14 BUDGET – Kathy Miller, Manager, LIFT Eligibility and Community Relations

Kathy reviewed the CAT's Budget Priorities for FY13 and asked for the committee's input for the FY14 budget process.

Claudia asked about the status of the installation of the universal disability symbol in the priority seating area floor on the Type IV vehicles. She saw a light right vehicle without the symbol and questioned if the project had been delayed to the budget issues. Kathy responded that she thought the work was still underway but would follow-up and report back.

Beth Nagy-Cochran commented that she was pleased to see that the annual report indicated that Transit Tracker would be installed at the remaining MAX stations without it. She supports all continued improvements to bus stops and signage.

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She added that the agency has added staff for fare enforcement. She would this effort to continue to increase.

James Jackson said he would like to add a priority to incorporate tactile way finding tools within the art installed on the light rail projects.

Zoe commented that there had been discussion about the PMLR Project art installations at the last ad hoc committee meeting. She suggested she could mention the comments at the next meeting.

Claudia suggested that it may be appropriate for the CAT and staff to have a discussion about the art design process including making it more accessible and using it as part of the way finding application. Members agreed and Kathy said that she would follow-up.

Public Comment

Jane Doyle asked if the current bus stops already meet the mandatory requirements. Kathy responded that the points under discussion would be considered improvements beyond requirements.

Discussion

Beth Nagy-Cochran made a motion that the CAT approves the list of FY14 budget priorities including the revisions to items No. 4 and No. 6 as discussed. The motion was seconded and passed.

Kathy will forward a copy of the revisions to the Executive Committee for review and to staff for consideration for the budget. A copy of the final list of priorities will be included in the March CAT packet.

LIFT OPERATIONS QUARTERLY REPORT – FY13 – 2nd Qtr. - Susan Florentino

Susan Florentino provided an overview of LIFT operations for FY13 – 2nd Quarter (October-December):

- Average weekday ridership decreased 3.3% from the same quarter last year, but increased 0.9% from the previous quarter.

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- Average Saturday ridership decreased 8.2% and Sunday/Holiday ridership decreased by 7.3% from the same quarter last year.
- The percentage of No Shows increased and cancellations decreased by the same amount compared to the prior year.
- A total of 18.7% of trips scheduled resulted in a No Show or cancellation. This total remained unchanged compared to the same quarter the prior year.
- On-time performance for pickups increased by 0.3% compared to the second quarter of FY12 and early arrivals increased by 0.9%.
- On-time performance for appointments increased 0.2% from the prior year.
- On-time performance for LIFT cabs was 87.5%, a decrease of 2.3% over the prior year. On-time for cabs was the lowest of the last five quarters.
- Average trip durations decreased by 0.9 minutes to 36.3 minutes, a decrease of 2.4% from the same quarter last year.
- Both complaints and issues and commendations have increased in both number and rate each of the last four quarters.
- There were 3.9 percent fewer calls than in second quarter of FY12. Dispatch calls accounted for the largest decrease in call volume and 99.3 percent of calls were answered within five minutes.
- Rides per hour productivity decreased by a total of 1.7 percent from the prior year.
- The cost per ride increased from \$29.54 in FY12 to \$31.09 in FY13.

Susan thanked Jennifer Burke, ATP, for her work on the report. In response to the CAT's request, she revised the report to include a running comparison for each of the report categories for the past five quarters.

Discussion

Arnold asked if the reduction in weekend service was a result of the adjustment to the ADA boundary to match fixed route. He also questioned if the reduction in service area had resulted in a reduction of LIFT staff causing additional unemployment. Claudia added that last year's fare increase may also be a factor in the ridership reduction.

Susan said it is difficult to determine the exact causes for the fluctuation in ridership. The analysis completed prior to the boundary adjustment did not

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estimate that level of decrease. As TriMet is able to increase service, the LIFT service boundary will expand and increase as well. She added that there has not been a significant reduction in LIFT staff as a result of the changes.

Susan said that regarding on-time performance, there are patterns that occur annually based on weather, etc. She emphasized that TriMet and First Transit staff have been working to improve on-time performance and for January 2013, it was 95.1 percent.

Jan commented that the improvements in January may also be a result of operators becoming more familiar with the new MDT system. Susan agreed and said that the MDT system is a better tool of achieving increased performance. All but 20 vehicles have been added to the new system.

Staff is also working to reduce the use of cabs and to increase bus trips. Susan said that the reduction in cab on-time performance is due partially to the fact that there have been more trips than usual transferred to cabs. Cab performance for January has improved to 91.2 percent.

Susan said that the service changes can account for some of the increase in complaints and issues. Over the past six months, staff has also reviewed the complaint process and improved the criteria for documenting complaints to ensure that all customer complaints are documented. First Transit is also working with operators who have received complaints about customer interactions.

Jan asked about the definition of being on-time for the operator. Susan said that it is the same as the 30-minute window for the customer.

There was discussion that a coversheet should be added to the report to include the definitions for the categories for complaints and issues.

Zoe commented that operators should be reminded to refer to all the information included to the manifest to ensure they follow the directions about specific locations. Susan encouraged customers to report any service delivery issues to Customer Service so that they can be addressed with the operators.

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Susan commented that First Transit has worked with Reservations staff to improve call statistics. Customer Service calls were answered at the rate of 97 percent within five minutes.

Chris asked if there were any plans for customers to have the ability to communicate with Dispatch via email. He said that not all customers have cell phones and pay phones are becoming scarce. More customers may have access to laptops and notepads given that Wi-Fi access is readily available. Susan said that currently that capability is not available but may be an option for the future.

Staff continues to work to improve the rides per hour. With the work to reduce cab use, some of the longer and more difficult trips are put on buses which then impacts productivity.

Jan asked about the process for no-pays and partial pays. She has heard from operators and customers that with the new MDT system, a customer can no longer make a partial payment. In the past, she was told customers could then send in the balance of the payment or pays it with their next fare.

Susan responded that the operators can still track partial pays on paper but they can't be entered into the system. There are customers who are unable to handle a fare and the entire fare is paid at the point of drop-off by the home staff. The policy remains that if the customer doesn't pay the full fare, it is considered a no-pay.

CAT members questioned the increase in the costs when the ridership declined. Susan said that though the number of service hours declined, there were increases in fuel costs, insurance costs, etc.

Claudia asked that staff report back at the end of the fiscal year as to whether or not the reductions in service had resulted in the estimated cost savings of \$400,000 as proposed.

Arnold said he finds it amazing to compare the cost of the LIFT ticket vs. fixed route fare given the differences in the level of services provided and the cost to provide the trip.

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Susan responded that paratransit costs nationwide exceed fixed route costs. The costs are average costs per trip. Longer trips are obviously more expensive while group trips to the same location are less costly.

Jan thanked Susan for the report. Susan said that staff would add a cover sheet about the complaint categories and also include information about the early arrivals in the next quarter's report.

**CAT MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT – Kathy Miller, Manager, LIFT
Eligibility and Community Relations**

Kathy informed the committee that the member recruitment process would begin in March. There are seven members whose terms expire who will be notified by mail and eligible to reapply for an additional term. Public notice will also be given and interested individuals may submit applications which will be due by April 5, 2013.

Jan asked for volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee. Beth, Zoe and Diana volunteered. A member of the Executive Committee will also be appointed to the committee.

CAT MEMBER COMMENTS

Zoe Presson commented on a recent ride on a new fixed route bus. When was exiting the bus with her mobility device and approached the slope in the floor inside the bus, she grabbed the handle bars on the door and her wheelchair flipped out from under her.

Allen said there are two issues with the new bus design and staff is addressing them. One issue is that when the bus doors open they stick out slightly. Staff is considering options and may install a small piece of molding to prevent customers with mobility devices from catching the device wheels on the door.

The other issue is that the inner part of the ramp slopes down within the bus to enable the ramp to achieve a lesser slope. The next order of the new bus design will have a different ramp. The manufacturer has designed

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a ramp where the inner part does not rotate down unless it detects that the exterior ramp will be extended to street level.

Allen said that staff will work with the operators to caution customers about the slight inner slope.

Arnold asked if operators can leave their seats to assist customers. Allen responded that they can and it is a requirement of the ADA for the operator to provide assistance as needed.

Chris commented on the location of CAT meetings and suggested that the committee consider meeting at other locations throughout the region to give people an opportunity in other areas to participate.

Jan said that the Executive Committee could discuss at their meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.