

Paratransit Advisory Committee (PAC)

January 27, 2022

Meeting Minutes

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the PAC meeting date, time, and format was changed. A Zoom virtual meeting was conducted.

Meeting was called to order by Shirley Teran-Marty, PAC Liaison at 5:00pm.

Attendees on Conference Call:

PAC Members - Thomas Coppola, Luda Demikhovskaya, Ketrina Hazell, Billy Mitchell, Mark Anthony Phifer, Jean Ryan, Ellen Rubin, Tucker Salovaara, Sharada Veerubhotla, RueZalia Watkins

Absent- Jose Hernandez, Mindy Jacobson, Sharlene Kraft

MTA/NYCT Paratransit - Brian Altschul, Benoit Dupuy, Tammie Francisque, Donna Fredericksen, Ami Freyberger, Natalie Garcia, Eugene Griffith, Simone Harvard, Patricia Iburguen, Diane McFarlane, Natasha Parris, Donald Raimondi, Shirley Teran-Marty

Guest - Mike Epley (Arro), Kelly Ann (Arro)

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Watkins conducted the meeting as the new PAC Chair. A motion was made to approve the previous meeting minutes.

Access-A-Ride (AAR) Service Report

Opening remarks, Deputy VP (DVP) Raimondi gave thanks and recognized David DePorte for many years of service as the PAC Chair and welcomed Ms. RueZalia Watkins as the new PAC Chair. DVP Raimondi thanked Mr. DePorte for his unique wisdom and perspective to the group. His passion and dedication were there until the very end of his term and the team at Paratransit appreciate his advocacy. He thanked Ms. Ellen Rubin, who will remain as the Co-Chair, for taking the lead during the pandemic. She provided great leadership when during this transition period when meeting remotely was no easy task. Most of all she provided a way forward, which is what advocates do when faced with adversity. DVP Raimondi looks forward to continuing the conversation to improve and make AAR better for PAC members and other customers.

DVP Raimondi expressed how tonight's PAC meeting is about change and welcomed Ms. Watkins again as the PAC Chair. Ms. Watkins' passion and leadership will bring new energy to the PAC and the Paratransit team is looking forward to working with her.

A new Vice President for Paratransit has been announced, his name is Christopher Pangilinan. Many of the PAC members may already know him from other organizations, but he should be joining the March PAC meeting. Additionally, Paratransit will become its own department within New York City Transit, which removed paratransit from the department of buses, reporting directly to interim President Craig Cipriano.

DVP Raimondi reported AAR statistics and stated we are well passed the peak of the Omicron variant. Ridership for November is averaging 65% of AAR's pre-pandemic service. In the month of November, we saw an increase in traffic and high ridership was observed, and we continue to feel the impact on the industry-wide shortage of drivers. In the month of December, Paratransit took strategic measures and

declared an immediate operating need to fast track procurements and supplemental services. These included ad campaigns, reaching out to retired operators, assisting carriers with their hiring programs, established Broker performance incentives, and finalizing commercial agreements. As an update, Curb is no longer providing service for Paratransit.

A summary of the November 2021 operating statistics from the Paratransit Report was sent to PAC members. DVP Raimondi provided the November statistics. A copy is attached to these minutes.

PAC Member Discussion and Feedback

Ms. Ryan asked if the report reflects no shows for all brokers (e.g., CTG, Arro and Sentry). DVP Raimondi recognized that since the new vendors perform fewer trips and are getting acclimated with the service comparing the service is difficult. Arro and Sentry are being monitored internally by Paratransit.

Paratransit Topic – OMNY Soft Launch

Deputy Director of Outreach, Donna Fredericksen, explained how in March of last year OMNY presented to the PAC and now she and the Outreach team are moving forward to test and implement the system. We are calling this the Access-A-Ride OMNY Soft Launch. This is a special account a customer would connect to their debit card, credit card, bank account or add cash, and payment will be deducted after an AAR trip is completed. The importance of the Soft Launch is to gather feedback and concerns from our customers. This week the Outreach team implemented a survey which allows selected participants to provide their feedback and questions about OMNY even before we start the technical soft launch. All PAC members received this questionnaire survey and the deadline to respond is tomorrow, January 28th. However, PAC members can always reach out to the team for

assistance. After the surveys are completed, AAR will choose the best candidates that will be available to provide feedback and be active participants during the soft launch. Thereafter, additional information will be provided.

DVP Raimondi added that selected participants will get the OMNY card in May. In addition, for customers who are already enrolled with OMNY and use it on buses and subways the method remains the same on Paratransit. During this rollout Customer Correspondence will assist with videos, literature, and FAQs so that any questions customers have may already be addressed.

PAC Member Discussion and Feedback

Ms. Veerubhotla explained when MTA launched OMNY for buses and subways she enrolled, and the process was very easy, especially for a customer who is blind. There is a surface which the card touches and provides a beep, so the passenger is aware the transaction has taken place. This system is very user friendly.

Ms. Fredericksen clarified that AAR transactions for OMNY will take place behind-the-scenes since the vehicles will not be equipped with a tap and go screen. Participants will receive additional information to guide them during this process. The system offers an easier way to board and pay for AAR trips in a contactless method.

Mr. Salovaara questioned what the 15min/30min pick up time is relating to. It was explained that the indicator is the same for both primary and broker. The 30min window starts from promise time that AAR is required to pick-up a customer. It is also a guideline that the FTA has considered appropriate . Carriers and broker services are provided with incentives if they meet their performance goals.

PAC Topic - Arro (E-hail Provider and Broker)

Mr. Mike Epley, the Head of Mobility at Arro introduced himself as well as Ms. Kelly Ann Barrett, head of Operations at Arro. Arro started servicing trips first with the E-hail pilot program and has transitioned from a subcontractor to a broker role in September. As service continues to ramp up their goal is to keep and improve the metrics on the 30min wait window. Regarding service quality, the challenge of recruiting drivers continues, but Arro has provided incentives.

PAC Member Discussion and Feedback

Ms. Veerubhotla mentioned how the phone lines were down for the entire afternoon the previous day until this morning, and there was communication relaying this to customers. Also, the text message sent out to customers about drivers being one minute away or arriving 30minutes later needs to be reprogrammed? Mr. Epley responded that he and the engineering team were already brainstorming to find a solution to this unacceptable experience. The incorrect time alert has been addressed so customers should not be receiving this text message.

Mr. Phifer noted issues with downloading the application to his phone and he hasn't received any assistance. Ms. Barrett advised she would reach out to him with support.

Ms. Rubin was also having trouble calling the Arro call center. She asked if there was a staffing issue or a phone outage? Mr. Epley will review the staff capacity and investigate further and provide a response for the next meeting.

Ms. Ryan asked if the automated voice can be changed. She suffers from hearing loss and is unable to understand the recording clearly

due to the speaker's accident and high pitch. She added that drivers need to safely board customers who use wheelchairs with the 4 tie-down and the strap across the chest. Mr. Epley responded that customers may opt into getting text messages instead of listening to the recorded voice message. Ms. Barrett confirmed TLC does receive tie-down training.

A tribute to Stanley Weinblatt

DVP Raimondi spoke of Mr. Weinblatt's contributions as a PAC member and advocate, then presented a plaque to family who zoomed in at that time.

New/Old Business

Ms. Hazell asked how a customer with children be removed from Broker service. Ms. Fredericksen explained the importance of customer's reaching out to option #8 / Comment Line directly to register complaints, so issues may be investigated. Ms. Teran-Marty informed PAC the next meeting is on Thursday, March 31st.

Closing

A motion was made by Ms. Ryan to end the meeting. Mr. Salovaara seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:30pm.

Paratransit Report

Statistical results for the month of November 2021 are shown below.

Paratransit Operations - Monthly Operations Report Service Indicators							
Category	Performance Indicator	Current Month: November 2021			12-Month Average		
		This Year	Last Year	% Change	This Year	Last Year	% Change
Ridership	Total Trips Completed*	466,157	476,655	-2.2%	476,159	462,971	+2.9%
	Total Ridership	657,621	649,352	+1.3%	659,532	618,082	+6.7%
On-Time Performance	Pick-up Primary 30 Minute	94.0%	98.0%	-4.0%	94.4%	97.6%	-3.2%
	Pick-up Primary 15 Minute	81.0%	92.0%	-11.0%	84.5%	89.8%	-5.3%
	Pick-up Broker 30 Minute	84.0%	98.0%	-14.0%	91.7%	97.7%	-6.0%
	Pick-up Broker 15 Minute	67.0%	92.0%	-25.0%	77.2%	90.8%	-13.6%
	Appointment OTP Trips Primary - 30 Min Early to <1 Late (On-Time)*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	46.0%	n/a
	Appointment OTP Trips Primary - Early*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	47.0%	n/a
	Appointment OTP Trips Broker - 30 Min Early to <1 Late (On-Time)*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	31.7%	n/a
Appointment OTP Trips Broker - Early*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	61.3%	n/a	
Ride Time	Ride Time Variance Performance: Actual Trip Duration vs. Planned Trip Duration - At or Better Than Plan	77.0%	87.0%	-10.0%	83.4%	85.7%	-2.3%
	Average Actual Trip Duration in Minutes	39	28	+39.3%	32	30	+6.0%
	Max Ride Time Performance Primary	98.0%	99.0%	-1.0%	98.8%	98.9%	-0.2%
	Max Ride Time Performance Broker	96.0%	99.0%	-3.0%	98.8%	99.0%	-0.3%
Customer Experience	Frequent Rider Experience Primary*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	76.3%	n/a
	Frequent Rider Experience Broker*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	70.0%	n/a
Provider No-Shows	Provider No-Shows per 1,000 Schedule Trips Primary	2.49	0.69	+260.9%	2.55	0.60	+327.1%
	Provider No-Shows per 1,000 Schedule Trips Broker	10.66	0.45	+2,268.9%	3.71	0.73	+409.0%
Customer Complaints	Passenger Complaints - Transportation Service Quality Per 1000 Completed Trips	7.0	1.4	+400.0%	4.5	1.8	+151.9%
	Passenger Complaints - Non-Transportation Service Quality Per 1000 Completed Trips	4.0	0.9	+344.4%	2.3	1.2	+90.3%
Call Center	Percent of Calls Answered	86.0%	95.0%	-9.0%	90.8%	96.8%	-6.0%
	Average Call Answer Speed in Seconds	225	58	+287.9%	138	40	+242.4%
Eligibility	Total Registrants	164,075	161,284	+1.7%	163,266	162,257	+0.6%

*NOTE: The Drop-off On-Time Performance and Customer Experience metrics are not available to present monthly data comparison due to the temporary suspension of appointment time booking of trips associated with the COVID-19 pandemic which started in March 2020. Consequently, the current 12-Month Average rate for these two metrics cannot be calculated.

Note: 1) The percentage comparisons are the percentage point change instead of the percentage change.
2) Trip data and resulting metrics are preliminary and subject to adjustments.