

MAC

MARTA Accessibility Committee

AGENDA

September 13, 2016

**9:30am to 12:00 noon – Travel Training Center – MARTA Annex
Building**

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|--|-----------------|
| 1. Call to Order | Lafayette Wood |
| 2. Introductions
(Committee Members & MARTA Staff) | Lafayette Wood |
| 3. Approve MAC Minutes | Lafayette Wood |
| 4. Subcommittee Reports | |
| a. Accessibility Subcommittee | Jorge Urrea |
| b. Appeals Subcommittee | Gladys Taylor |
| c. Customer Focus Subcommittee | Leonard Stinson |
| 5. Public Hearing | Toni Thornton |
| 6. Proposed Service Modification Briefing | Monique Forte |
| 10 Minute Break | |
| 7. MARTA Mobility Briefing | Warren Montague |
| 8. MARTA Eligibility Briefing | DaVette Harris |
| 9. Announcements | Lafayette Wood |
| 10. Adjournment | Lafayette Wood |

Next scheduled MAC meeting is Tuesday, July 12, 2016.

MARTA Accessibility Committee

Minutes For May 10, 2016

MAC Members in Attendance:

Lafayette Wood – Chairperson
Mark Gasaway
Ike Presley
Brent Reynolds
Vanessa Robisch
Dolphine Sloan
Leonard Stinson
Gladys Taylor
Jorge Urrea

Interpreters & Captionist:

Holly McKay – Captionist
Andrea Locken – Interpreter
Thai Morris - Interpreter

MARTA Staff in Attendance:

David Scarbor – Diversity & Inclusion
Tonya Allen – Diversity & Inclusion
Ferdinand Risco – Diversity & Inclusion
Tracee Dennis - Safety
Toni Thornton – External Affairs
Monique Forte – Planning
LaHoya Blount – Customer Care Center
Catrina Jones – IT
Leslie Porter – External Affairs – Reduce Fare
Shirley Webb – Mobility - Reservation
Thomas Gaskins – Bus Operations
Derrick Morse – Diversity & Inclusion
Mia Tidwell – Mobility – Travel Training

MARTA Contractors in Attendance:

DaVette Taylor-Harris – MTM
JoAnna Faunce - MTM
Edward Hood – MV Transit
Warren Montague – MV Transit
Dara Hayden – MV Transit
Linda Broady-Myers – MV Transit
Rosalind Parker – MV Transit

Visiting Public:

Ken Mitchell
Frank Burndt
Claire Hayes

The meeting of the MARTA Accessibility Committee was held on Tuesday, September 13, 2016 in the Atrium of the MARTA Headquarters, located at 2424 Piedmont Road, NE, Atlanta, GA 30324.

1. Call to Order

Lafayette Wood, Chairman, called the MAC meeting to order.

2. Introductions

The MAC members and MARTA staff introduced themselves.

3. Approval of MAC Minutes

Mr. Wood stated that he would entertain a motion to approve the minutes from May 10, 2016 MAC Meeting. The motion was made and second. He then called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes which as seconded. The vote was unanimous and the motion was passed.

4. Subcommittee Reports

- a. Accessibility Subcommittee report was given by Mr. Jorge Urrea. Mr. Urrea reported that the Accessibility Committee met with Catrina Jones and discussed the AVIS project and that the committee will be working closely with Ms. Jones and her team throughout the project. He also

stated that the committee will be meeting to review the AVIS project lab in November.

- b. Appeals Subcommittee report was given by Ms. Gladys Taylor who reported that the Appeal hearing will be during the month October or November.
- c. Customer Focus Subcommittee report was delivered by Mr. Leonard Stinson who reported that he has been working with David Scarbor to coordinate the Subcommittee outreach effort and that he will provide additional updates in the future.

5. Public Hearing

Ms. Toni Thornton shared information concerning the upcoming Public Hearing for service modification to go into effect on December 10, 2016. She went over the following hearing dates Monday, September 19th, Wednesday, September 21st and Thursday, September 22nd and provided the location and times for each hearing. Ms. Thornton shared that there is a video posted on itsmarta.com and that the video is provided in Spanish and ASL (American Sign Language) and the address and phone number where comments could be submitted for the public record.

6. Proposed Service Modification Briefing

Ms. Monique Forte provided the committee with a briefing and description of the proposed modifications to each of the following routes: 2, 16, 33, 34, 47, 67, 102, 123, 165 and the 191. Ms. Forte pointed out that the service modification will probably not affect ADA service as the requirement is that the customer is within $\frac{3}{4}$ of mile of bus stop. She then opened the floor for questions and received the following questions:

- If they stop a route, the Mobility riders will still be accommodated? Response: Yes, within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of a bus stop. The route that is being proposed for removal there will still be surrounding surface streets and coverage for that community.
- If you discontinue a route, will that discontinue Mobility service for patrons in that area? Response: No, the requirement is that the customer be within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of service bus stop and with the route that is being discontinued, the segments are being serviced by other buses routes.
- You mentioned the route 191 running into the International Airport, was consideration given to running this route into a rail station, which would provide Clayton County with a direct rail connections? Response: The service modification which went into effect in August of this year connects this route to the College Park Station.

- We need to know if these routes being modified will they affect the Mobility service for all of the customers in those different areas? Response: When you take a closer look the modification usually do not have a huge impact unless we cut a lot of service. We still service within $\frac{3}{4}$ of mile and when you look closely it has little to no impact.
- What are you using as your guidelines to determine underutilization? What is the equation being used? Response: We use service factor methods and data such as surveys, traffic checks and Breeze machine counts and we look at them over a long period of time before making a change. There is not set equation.

10 Minute Break

7. MARTA Mobility Briefing

Mr. Warren Montague, General Manager for MV Transit provided a briefing of the Mobility Services since MV Transit took over the service on May 21, 2016. He let the committee know that they currently have 355 bus operators and 10 additional operators currently in training. They have begun providing additional wheelchair training for all operators. MV Transit has 12 dispatchers on duty and they have a schedule that will allow for more opportunities for dispatchers. The ETA operators have at least 3 people on the phones at all times from 4:00am to 8:00pm. MV Transit has 6 Supervisors and 12 Trainers who are experienced bus operators. MV Transit has 16 Mechanics and 16 Technicians who work on the vehicles daily, ensuring preventive maintenance are performed every 5000 miles.

When MV Transit took over the service the OTP (On Time Performance) was running in the mid 70's. During the 2 weeks in month of May that MV Transit provided the service the OTP ran at 86.2%, in June it ran at 83.5% and in August 85.7%.

During the third week in August the tablets were installed on the vehicles. We have some data issues and challenges with the GPS system and we are working with the IT department to resolve them. This includes a data issue with getting the information from the Trapeze system transferred over to the tablets. Additionally, we have been working with MARTA reservation concerning how they put information into the system. If the address is not used first it will not show up on the tablets, leaving operators unable to see thing like apartment numbers. We will be meeting with reservations, scheduling and dispatch next week to ensure the parameters in the system are correct. This will also assist

with reservations being able to give real times when they are booking customer's trips.

Over the past month and a half, ridership has increased about 200 to 300 trips. We think the service is getting better and that people are beginning to rely on the service. We have to do a better job of managing the demand. MV Transit brought on 165 new operators and are currently challenged with 200 plus former MARTA operator that we are trying to simulate new ways of how to do business based on the contract.

One of our goals is to improve OTP each month by 5 percent. We are continuing to work with the union and contractors. We are also working to improve the driver schedules and provide update driver routes. Additionally we are working to do a lot more enhance customer service training with our operators. He then opened the floor for questions:

- You stated that ETA was opened till 8:00pm, but there have been several times myself and others could not reach ETA after 6:00pm. Response: If you give the exact dates I can look into the matter.
- What is your policy on leaving customers? Response: Our policy is that if we have taken you out we need to bring you back and will not leave you stranded.
- What about patron using HD wheelchairs that will not fit on certain vehicles? I know of a situation where you do not come back and the person was stranded. Response: (Provided by Lafayette Wood) When situation like that arise we encourage you to file a complaint with customer service so that the matter can be addressed. Absolutely nothing can be done if MARTA is not made aware of the incident. Mr. Montague added that he looks at complaints and an opportunity to find out where there are problems and where we can fix them.
- I want to first complement you on the OTP. The last few trips taken since the middle of July have not only been on time, but some were early. I have notice on my last 20 trips that the Breeze card reader does not work. Would it be possible to pay the fare on the new tablets when this happens? Several of the drivers just say "I got you" and never take down your Breeze card number. Response: We are aware that there is an issue with the card readers and MARTA is working to resolve the issue. Additionally, there are multiple access numbers the driver has to remember. There is an access number for the vehicle, the system and for Breeze. We are trying to get a universal number for all operators so that it can reduce the amount of different numbers they have to remember.
- I have notice that rides for different people going to the same location are not being scheduled on the same vehicle. I experienced being picked up

from a center and there was another young lady with the same pick up information going to the same area, who was not on my vehicle. She ended up waiting 30 minutes past her window to get her ride. Is scheduling paying attention to this? Also what is the real purpose of the tablets? Response: It gives the operators an opportunity for real time and turn by turn directions without having to look at other instruments. It is an update from Radio Tower transmissions to Cell Tower transmissions and it is about 90 percent reliable. It uses Google Maps which is much more reliable and the device training takes about 45 minutes. When it comes to trips being scheduled on the same vehicle, it is a challenge and depends on when the individuals booked their trip and when the first vehicle fills up. We are doing some retraining and looking into grouping some trips together.

- I surveyed about 20 people, asking about their OTP experience and 10 responded, with 8 of the responses being that it has not improved. Each pointed out that when the GPS system goes down, most of the operators do not have a map book and the ones that do have then, do not know how to read them and are left clueless. Will you be providing some training on this situation? Response: We have instituted map reading training into our training and we provide map books for the operators.
- I understand that during part of the new operator training, the new operator is partnered with an experienced operator. I have been experiencing operators who say that they never had the partnered training and it shows. Response: Part of the operator training is what we call BTW training, which means “behind the wheel”. They go out on several runs where they take a manifest with fictitious addresses and names. Then they go through cadetting where they go out with a trainer and couple of live trips. The operators are also tested and the trainers sign off on the testing.

8. MARTA Eligibility Briefing

Ms. DaVette Taylor-Harris, the Program Director for MTM provided a briefing for Eligibility. We have 3 full time staff members and have completed 450 assessments. We have been receiving great feedback from the MARTA eligibility staff and the customers. MTM has 15 assessment contracts in various states. They do in person interviews and assessments. MTM has been on board for about 8 weeks now and we are focused on providing good customer service and assessments. She then opened the floor for questions.

- Claire stated that her daughter is a Mobility rider and she received a cover letter and application in the mail. She stated that the cover letter was not very helpful and asked if it could be modified to include better information concerning the expiration of eligibility and dates. The letter

read as if it was being sent to a brand new customer, not one who is re-certifying. Response: I will take this information back to the eligibility team to make the letter more customer friendly.

- I had the opportunity to go through the eligibility process, during which I was asked to walk on the various terrains. The one with the sand, which is meant to simulate dirt, is not helpful at all. Sand shifts as opposed to dirt which packs when you walk on it. This will create a problem for individuals in wheelchairs as well. Could you look at this and see if you can use something else, it would be helpful. Response: I will take this information back to the team. Additionally, no one has to do anything that they are not comfortable doing. Some people have express concerns about the sand for that reason and it is not something that anyone has to do.
- What is the purpose of having the sand terrain there and then saying that you do not have to go through it? Response: Safety is important and we want people to feel safe. We are creating different terrains you might encounter. Sand is used to simulate dirt, just as AstroTurf is used to simulate grass, which are terrains you may encounter in route to a fixed route bus stop. Mr. Wood added that they please make sure they let each person know that they can decline to do something based on their feeling it is unsafe or they are uncomfortable with it and they will not be penalized.
- I was told that on the letters being received, people are being told that they can only bring 1 person with them to the functional assessment. I was told that the law requires that 21 days after the application is complete we have to be notified whether they are approved or denied. Response: Individuals are permitted to bring a PCA (Personal Care Attendant). Mr. David Scarbor added it is restricted to 1 person due to the limited space and to protect the privacy of the individuals there for their appointments. We want to ensure that every customer's privacy is protected. Limiting the number people admits aid in this protection. Please keep in mind that this is a secured facility. If a customer needs to bring additional individuals with them, they can make the request for that accommodation. The 21 days begins upon the completion the interview and/or assessment has been completed.
- So are you saying that you receive Part A of the application and then 30 days later you get Part B and then we have wait another 30 day or so to go through the assessment? Response: Provided by Mr. Scarbor, the customer returns both parts A and B of the application so there is no additional wait. Once the completed application is received you are contacted and the appointment is scheduled. If there is an issue with

getting you scheduled to come in right away, they will work with you to get your appointment scheduled.

- In July there was a meeting held at CVI (Center for the Visually Impaired) that was well attended. The person representing MTM had one of the most unprepared presentations that I have seen at a public forum. She basically stated that she is representing MTM and that they will be doing assessments for MARTA. I think you should be aware that at least in the blind community about 2/3 of the people who are aware of this assessment process, believe that it is a ploy on the part of MARTA to kick them off the system. That was repeated 50 to 60 times during the presentation. The woman was totally unprepared and could not tell us what will go on with the assessment. She kept saying that she could not tell you what would go on for each assessment because each person is different. I feel that someone should go back to CVI for an addition session. Response provided by Mr. Scarbor, she answered the questions that were asked accurately. Each person's assessment will be different, if they require an assessment. You might come in for your interview and that be enough to meet the criteria. Another person may need to sit down and have a more in-depth conversation about their individual transportation needs. Every individual's process will be different as each person's disability is different as well as their transportation needs. Every application will not require an assessment. If you would like to us to come back to CVI we would be happy to do so. Please contact me and we can work to get something scheduled.

9. Announcements

Mr. Wood announced that his term will end on December 31, 2016 and that anyone interested in MAC Chair Person position should submit the resume along with a letter of interest to David Scarbor by 5:00pm on October 12, 2016. Applicants will be contacted for a panel interview. If you have any question please contact Mr. Scarbor at 404-848-4037. He then asked Mr. Scarbor to announce the date of the next meeting and Mr. Scarbor responded, Tuesday, November 8, 2016. Mr. Wood stated that November 8th is Election Day and Mr. Scarbor responded, exactly. Mr. Wood then encouraged everyone to get out and vote early before coming to the meeting.

10. Adjourned