

City of **SANTA CLARITA**  **TRANSIT**

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Committee Meeting

9:00 a.m.

Thursday, September 7, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Keith Curry called to order the meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee at 9:06AM

MEMBERS & GENERAL PUBLIC PRESENT

Keith Curry, Chairman	Adrian Aguilar, Santa Clarita Transit
John Taylor, Santa Clarita Senior Center	Kurt Baldwin, Independent Living Center
Carmen Taylor, General Public	Linda Wood, Member
Karen Manke, General Public	Glen Fisher, General Public
Yvonne Scott, General Public	Jim Hogan, Member
Line Paquin, Member	Yvonne Scott, General Public
Ella Clark, Member	Cliff Wood, General Public
Elmer Contreras, MV Transportation	Jim Hogan, Member
Christina Blanco, Access Services	Steve Sulphur, Clear Captions
Fayma Ishaq, Access Services	Milcah “Mikey” White, General Public

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Jim Hogan made a motion to approve the June 2017 AAC Minutes as read. The motion was seconded. The Minutes were approved as is with no changes.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Cliff Wood – No Comments at this time

Carmen Taylor – No Comments at this time

Karen Mankel – No Comments at this time

Yvonne Compton – No Comments at this time

Milcah “Mikey” White

Access Services

Have you folks made the investigation of the Access stop which is at the North Hollywood location? I think I talked to this young lady the last time. The times that I have tried to use that stop where the subway & the Orange Line meet; it seems like the Taxis can't GPS it correctly, so I have been utilizing the address of the coffee bean across the street. Unfortunately, the entrance to the Coffee Bean faces Chandler, but the address is for that whole building facing Lankershim, and there's a challenge with that. It's not bad when we are headed there, but being picked up there is a challenge and there have been instances where the van has left. I've had to call and then it puts me in a position where we have missed our appointment or been late.

Another concern I have is having the Access Service identify the address in Los Angeles. This is the second time that this has happened. The incident occurred a couple of weeks ago. I was in the area of Norwalk at the Green Line where the Metrolink meet. Access was trying to identify that location to come and pick up my son from there to Union Station. They had a bit of a challenge in finding the address. That's the first time that that's happened at that location, and I was just wondering what can cause that. The challenge for that was that my son does not have a phone, and I let them know that. He was finally located, but I wanted to understand why that occurred.

The last thing just came up in trying to advocate for my son. I'm his advocate and PCA. He can't be at this meeting because he's at school. The challenge I have is that I called yesterday to be able to get an Access ride here and I was told that that it couldn't happen because he's the one that has the Access ride. I was puzzled by that because sometimes I help my mom over here I usually come with her, so I never had to do it just to represent him and address his questions and his needs. I just think that was kind of a disingenuous behavior on Access Services to make that a standing rule and I'd like to find out who I need to write to petition and to change that policy because I don't think that's an appropriate policy. There are many people that have disabilities that may not be able to be represented at a meeting and they have a spokesperson that speaks for them and so I think they need to be given accommodation to have a ride to the meeting to address these issues on their behalf.

I don't depend on my son for transportation, but I do advocate for him, so that he can be able to navigate this City and the surrounding parts and be independent of me. So what I'm saying is that I believe that with other services that apply to other people with disabilities, accommodations are made for people who are their supportive services. I need to be accommodated by the service so that we can assist that person with voicing their voice when they have to be at school.

Kurt Baldwin responded

The eligibility for Access Services is the person that due to their disability cannot use the regular bus, that's who gets Access Services. But if that person has a PCA and they need that PCA, that person gets to ride with them for free, so if your son wanted to go to the annual meeting or this meeting, then you as a PCA can ride for free but that transportation is not going to be for you without your son.

Glen Fisher

Access Customer Service

One of the Issues that I have with Access is the staff, the customer service representatives and the dispatchers. When you're calling in to make your reservations, and you're dealing with members who are supposed to be servicing the public, some of these individuals that work for you guys, have horrible dispositions. They have horrible attitudes and are very mean to the customers. They are very short tempered, they get smart and they get very sarcastic with you, and it seems like you're getting on their nerves. But "you are there to service me" and I'm trying to make a reservation, or I'm trying to get something done and then you're giving me attitude and being rude to me unnecessarily. I have a serious problem with that. Like I stated at the last meeting at the library, "When you have people who are supposed to service the public and be there for people with disabilities and special needs, then if you're in any sector of customer service you are supposed to govern yourselves accordingly".

Like I expressed before, I come from management for the federal government in customer service, which has a zero tolerance. If my team members spoke to a client out of order, and there was no resolution to the problem, there was zero tolerance, and I would send them home for the day. "Punch out it's time for you to go home". If you're disrespectful to a client, "punch out and go home, then start all over tomorrow". But Access allows these people and I'm telling you, you have so many people in different departments across the board, that is very disrespectful in customer service and you all need to address that, because it's not fair to us that they take out their frustration, or their personal problems out on us, that's not fair at all.

I'm going to give you one case in point. Yvonne and I went to the Santa Anita Mall in Arcadia. We were at the mall and we called customer service and asked them if it was at all possible if they could dispatch the driver to our location where we were. The Access location for drop off

and pick up was on this side of the mall. Where we were going, was at the main entrance on the complete opposite side of the mall and that's where we were for over eight hours. So when we got finished with our meeting, that door and that entrance to where we were was right there just a matter of steps from us. When it was time for them to pick us up, the driver was sitting at the opposite end of the mall. So dispatch called and we told him "it's four of us in the car, can you have the driver meet us at the entrance where we were at" which was between the Cheesecake Factory and Wokanos. They told us "no", that we had to go over to that point.

My issue with them was the people that were there, we couldn't walk across the mall and get to that other side for the Access ride to pick us up. They were unyielding and unmovable. I requested to speak to a supervisor. The supervisor's name was Miguel. Miguel in the Eastern District of Access got on the phone. I said, "Miguel, I have summonsed you to this phone call, because there are four of us that are handicapped and cannot walk to the other side of the mall". From the time that we arrived here to the time that we are leaving, we were at this main entrance; we have not moved throughout the mall for the eight hours that we have been here. "Can you send the driver to this door or to this main entrance over here?" He said "absolutely not". I said "Let me be clear, and I put him on speaker phone for everyone that was there surrounding us to hear, "We have four handicapped people that cannot walk to the other side of this mall and you're going to tell me that you are not going to accommodate us?" He said "I will not do that". That is unacceptable. I'm heated. You put me in a position, where I cannot physically do that. So I'm supposed to take myself and begin to walk, and I get maybe 300 feet in that mall and I fall to the ground, "What is Access going to do for me?" What about these older ladies that are with me, and cannot walk either?

You know these policies that Access talks about "We are there for the handicapped", "We are there for people with special needs", and then he says, "It's a security issue because we do surveys at that location, and they are not deemed safe". I'm not going to move, I am not going to put myself in harm's way because Access Services has these policies and who ever these teams are that go out into the public to survey these areas and then they say that they are deemed unsafe, who are these people? Let us see them.

If you're a decent human being there's no way that you can look at that location as big as it is and say that it's deemed unsafe and then you put these people in harm's way. It's not fair to treat people like that.

Keith Curry, Chair

Temporary Vice-Chair

Before we go into members comments, I got an e-mail from John Panico. He's not going to be here today. We need a Vice-Chair temporarily for today. John Taylor would you like to be the Vice-Chair for today because John Panico is out?

Jim Hogan made a motion that John Taylor be the temporary Vice-Chair for this meeting. John Taylor accepted. Ella Clark seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

There will be a guest speaker today. I have a very important appointment today. I will be leaving at approximately 10:25AM. Our guest speaker will be here by then.

MEMBERS COMMENTS

John Taylor, Santa Clarita Senior Center

Problem getting his times together

On Tuesday, I called for a Friday pick-up at the Senior Center where I'm working on Friday. I asked for a 1:30PM, I was given a 1:13PM. I told them I can't take that because I work until 1:30PM. I said try 2PM and he said, "I have nothing available". From Tuesday to Friday, really? That amount of time and they don't have anything at least within a half an hour and 45 minutes? So I'm having a problem with that. Now I have to take the big bus and that makes my wife very worried because I have to cross the street and I have to go to work tomorrow. I talked to John on Tuesday for a Friday pick-up and nothing was available, so I'm a little concerned with that. I can understand if I call the day before and everything was wrapped up, but I call on a Tuesday for a Friday pick-up. To me that is very unacceptable.

Kurt Baldwin, Independent Living Center

Measure M Committee

I just wanted to report what is going on with 2 percent Measure M Committee. We passed a sales tax measure for the County of Los Angeles to go to Transportation, it's called Measure M. It's going to do a lot of things. Part of that money goes to older adults and people with disabilities. The MTA formalized a little committee of the MTA older adults and people with disabilities collaborative. We are having our first meeting coming up later this month as a formal.

We drafted a letter, with Move LA. What we are saying is that 2 percent isn't going to meet the needs of older adults and people with disabilities, so we would like MTA to leverage that SB1, State Transportation Money, Senate Bill 1 to augment some of the promises that they made to us in Measure M. For example maybe have some unlimited same day service on Access Service or something maybe not even associated with Access Services that MTA operates. There may be some ideas about doing some brokerage model or you can use accessible vehicles and have it be like an Uber or Lyft sort of situation.

We are insisting that it be completely accessible so we don't want a two tier system. We had a whole list of things having to do with keeping fares low and augmenting the service so that it's more usable for older adults and people with disabilities. There is a lot more work being done for first mile, last mile, accessibility for the right-of-way, if I can't get to my home bus stop, that's a

barrier to transportation, why don't you fix the side walk? or put a side walk in so I can get there. There's a lot of competition for that money to kind of augment the 2 percent Measure M for the older adults and people with disabilities.

Linda Wood

Salt Creek Grille

I called Access/DAR and I told them that I wanted to go to Salt Creek Grille. They have taken me many times there, but that day someone answered and told me "I need the address". I don't remember the address, so he said "We can't take you until you get the address".

Kurt Baldwin, responded to Linda Wood

The reality is that there is a legal obligation to accommodate people with disabilities. It's a legal obligation, so if you're going to be so inflexible in your rules that you're going to create a barrier to a person with disabilities to get a needed service, then you're discriminating against that person.

Fayma Ishaq responded to Linda Wood

The policy has always been that it's required for the customer to provide the exact address and the exact destination address that they are traveling to. So if we travel in the basin areas, you will notice that every operator will ask "what is the pick-up address?" even if it's your home address, and "what is the destination address?" We have multiple people calling on behalf of a customer. If somebody said "pick me up from my home" and the address on file has not been updated, and that individual's schedule is to the address that's on file, the customer will actually be picked-up from somewhere else, because there isn't something in the recording or the customer telling the CSR "pick me up from this particular address". There are destination addresses where there are multiple locations of that same place that you're trying to go to. It's a way to ensure that the customer is being picked up from the right place and going to the desired destination and having the exact pick-up and the exact drop-off address that is going to ensure that you're going to get there.

Line Paquin

Issue with a Reservation

On August 15 I made a reservation for August 22; they told me I have a 10:25AM pick-up, I confirmed it on August 21 to make sure that I had the right time and I did. Then they came to pick me up and they got there at 11:51AM. When I complained that my pick-up was at 10:25AM, the driver had it down as 11:25AM and I had just confirmed it the night before. I try to confirm for important rides, but I didn't make it to the appointment, I was too late.

Ella Clark

Difficulty Scheduling a Ride

One of my problems is that it used to be when you called up to get a ride, they would give you three chances to finding something close to when you had to leave. Now they are down to two chances and they are very short two's. They say that a lot of the problems that you have is trying to schedule a ride. No matter how far ahead it is, you have trouble scheduling a ride around what you said.

It's getting harder and harder to book a ride. Even on my standing orders, I've been late; they get there later and later at times. Last week I made it just in time, so even on a standing order, you don't get there on time and you don't know if you're going to get DAR or Access. My standing order is for my chiropractor and it's important that I get there and they only have a window for me. So if I try to get a ride another day, it's very hard to book a ride because they don't make it easy. If you don't have the address right in front of you, if it's some place you've never been before, and I don't even have 411, I don't have access to a computer, and I don't even have a fancy phone.

There's just a big problem with scheduling rides and if you get the rides, are they going to get you to the appointment on time? This has been a problem over the years, because I've had a standing order for a few years. And for me to barley get there on time, at least they're not getting me there when it's all over with.

Jim Hogan – No Comments at this time

Steve Sulphur, Clear Captions

Title 5 ADA Discussion / Clear Captioning

I work for a company called "Clear Captions". We're the federally certified provider of captioning telephone services for those with hearing loss. As you all know, the ADA there's five parts, five titles. Title 4 created the tele-communication relay service that requires every telephone company, weather cellular or home phone company to take a portion of the fees that they collect every month and put them into a fund so that's what partially funds the ADA Title 4. The ADA takes a fraction of that money to provide telecommunication services to those with hearing loss.

It's a phone like any other phone you've ever had. It has a hand set, it's got a speaker but the beauty of it is when you are speaking with somebody, the person you are speaking to, if you missed something that they are saying you can look down at the screen and the conversation is being live captioned or it's being texted to the screen live as you're speaking to the other person. If you have hearing issues and maybe you can relate to this with a relative, you're talking to them and they're always saying "what, what? I can't hear you". They can now look down at the

screen where the conversation is being captioned in live time. The only qualifications are if you have any hearing loss. If you have any issues with your hearing through Title 4 of the ADA, you are entitled to the product and the service.

The toughest part of my job is convincing people that it is free. The reason it is free is because of that little charge that every billion American pays every month, about 60 cents a month and that goes into the fund. The reason that the phone is free is because we have all been paying for it every month for the last 30 years. So if you have any hearing loss, you're entitled to a civil right to the free phone, the free captioning service. I come install the phone for free, and it's all paid for.

Your phone has smart phone technology that is basically like an iPad or a smart phone so not only can I adjust the volume but there's an equalizer too. I can adjust the highs and the lows specifically for your hearing. Some people can't hear low, some people can't hear highs, I can adjust that. I can also put your contacts on the phone or your loved ones so that they have one touch speed dialing. There's also a voicemail, so when someone leaves a message, not only can you replay it, but it's also captioned on the phone. If you have a friend that calls and they leave a two minute voicemail and at the very end, they leave their phone number. Instead of having to hit replay, to get to the phone number, it's just on the screen for you. Had I not been delayed earlier, I would have had the phone set up, I would have had it set-up so you can see the captioning, but you have a fantastic picture here. The reason why I put the card on the back is many people say to me, "OMG I can never read that small print". So that's why I put the post card to let people know that I can make the letters/font as big as somebody needs so that they can read it.

Again, there's a small service fee on every American's cell phone bill every home bill, it's about 62 cents per month. That money funds the Americans with Disability Act, Part 4 of the ADA and it is specifically for people with hearing loss. If you have any hearing loss or you know somebody with hearing loss and if you can put me in front of a senior center and a senior living church anywhere where there might be people with hearing loss, my goal is to get the word out because we're not allowed to advertise. All the money goes to the phone, so I'm here to serve and help people. Like I said, I'll set the volume and the tone for the speaker for the handset, I'll install it and you're basically good to go. The only qualification is that you have to have some form of hearing loss. We reach out to our Dr. for certification. You have to sign a lease and you can't take it out of the country.

Keith Curry

Officer Elections

I got an email this morning from John Panico; he's not going to make it again. I emailed him and I asked him "Would you like to submit your nomination as Vice-Chair?" I didn't get a response.

Adrian Aguilar responded to Keith

Without John accepting the nomination; I wouldn't feel comfortable moving ahead with the election. We can do one of three things, we can wait again, we can open it up for new nominations, or we can do whatever the committee thinks is appropriate, but to vote on somebody who has not accepted the nomination, I don't think is appropriate at this time.

Jim Hogan responded

Two things, we always have to get something in writing, even if it's an e-mail and unfortunately John hasn't done that so far, however he's not in violation of the attendant because he always calls in and acknowledges that he's not going to make it. It's a sensitive issue with his wife that is causing the problem.

Adrian Aguilar responded

We already have a nomination on the floor, John was nominated. So we already have a motion for him to serve as Vice-Chair, however he has not been at the last two meetings to accept that nomination, so what we can do is either open it up for new nominations for somebody other than John or we wait until November.

Keith Curry responded

Do we have another nomination on the floor who would like to run for Vice-Chair?

Jim Hogan took the nomination for Vice-Chair.

Besides that, the November meeting can still be opened up. The nomination is closed.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

AGENCY UPDATES

Adrian Aguilar, Santa Clarita Transit

On-Time Performance

In terms of the overall on-time performance for local and fixed route service, this includes our local and commuter service.

June: 90.73%	July: 91.5%	August: 88.7%
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Usually we see a drop in August as school gets back into session and we have more kids riding the buses, but we have been averaging between 89 & 91 percent for the past 12-18 months. Our target is 90.5 percent so we are right in that range.

Vehicle Procurements

We currently have fourteen DAR buses on order. The first round of five vehicles is scheduled to be delivered in late October. After that we will have five vehicles delivered in October; five vehicles delivered in April of 2018, and then the remaining four will be delivered right around October.

Trolley

Our new trolley has been delivered to their facility in California. The decals are currently being installed and we expect to take delivery of that vehicle probably in the next 2 weeks.

During the summer months and the holidays, we run special routes based on the season. During the summer months, we run routes that provide service to various hotels, Magic Mountain, Town Center, and basically tourist attraction locations. During the holidays we use the trolley for events such as the Light Tour and things of that nature.

Order for our Transit Buses

I received an update from the manufacturer about three weeks ago. We are still looking at 2018 for the delivery of our buses, but it looks like they'll be able to move up the delivery date from October of 2018 to somewhere closer to July. As we get more information of those exact delivery dates, I'll pass along the delivery dates to the group when I have them.

Fayma Ishaq, Access Services

We had a position open for an interim Executive Director. We have filled the position. Our new Executive Director is Andre Colaiace. He has been with Access for 10 years. He was the Planning & Government Relations Deputy Executive Director for the Agency and now he is the Interim Executive Director.

Elmer Contreras, MV Transportation

August

8,000 trips	ADA on-time: 94.5%	DAR: 91.2%
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Changes in the Call Center

A couple of things have changed in the Call Center since our last meeting. We lost Valerie, Sabastian, Billie (you guys knew about) and Cesar. They have all moved on, they are no longer with us. We have a new CSR, her name is Beverly. She is still in her 90 days of training period. We are in the process of interviewing another CSR to replace Sabastian & Cesar, so I'm doing a lot of interviewing along with my co-workers. Once we get the new CSR's, there will be a new bid for them, so you will see some changes again.

Training

We completed a Wheelchair Certification for all of the operators. The training was refreshment training and how to tie down mobility devices, everyone went through it. It went pretty well. I'm in a lot of the training, I was there making sure that everyone was learning and doing the right thing. I plan on doing this training going forward at least once every six months.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting and seconded.

FUTURE MEETING

The next meeting for the Accessibility Advisory Committee will be held on November 2, 2017, 9AM in the Century Room at City Hall, 23920 Valencia Blvd. Santa Clarita, CA.