

ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**RIPTA Transportation Conference Room
705 Elmwood Avenue, Providence, Rhode Island 02907
Thursday, May 25, 2017
4:00 PM – 6:00 PM**

Attendees: Rui Cabral (Chair), John Gaffney, Angie Stabile, Barry Humphries, Janice Musco, Pamela Amaral, Kelly Richards, Mark Susa, Monica Dzialo and Heather Schey

RIPTA Staff in attendance: Mark Therrien, Jim Vincent, Seth Morgan and Cristy Raposo

MEETING MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Angie Stabile made a motion to approve the April meeting minutes. John Gaffney seconded the motion. Monica Dzialo abstained. All the rest were in favor.

II. SUMMER SERVICE AND KENNEDY PLAZA CHANGES

RIPTA Planner Seth Morgan reviewed the upcoming summer service changes, as well as bus stop changes, effective Saturday, June 17, 2017. He explained that the consolidation of bus stops creates space near the Soldiers & Sailors Monument for special event programming. RIPTA is staggering arrival times, making timing adjustments to schedules and introducing crosstown or interlining routes. For a full list of changes, passengers can visit RIPTA.com.

ATAC members expressed concerned about the Warwick Mall bus stop; passengers would be preferred to be dropped off in front of the mall. Seth Morgan stated that the property owner dictated where bus drops off passengers.

III. FOLLOW UP FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

• How to Engage the RIPTA Board

Rui Cabral emailed the RIPTA Board Chair with a description of the ATAC and invited him to attend the May ATAC meeting. *Follow-up: Rui Cabral has not yet received a response from the RIPTA Board. Rui will send a follow-up email to the Board Chair and the CEO's administrative assistant.*

• Service Animals

Heather Schey reported that a driver made her put her service dog between the seats; the dog could not fit and was uncomfortable. She asked if RIPTA driver training instructs drivers as to where service animals should sit and how the animals should be approached. Mark will look into this and RIPTA will reemphasize service animal training with a paycheck stuffer if necessary. *Follow-up: RIPTA does not have any rules or specific training regarding service animals for paratransit.*

Mark Therrien stated that RIPTA will ask other other agencies in the American Bus Benchmarking Group (ABBG) forum for their paratransit rules/training on service animals.

IV. RIPTA REPORTS

- **Ride Call Time Performance**

Mark Therrien reported that the number of incoming phone calls have decreased by half in past year. The IVR is handling majority of the calls. However, calls abandoned has increased significantly.

- **Stop Announcement Compliance**

Jim Vincent, RIPTA's Compliance Officer, is overseeing the Professional Security Services, the company that monitors RIPTA's fixed-route performance. All ADA compliance requirements, including stop announcements, wheelchair securement, use of the lift/ramp, and basic customer service functions will be monitored and documented.

Jim Vincent provided the following RIPTA Bus Monitoring and ADA Announcement Compliance Report:

97 bus trips were monitored in May

Of those 97 trips, 3 of the automated announcements worked (97 % functioning).

3 bus drivers made zero announcements when the ATMS malfunctioned.

- **Wheelchair Lift Failure**

There were zero total wheelchair failures for the month of May.

V. RIDE/RIPTA SERVICE FEEDBACK

- **Interactive Voice Response (IVR)**

Mark Therrien stated that Ride is no longer using the company in New York for service after hours. Passengers need to use the IVR, Reveal app, or call Ride in the early morning for their pick-up times. *IVR is a telephone technology in which someone uses a touch-tone telephone to interact with a database to acquire information.*

- **Reveal App**

Mark Therrien reported that the Reveal App was recently updated. ATAC members reported that the app no longer tells you when you're next in the queue to be picked up. Janice Musco stated that she would like the app to display the name of the taxi company picking up. Heather Schey reported that her projected times keep getting pushed back to the latest time in the window. Mark Therrien asked that ATAC members contact Diane Chappell and let her know when it happens.

- **Blackstone Valley Tourist Center**

ATAC members reported that drivers are having a hard time locating the back entrance where paratransit passengers need to be picked up. Mark Therrien

stated that RIde will geo-locate it.

- **RIde Information**

ATAC members expressed concern that rehab and other centers do not know about RIPTA's RIde Program. Due to the constant change of staff, employees aren't kept up to date on all the available programs for their clients, especially RIde.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS AND MEMBER REPORTS

- **Q-Straint**

Mark Therrien reported that Q-Straint, a company that produces wheelchair passenger safety solutions for public and private transportation, will be demonstrating their new wheelchair securement products at RIPTA. Their Quantum system guarantees self-securement in under 25 seconds without requiring the driver to leave their seat to help. This is the transportation industry's first fully automatic rear-facing wheelchair securement station. Quantum lets wheelchair and scooter passengers board the bus or train, position their chair and simply push a button to secure themselves in a stable and safe rear-facing position. The device locks your chair in and holds you in place. Q-Straint will also demonstrate their Q'Pod, which offers forward-facing wheelchair securement.

RIPTA would like ATAC's feedback on these products. Cristy will email ATAC members with demonstration information. RIPTA will provide free RIde service to and from the demonstration for ATAC members.

- **New Van Order**

Mark Therrien reported that RIPTA will be purchasing new vans for RIde; some may be 12-18 inches skinnier. RIde is also considering purchasing transit vans since they can travel on difficult roads easier. Heather Schey asked if it was possible to order shoulder straps for the outside seat for these new paratransit vans. Mark Therrien will look into this. He wants ATAC members to think about what should be included in a paratransit van order. What features would like they like to see? For example, fabric on the interior roof vehicle to help reduce the sound.

- **Veterans Pilot Pass Program**

Cristy Raposo stated that RIPTA and the Rhode Island Office of Veterans Affairs (RIOVA) are launching a pilot bus pass program for local veterans. The project will enable RIPTA to learn more about the transportation needs of veterans while also offering fare products to some veterans. This pilot project will provide up to 200 qualified U.S. military veterans with free, unlimited rides on RIPTA's fixed-route buses through the end of 2017. Passes will be available beginning June 1, 2017 through June 29 on a first come, first served basis while supplies last. Under this pilot project, RIPTA will also offer free service on Memorial Day, Monday, May 29,

2017, to all Rhode Island veterans with proof of eligibility.

Angie Stabile made a motion to end the meeting at 6:00pm. Barry Humphries seconded the motion. All were in favor.

When calling to schedule your Ride to the ATAC meeting, please be sure to tell the Customer Service Agent that you are going to and from the ATAC meeting so that you will not be charged. If you would like to take the complimentary Ride trip from Kennedy Plaza to the ATAC meeting, you must contact Cristy Raposo by 4:30pm on Tuesday, July 25, 2017 to reserve your ride (raposo@ripta.com or 784-9500 x1242).