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MEETING NOTICE

To: TPAG (Transportation Planning Advisory Group)
From: Constance Mellis - Staff to TPAG
RE: **May 18, 2011 TPAG Meeting**
Time: **1:00 P.M. to 2:30 P.M.**
Place: **Worcester Regional Transit Authority**
Advisory Board Meeting Room, 287 Grove Street, Worcester

Agenda

1. Action on Meeting Minutes of April 20, 2011
2. PBSI and Customer Service Reports
3. Functional Assessments for ADA Paratransit Service
4. Customer Service Complaint Form
5. TPAG meeting schedule
6. New Business

TPAG Executive Board members should plan to stay after the meeting for about 10 minutes to discuss upcoming agendas.

Elders and individuals with disabilities can receive *FREE transportation* to and from TPAG meetings.

Call Paratransit Brokerage Services, Inc. (PBSI) at (508) 752-9283.

To place an item on the TPAG agenda, call (508) 459-3328.
This notice is available in accessible format upon request.

The next TPAG Meeting is scheduled for June 15, 2011, 1:00-2:30pm.

TPAG Meeting Minutes
April 20, 2011

Attendees: Kathy Kulesza; Jackie Norton; Mark Binall; Robert Bermudez; Pamela Alvin; Mary Healey; Sharon Strzalkowski; Mike Kennedy, CLW; Anna Kusterski, Mass Commission for the Blind; Doreen Goodrich, Senator Michael Moore's office; Wendy Steinhilber, PBSI; Jim Delage, PBSI; John Carney, RTA Transit; Bill Clark, Yellow Cab; Constance Mellis, CMRPC

Ms. Kathy Kulesza, Chair, began the meeting. There were around the room introductions.

Meeting minutes of February 16, 2010

Minutes were accepted as presented.

Functional Assessments to Determine ADA Paratransit Eligibility

PBSI staff gave a history and overview of WRTA's plan to use functional assessments to help determine ADA paratransit eligibility. This assessment would be used in coordination with the current verification from a health care provider. Transit authorities nationwide are being encouraged to begin using a functional assessment as part of the application process instead of strictly a paper application. This assessment would help the reviewer to determine the physical and cognitive abilities of the applicant to use the WRTA bus in a real setting and be able to make a better determination for service needs. This assessment is in development right now. It will include situations like navigating sidewalks and curb cuts, crossing signalized and unsignalized intersections, traveling on even terrain, uneven terrain, and slopes, reading a bus schedule, waiting for a bus, as well as several other real life skills required to use the bus. When discussed it has received support from CLW and REDD. This would eventually be used for new applicants as well as for those being recertified. PBSI will be asking for input from TPAG. Several TPAG members in attendance expressed an interest in discussing this further and offering input when needed.

Snow Removal at WRTA Bus Stops

RTA Transit discussed the difficult winter conditions with regard to snow removal. It was pointed out that property owners need to take at least some responsibility for snow removal since WRTA could not reasonably be expected to remove snow and ice from all their bus stops in a timely manner. This was a particularly difficult winter for snow removal due to the amount of snow and the long lasting temperatures below freezing. Further, it was pointed out that despite some worries about the impact of snow on the clearance of low floor buses, there were no snow related problems.

Bus Stop Announcement Technology

WRTA is coming closer to having the automated bus stop announcement system installed on the buses. This will also include a system for visual display. It is expected to begin in the late Fall. In the meantime, WRTA's recent secret rider survey of stop announcement showed 100% compliance. If at any time bus stop announcements are not made, passengers are encouraged to call in a complaint. All complaints are investigated promptly and should be called in for any service violations including lack of stop announcements and failure to lower kneeler.

WRTA New Facilities

WRTA hopes to build two new facilities over the next few years. One will be a transfer station which will be a three story building adjacent to Union Station. It will house administrative offices, PBSI and Customer Service. This will be the new WRTA bus route hub to replace City Hall as the hub. Although buses will still travel to City Hall, it will no longer be the main hub. The second facility will be the Operations Facility which will be on Quinsigamond Ave. Although this property, and the current Grove Street property, will have environmental cleanup issues, it is expected that with input from state and federal environmental agencies, it will be successfully done. Significant public outreach will be done, including outreaching to people with disabilities and support agencies like MCB and CLW.

Greendale Mall Access

It was explained that the Greendale Mall bus stop is inaccessible on the inbound route. Greendale Mall is private property and buses can only enter with permission from the property owner. Since this has not been granted, the WRTA picks up all ADA eligible passengers who are traveling inbound using paratransit service. People who require accessible bus stops at shopping malls should be aware that the bus stops at both the Auburn Mall and the Shoppes at Blackstone Valley are fully accessible to people with disabilities.

WRTA Advisory Board

A letter was read aloud regarding the appointment of a disability representative to the WRTA Advisory Board. This position was vacant for about two years and this appointment was an effort by the WRTA Advisory Board to have it filled. Discussion began about the qualifications to be on the Advisory Board. It was explained that WRTA Advisory Board members are not required to be transit or paratransit users but are typically appointed by their town to represent the transit and paratransit users of their town.

Complaint Form

PBSI reports that they hope to have its new complaint form finalized by July 1 and in use shortly after that.

PBSI Report

Highlights of the report include: all no shows were excused in Feb due to the widespread impact of snow and snow removal on all travel.

Subscription Service

PBSI staff explained that subscription service is available for trips recurring 2-5 times each week. Examples of these are work, school or physical therapy but these trips could be for any purpose. Passengers should call PBSI monthly to maintain their subscription. Changes in schedule, holidays and vacations can impact subscription service.

Late Night Paratransit Service

It was explained that currently ADA service mirrors the fixed route bus service as required by law. Expanding paratransit service hours would require additional funds that the WRTA does not have.

Questions to Yellow Cab

- Any Yellow Cab driver using a cell phone while driving should be reported immediately. This is a violation of policy.
- Cabs are replaced on a regular basis. This is usually done in the Spring after the difficult winter road conditions.
- Holy Cross staff has asked transportation companies, including Yellow Cab, to avoid driving on campus property unless they are picking up or dropping off a passenger.
- Cabs are checked daily for fluids and tires and biweekly for other things. If a passenger is aware of a problem with the cab, especially one in the back seat where the driver may not notice, it should be reported immediately.

**The next meeting will be on Wed, May 18, 2011,
1:00-2:30pm in the WRTA Advisory Board Room.**

WRTA Advisory Board Report

FY '10/Paratransit Brokerage Services

	March-11	February-11	March-10
Application Trips Requested	0	33	105
Trips Requested	0	9462	11,735
Capacity Denials	0	0	4
Total Trips Scheduled	11096	9462	11,731
Cancellations	1366 (12.5 % of scheduled trips)	1997 (21.1% of scheduled trips)	1,692 (14.4% of scheduled trips)
No Shows	170 (1.5% of scheduled trips)	113 (1.2% of scheduled trips)	189 (1.6% of scheduled trips)
Trips Completed*	9540	7353	9850
Elder Shopper	0	564	802
Companion(s)	339	258	404
PCA(s)	704	663	777
Total Trips Scheduled (Including Companions & PCAs)	10683	8738	11,833
Applications Requested	99	43	98
Applications Completed	73	25	73
Incomplete Applications	59	8	42
Total New Eligible	40	42	71
Total ADA Eligible	4684	4658	4,466
No Longer Eligible	80	54	99
Total In-eligible	1	4	6
No-Shows Excused	47	113	36
No-Show Suspensions	6	0	8

*Does not include PCA's and Companions