

ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**RIPTA Transportation Conference Room
705 Elmwood Avenue, Providence, Rhode Island 02907
Thursday, May 24, 2018
4:00 PM – 6:00 PM**

Attendees: Rui Cabral (Chair), Heather Schey, Angie Stabile, Deanne Gagne, John Carvalho, Lisa Stamp, David Barlow, Pamela Amaral, Kelly Richards, Jeanne Ouellette, Monica Dzialo, Benny Bergantino

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

MEETING MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Angie Stabile made a motion to approve the April meeting minutes. John Carvalho seconded the motion. All the rest were in favor.

II. FOLLOW UP FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

•Ride Fare Product

Cristy Raposo Perry was going to ask RIPTA's Finance Department if Ride Fare Tickets can be sold to members at the beginning of the meeting.

Follow-up: Cristy Raposo announced that ATAC members may be able to purchase Ride Fare products at the beginning of each ATAC meeting.

Members must order their fare products ahead of time through Cristy and bring the exact payment in cash or check to the meeting.

•RIPTA Reports

John Gaffney had asked if it is possible to measure the number of drivers missing special stop announcements. Jim will report on this at the next meeting.

Follow-up: Mark Therrien provided a list of questions covered by the Bus Monitoring and ADA Announcement Compliance Report. The number of drivers requested to announce a special stop and failing to do so is not covered in the report. Mark will ask Jim Vincent if it can be added.

• Crossing Elmwood Avenue

Last year, Rui Cabral sent a letter to RIDOT requesting that RIDOT update the pedestrian signal so that is audible. Passengers coming here for their bus passes are required to cross the street. To date, Rui has not received a response. John Gaffney asked that Mark Therrien follow up on this. Mark will inform interim CEO Amy Pettine of the letter that was sent to RIDOT and request her assistance in receiving a reply.

Follow-up: Mark Therrien stated employees here have complained

about this as well. He has passed this along to Greg Nordin, RIPTA's Interim Planning Director for follow-up.

III. RIPTA REPORTS

- **Stop Announcement Compliance**

Jim Vincent, RIPTA's Compliance Officer, is overseeing 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 was unable to attend this meeting. He will provide the April RIPTA Bus Monitoring and ADA Announcement Compliance Report at the next meeting.

- **Wheelchair Lift Failure**

There were zero wheelchair lift failures for the month of April.

IV. DOWNTOWN TRANSIT CONNECTOR (DTC) UPDATE

The Downtown Transit Connector will provide high-frequency transit service (every 5 minutes in each direction) between the Providence Amtrak/MBTA Station and the Hospital District in Upper South Providence. There will be six paired stops along the corridor, each designed with a unique and highly-visible identity. The stops will include shelters, real-time bus arrival signage, and other passenger amenities. Opportunities to enhance RIPTA service using signal priority for buses or dedicated bus lanes will be included, as well as efforts to create attractive public spaces around each stop. There will be a presentation at the next meeting.

Seth Morgan, RIPTA's Planning Department, presented to the group on this subject. Seth stated that the new DTC bus shelters will be tall structures with the RIPTA logo and will be brightly lit up at night. RIPTA has conducted studies on service in the downtown Providence and hospital area since 2010. The DTC will provide better connections to these areas and better service. He stated that Routes 3, 6 50, 51, 55, 58, and 72 will be part of the DTC network and stressed that none of the routes are increasing frequency. As part of the plan, Washington Street will become two way and East Approach will be closed to traffic. The eventual goal is to remove bus stops from Fulton Street. The changes will be implemented in 2019. Heather Schey asked if there will be a button on the digital display that a passenger could push and listen to the display. Seth answered no, but maybe that is a feature that could be installed later.

For more information on the project, visit <http://ripta-dtc.com/>.

V. CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

ATAC members received the draft Code of Conduct Policy to review ahead of the meeting. The policy was reviewed and discussed.

3.3 Prohibited Conduct

23. Carrying or storing any firearm, shotgun, rifle, or other dangerous weapon or article.

ATAC members asked if a firearm could be transported in a locked case if the passenger has a gun license. Mark Therrien will find out and report back to the ATAC.

VI. RIDE/RIPTA SERVICE FEEDBACK

•Smart Fare Technology

iNiT, Innovations In Transportation, Inc., was on-site at RIPTA on May 15, 2018, to discuss how to install the new fare validator on a bus. The validator, which is where passengers will scan their mobile app or fare card, has to be mounted. Several ATAC members attended the meeting and provided input as to where the validators should be mounted. ATAC members asked if validators will be installed on the Ride fleet; Mark Therrien confirmed that information.

•Passengers with Disabilities

Heather Schey stated that although her friend does not use a cane, she is visually impaired and uses the Ride program. Her friend may not look like she needs assistance boarding, but she does and is worried about accidentally sitting on someone because she cannot see that well. Mark Therrien stated that drivers are trained on this; sometimes people with disabilities do not look like they have any type of disability. Mark stated he will send out a reminder notice to drivers and the Training Department.

VII. TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COUNCIL UPDATE

Rui Cabral is representing the ATAC at the Human Services Transportation Coordination Council. The working group will look at alternative funding services for the no fare bus fare program. They will be meeting monthly until the report is due to the legislature (November 1, 2018). His working group is focused on finding money for the program.

Rui Cabral stated that the group discussed levying a tax on businesses for their parking spaces. They also discussed giving RIPTA an extra penny on the gas tax.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS AND MEMBER REPORTS

•Caravan Purchase

RIPTA is currently out to bid to purchase five new Chrysler Caravans. This will help cut down on the amount of taxis the Ride program must use. Mark Therrien stated that the entire Ride fleet is eligible to be retired due to mileage or age. All of the '08s have been retired. The challenge is that the vehicles available for purchase that look similar to our current fleet do not have diesel engines. The Ford Transit, while a possibility, does not have a transit entry door; it has a sliding door, which would require the driver to get out of their seat to operate. RIPTA must adhere to

federal standards when purchasing these new vehicles. The law requires that the vans be able to accommodate a wheelchair that weighs 600lbs; RIPTA can currently accommodate 850lbs.

John Carvalho made a motion to end the meeting at 5:56pm. Angie Stabile 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 for your ride.