

CAPITAL AREA TRANSIT
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes

CAT Conference Room
Thursday, January 12, 2017

The CAT People with Disabilities Advisory Committee has been organized to facilitate communications between and collaboration with CAT management to improve transit services for persons with disabilities and/or persons with low incomes.

The

Attendance

Robert Philbin	Roger Jones	Karin Cain	Ron Cottingham
Seth Ambrose	Cathy Long	Iris Fuentes	Millie Taylor
Carolyn O'Brien	Sherry Marks	Kirstie Weidman	Christopher Zdanis
Mike Begler	Howard Dehart	Vernae Patterson	Liz Pabon (phone)

December minutes read and approved.

Mike Begler reported on the website status.

There are three parts to this. Two technology-related tasks going on now and a third will hopefully start next month.

- CAT has received eight proposals on the website, one of which was disqualified so there are seven proposals which came in to build the redesigned website. The CAT selection committee will be evaluating them and the goal is to have a successful bidder recommendation to the CAT Board of directors for their February 23 meeting. The RFP was broken into three parts, marketing, design and hosting. If the schedule is met and the Board approves the vendor in February, a coding development should begin in March and hopefully it will be done by September.
- Mike said that an RFP is being put together for a replacement phone system. Included in some of the new features is an online customer survey feature. At the end of the phone call, the caller will be prompted to rate their satisfaction by pressing a particular number. That data will be collected and built into a database as to how well people's experiences are. The team is hoping to have the RFP on Bill Jones's desk by next Friday. If they can get his approval, they can get this completed by the end of the month or early February.

- Karin Cain has looked at a couple of different vendors for the customer complaint system. CAT is trying to look at how their organization handles their complaints and process flow to understand and see if they may want to re-engineer and improve it in some way. Then look at software to fit.

During a Q & A the committee was reminded that all ADA requirements would be applied to the website. Mike also expressed to the committee that technology will not completely solve the problem, a lot of it will depend on the people that use it and it is very important for the committee to be part of the process. Cathy Long stressed that it is a good idea to tag all buttons with text, a necessary feature for blind customers.

Ron Cottingham from IT updated the committee on the ADA developments at the Harrisburg transfer center. CAT is trying to do a lot of driver education.

When it comes to the software system, the MDT's have to be logged into the correct runs the buses are doing and the correct trip those buses are doing because that connects directly in with the annunciators. CAT has put some procedures in place that clarify for all the drivers what exactly the expectations are when they are supposed to change their trip. For instance, coming into the transfer center they do not want the buses logged into the trip that they are coming off of. They want them logged into the trip that they will be making. When they come into the transfer center and open up their door the annunciator will announce the next trip that they will make. CAT has found a couple of glitches in the system and they are trying to find out from the vendor if there is anything that can be done about it.

- When the buses come into the transfer center often there is a line of buses there. They open up the door when they first enter in and all of their passengers exit. They then close the door, open the door again and that annunciator does not go off a second time.

They are also considering if the backdoor can be somehow disconnected to that prompt. That way if the bus does stop short of the front section of the transfer center (or the second section or one of the shelters), it can open up the rear door and allow people to exit so as not to have the annunciator go off until the bus pulls forward. Cathy Long stated that it might be difficult for people with disabilities to get out the back if they are sitting in the front. Ron responded that they are considering all factors.

Ron said, last Monday, five of them checked every bus that came in. They were pleasantly surprised at the amount of annunciators that are working now. He thinks that has a lot to do with communication that went out to the drivers and the fact that their presence was there. They are going to continue doing that so they understand this is very important to them. They have the dispatchers monitoring the system, so if the drivers are not logged in to their correct trips, the dispatcher has an analyzer that tells them. They can then contact the driver electronically or on the radio to say "please log into your correct trip", thus correcting that issue.

Ron recapped the new signage at the Harrisburg transfer station. Anybody with disabilities can be loaded at any shelter point on the east shore and there are signs saying so. They removed the chains on the poles behind the shelters to give accessibility to the shelter. Also, they are not saying you must load at one of the first three shelters. They still allow any loading at the handicap shelter even for the east shore passengers. The only place you can load for the west shore is at the handicap shelter. So there is signage there saying "East or West shore handicapped passengers can load here."

All signage will be updated any time there is a 'new bid' so anything that has been changed is going to be reflected on all schedules. They are laminated and the printing was made larger. Signs are still at the handicap loading area that have the numbers on so you can hold up the number bus you are looking for. The signs are hooked together and Ron will find out if there is some kind of a holder that they can be disconnected from so individual number signs could be held.

Ron said the signage that is on the front of the buses is completely disconnected from the annunciators and does not work in correlation together. A driver has to manually change that sign. In the past, many drivers were putting the out of service up before entering the transfer center to keep passengers at the center from wanting to get on a bus that just finished that particular route. Now they have asked them to change the sign to reflect the trip that they are going to make, rather than the trip they just made, before entering the transfer center. If your specific trip does a Capital complex there is a specific sign that is set up that says "Capital complex downtown Harrisburg."

Bob told Ron to send any information on ADA updates to Seth at the CILCP so he can distribute it electronically to other consumers. Seth Ambrose provided his information to Ron.

Sherry Marks reported that the complaints seem to be fewer than they were at one time. CAT provided service to about 1900 PT riders in the last month with 2 actual complaints filed. There was an issue of people that are seniors that live in Dauphin County and want to go to Cumberland County. They can only go to Cumberland County under the lottery senior for medical and for employment. If a person that lives in Dauphin County has a disability and they are over 65 they can fill out the **Special Efforts Transit** application and then they can go wherever the three-quarters of a mile the city bus route would be going.

Bob Philbin updated the committee on the Harrisburg city curb cuts committee. There is a joint effort between the City of Harrisburg's Planning and Engineering Department, Capital Area Transit and CIL. The vendor RFP has been put out for a consultant who will analyze all the routes, all the stops, all the curb cuts and all the shelters in the city of Harrisburg so we'll have a comprehensive first database and then we will be able to implement a plan over time to upgrade the whole city. They are about a week away

from selecting the consultant and then the project will be underway. It will probably take close to a year to finalize the initial report for this multi-year project.

Roger Jones is now going to be working with Chris Zdanis on updating the ADA/CAT policy.

Carolyn O'Brien introduced a list she and Cathy Long drafted entitled, "Suggestions that May Make Your CAT Experience Better." Karin Cain posted it on the CAT website under the People with Disabilities tab. Bob thinks it would be a good idea if they print a bi-fold brochure and have them on their paratransit vehicles for at least six months to get that information pushed out to their users. Carolyn also made a suggestion that the People with Disabilities page be advertised on the CAT homepage to make CAT customers aware of this committee's contributions. Karin and Bob agreed it is a good idea.

Mike Begler discussed the survey. The written report to be presented to the board has been revised since the December meeting. Copies were distributed. Mike read an excerpt from the previously approved Roadmap to show we have accomplished its objectives. As a result, we are now moving on to the recommendation/remediation phase which begins with meeting with CAT operational staff to develop plans and timelines to address the opportunities of improvement identified in our survey. A meeting will be set up between Mike Begler and Chris Zdanis along with other interested committee members to discuss CAT's recommendations. Also, instead of issuing a written report, a decision was made to present an oral presentation along with handouts of the survey's conclusions and agreed upon remediation plans to the CAT Board of Directors sometime this spring.

Bob reported that the committee might be interested in seeing a similar study that PennDOT and CAT worked for several months last fall.

MOTION: That the committee approve of the plan moving forward and move immediately to the recommendation/remediation phase of their findings and that at the conclusion of this phase they will put together an oral presentation with supporting handouts to be made to the CAT Board of Directors. **MOTION CARRIED**

Bob Philbin announced that the CAT driver training committee has requested members from the advisory committee to participate. New drivers will be trained and old drivers will be retrained to be more understanding of individual needs. Class room training starts next week and physical demonstrations in 3 to 4 weeks.

MOTION: To nominate Howard Dehart, Charles Carr, Marsha Drenth, and Cathy Long, Roger Jones may know someone with interest. **MOTION CARRIED**

Other Notes...

Chris Zdanis, new manager paratransit, shared ride services was introduced. His extension is: 172.

Karin Cain informed the room that Find My CAT Bus users may be having trouble with a bus announcing its destination. Also, trips are showing that they are not assigned, which means they are not announcing their stops and showing up on the maps. It is a problem with the system that they are trying to troubleshoot. CAT set up several committees to identify these issues that they hope to resolve very quickly.

Bob informed everyone that they could register for newsletters and text updates to be kept up to date daily. On the CAT website, on the right hand side, in the section called "quick links" click on "sign up for email alerts" or choose the option for text alerts.

Also note that a reservation can be made up to 2 weeks in advance and it will NOT be cancelled unless you press 3 to cancel on the IVR.

Meeting Adjourn

Carolyn O'Brien, Secretary