

**ADA Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 14, 2014**

Members Present

Chairperson: Steve Hastalis
 Committee Members: Garland Armstrong
 Rhychell Barnes
 Dorrell Perry
 Doreen Bogus
 Mary Anne Cappelleri
 Bryen Yunashko
 Grace Kaminkowitz
 Excused: Maurice Fantus
 Tim Fischer
 Laura Miller

Facilitator: Amy Serpe, CTA Manager, ADA Compliance Programs

Steve Hastalis, Committee Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Roll Call

- Members of the Committee introduced themselves.
- Maurice Fantus, Tim Fischer, and Laura Miller had excused absences from the meeting.

Announcement

- There was an announcement that Yochai Eisenberg has resigned from the Committee.

Approval of Minutes from January 13, 2014 Meeting

- There were a couple of changes to the January 14, 2014 minutes. Rosemary Gerty pointed out the correct spelling of Anne LeFevre's name. Ms. Gerty clarified that the RTA Appeals Board for Paratransit certification does not reevaluate, but rather discusses the terms of appeals in order to gain additional information. Ms. Gerty also updated the number of appeals in 2013 to 112. Ms. Kaminkowitz withdrew her motion and moved to accept the minutes as corrected. Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion. Mr. Hastalis asked for a vote to approve the minutes as amended. The Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the Committee's January 14, 2014 meeting.

Rail Car Information

- Mr. Robert Kielba, Chief Rail Equipment Engineer, stated that there are about 432, 5,000 Series rail cars in service. There are 14 cars running with the new door opening chime activated primarily on the Red, Yellow, and Purple Lines.
- There are 58 cars loaded with the software at a rate of four to six cars completed in a week. The sound on these particular cars will be activated at a later date. There will be a media notice to notify the public of what the chimes are and what they mean.
- Ms. Doreen Bogus asked if there is a date that the chimes will be included on the remaining lines. Mr. Kielba answered that the chimes are a software installation being done in

conjunction with another modification on the doors. Mr. Kielba is hopeful that the chimes should be functional later this year.

- Mr. Kielba explained to Mr. Hastalis that the Pink and Green Lines use the 5000 Series cars and the Red Line also uses them about 60 percent of the time. The Yellow Line generally uses the 5000 Series cars.

Customer Service Report

- Yvette Paetsch, Manager Customer Feedback Programs had provided relevant reports that were sent to the Committee members previous to the meeting.
- All complaints increased by 4% in Quarter-1.
- ADA complaints remained at the 3% level with no increase.
- ADA compliance increased from 39 in year 2013 to 47 in 2014. Malfunctioning inoperable AVAS went from 4 in 2013 to 16 in 2014. However, pass ups decreased by 17 with 23 in Q-1 and six in Q-2.
- Mr. Garland Armstrong raised the concern that passengers with wheelchairs should have to be “tied down” in the securement area for safety issues. Mr. Hastalis explained to Mr. Armstrong that the law prohibits different treatment based on disability and that it is ultimately up to the person if they want their wheelchair secured.

Elevator/Escalator Report

- Frank Dixon, Manager Escalator/Elevator Maintenance provided relevant reports that were sent to the Committee member prior to the meeting.
- Mr. Dixon reported the efficiencies ratings for escalators in Quarter-1. In January 2013, the “percent” went from 93.29% to 96.72% in January 2014. February 2013 had 94.05% efficiency and February 2014 had 95.83%. However, the percent decreased with 95.77% in March 2013 and 94.06% in March 2014.
- Mr. Dixon reported that there were four reconditionings during Q-1. The reconditionings included the Loyola, Jackson Van Buren on the Red Line Street to the Mezzanine escalator. The Jackson Van Buren master platform along with the Bryn Mawr Red Line was also completed. Reconditionings at Howard and Pulaski 51st Street are being looked at.
- Mr. Dixon mentioned that there was an issue between CTA and ComEd involving a motor becoming fried. The project is being done at Austin Green Line station.
- Elevator efficiencies were at 97.98% in January 2013 and at 96.49% in January 2014 due to cold weather and electronics. February 2013 ended at 97.96% and 2014 ended at 97.49%. March 2014 decreased 0.55% from 2013.
- Mr. Dixon reported that an elevator project on the Cermak Green Line is currently being worked on.
- Mr. Hastalis questioned about the strange noises being made by the escalators at Howard. Mr. Dixon explained that the noises are from problems when the chains in the escalators start stretching. Mr. Dixon also noted that there is a project in order to fix those issues. The project is approximately six to seven weeks.
- Ms. Rhychell Barnes commented on the Blue Line elevators having unpleasant odors. Mr. Dixon stated that the janitorial department will be power washing the stations that could not be done in the wintertime due to the cold weather.

Construction Projects Update

- Robert Wittmann, Vice President of Construction, updated the committee on current and upcoming construction projects.
- Mr. Wittmann presented that there is a substation project that involves three substations at Farwell, Armitage, and Hill. The substations are almost completed with the equipment that provides power to the trains. The Farwell and Hill substations are projected to be finished by the end of the summer while the Armitage substation should be completed by the end of the year or first Quarter of 2015.
- There is a current bus hoist project that involved installing new hoists at seven bus maintenance facilities. The new hoists are installed and working. The wrap-up of the project involves some work at the wash bays and inspection bays at the Chicago garage and 103rd garage.
- Mr. Wittmann discussed the Milwaukee Track Project which is elevated track placement work on the Blue Line between Damen and Logan Square. Replacing the ties on the track will eliminate slow zones. The work is being completed over a series of ten weekends, with three weekends being completed to date. During these weekends, the Blue Line service between the elevated areas will be shut down and bus shuttle service will be provided. The project will be completed by the end of the year.
- Mr. Wittmann reviewed the upcoming 18th Street Connector Track Project. The project includes the section of elevated track on the Orange Line along 18th Street. The work will be completed over a series of five weekends that ends in June where there will be no service between Roosevelt and Halsted. Bus shuttle service will be provided.
- The Harrison station is undergoing repair that includes new flooring, new finishes, lighting replacement, signage upgrades, some stair enclosures, and water management. The Polk entrance is closed for 42 days during repairs then when the Polk entrance reopens, the Harrison entrance will close for repairs. There will be five weekend station closures for work on the platform. The Harrison station project will be completed by the end of the year.
- Mr. Wittmann explained that there are two other current projects that are managed by CDOT. The Clark and Division station has been under construction for a while and is finishing up with a new LaSalle Street entrance that should have an opening date sometime in June. The second CDOT project is the new station at Cermak on the Green Line. The station will have two accessible entrances and their target completion is the end of 2014.
- Other construction projects include the Wilson station project that went out for bid and will hopefully begin later in the summer. 95th terminal is going to have some advanced construction work that will also start this summer. There is a three station design package that includes the Damen, Western, and California Blue Line stations that will be completed by the end of the year.
- Mr. Wittmann revealed that there are a few stations in the design phase that will soon be accessible including Illinois Medical District and Addison on the Blue Line and Quincy station in the Loop. There will be updates at upcoming ADA quarterly meetings.
- CDOT has planned a new station at Washington and Wabash. Protestors are going through an environmental process with FTA for the new station because they want to preserve the Madison station.
- Mr. Hastalis questioned how the entrances at LaSalle and Division will look like in regards to if there will be an escalator or stairway. Mr. Wittmann explained that there will be an elevator on the south side of Division that goes down to the mezzanine level and another elevator that goes to the platform level. Both escalators and stairways will be included at the entrance. Mr. Hastalis requested a verbal description of the LaSalle and Division station along with the

Cermak station. Mr. Hastalis asked if there will be a side or center platform at the Cermak station. Mr. Wittmann stated that there will be a center platform with a main station house on the north side of Cermak and an auxiliary station house on the north side of 23rd with elevators on both ends.

- Mr. Wittmann confirmed to Ms. Bogus that both sides will be enter and exit.

Ventra Open Fare System Program Update

- Michael Gwinn, Director, Revenue and Fare Systems provided information on key dates for the Ventra transition and Ventra machine updates.
- On May 1st, customers can no longer buy magnetic stripe cards or auto load/reload Chicago Card and Chicago Card Plus cards.
- On June 1st riders will no longer be able to use Chicago Card and Chicago Card Plus cards at turnstiles and on buses. The reload functionality for magnetic stripe cards will also be deactivated.
- July 1st is the full transition date to Ventra.
- Mr. Gwinn addressed the concerns that the Ventra vending machines' volume is not as loud as the legacy vending machine. Mr. Gwinn stated that Ventra is working with Cubic to begin the rerecording of the messages at a higher volume while maintaining the different volume levels. Ms. Amy Serpe reiterated that the audio button on the machine is also the volume control button. Ms. Serpe will be posting an online physical description of the Ventra machine to assist individuals in being able to use the machines at rail stations.

Facilitator's Report – Project Updates

- Amy Serpe, Manager of CTA's ADA Compliance Programs discussed the locations of all the beeper buttons (a list was sent to Committee members prior to the meeting). There are a couple hundred that are completed out of the projected 400. The beeper buttons give the audio portion of the LED Bus Tracker information. If there is an issue with the buttons contact Amy Serpe or customer service at 1-888-YOUR-CTA.
- Rail Car Awareness training was set for Saturday, June 7th at the Kimball station with different styles of cars. There will be more training sessions in the future if warranted. Additional information will be forthcoming.
- All ADA Advisory Committee members are required to complete the *CTA Statement of Financial Interest Form* which was sent to all members and is due by May 1, 2014. Assistance in completing the form is available by contacting Amy Serpe.
- Ms. Serpe is working with Greg Polman on the New Freedom Grant Descriptive Rail Guides project. An agreement was made in terms of the template and how platforms will be described in a consistent manner. The project is long-term.
- Ms. Serpe updated the Committee on how CTA sends out Customer Alerts regarding such things as service changes. Customers may sign up to receive alerts online at transitchicago.com. Alerts may be tailored to an individual's needs.
- Mr. Hastalis added that CTA is informative when it comes to big projects that will affect their customers whether it may be through social media, radio or television broadcasts, or on their website.
- Ms. Serpe reviewed the limitations of Committee member terms. Each member serves for two years from their start date, regardless of the circumstances of their term. After a two year term, a member has the choice to either renew their term for another two years, or decide to end their membership. Members do have the option to resign anytime they desire. Once a

member's rotation on the Board is completed, they have to wait another two years in order to reapply for membership.

- Ms. Bogus asked that since she is on the Committee on behalf of an organization, could another individual apply on behalf of that same organization. Ms. Serpe replied yes.
- Ms. Serpe is going to be looking at applications in order to fill the five out of twelve positions that will be opening this year. There will be information sent to Committee members and organizations involved about the open positions during the summer.

Old Business – Update from RTA Re: Paratransit Certification and Eligibility Review Board

- Ms. Rosemary Gerty, RTA GM, Regional Accessibility, updated the Committee regarding the fact that the RTA postponed updating their Eligibility Review Board memberships. Because of some internal conditions, the current seven Eligibility Review Board Members will continue and further review of the Board's structure will follow.
- Mr. Armstrong questioned Ms. Gerty on whether the RTA needed extra help. Ms. Gerty replied that the RTA has plenty of people working and that it wanted to take the time to evaluate their program and make changes anywhere deemed necessary.
- Ms. Gerty also discussed that the RTA has customer alerts as well. The RTA Travel Information Center has updated service advisories and they are also posted on the RTA Trip Planner. The updates are in real-time.
- Ms. Bogus suggested that the RTA consider having an audio line for customer alerts. Ms. Gerty added that the RTA is in the process of upgrading their telephone access system.
- Ms. Serpe discussed the priority seating poster information that the Service Boards created in 2012. Ms. Gerty explained that the CTA, RTA, Metra and Pace spent a year working with the former ADA Compliance Manager and other individuals on policies and wording.
- Mr. Armstrong was solicited to hold up a poster as Ms. Gerty explained about it. Ms. Gerty explained that the sign has the international symbol of accessibility that includes a stick man figure to indicate that seating is not exclusive to people with wheelchairs, but for all people with disabilities. Ms. Gerty also reviewed the blue marker signage that is different shapes and is used to indicate the actual location of priority seating and securement areas. CTA, Metra, and Pace vehicles all use this sign so that the public can start recognizing the symbol.
- Ms. Serpe noted that there are new signs on buses that ask customers to stand up along with the wheelchair symbol, (i.e., the international symbol of accessibility), and also with a figure. The sign also says the seating is designated for people with disabilities and seniors.
- Ms. Serpe informed the Committee that she, Rosemary Gerty, Jim Ferneborg from Metra, and Sally Williams from Pace/Paratransit meet regularly as the ADA Working Group to discuss transit issues of relevance to the disability community.
- Ms. Serpe reminded everyone not to be afraid to ask for assistance from any CTA personnel if needed. If a passenger asks for assistance and an employee ignores the request, a complaint should be filed with as much information about the incident as possible. Ms. Serpe explained that information is sent to the appropriate departments and managers for follow-up.
- Ms. Serpe reminded the Committee not to confront any other passengers that are not complying with requests to move in order to accommodate an individual with a disability. If there is an issue, passengers should ask the CTA employee for assistance.
- Ms. Bogus questioned if the quiet cars on the Metra trains are still making audio announcements. Quiet cars are cars designated for no talking and no cellphone use. Since Ms. Gerty was familiar with Metra procedures, she mentioned that Metra initially wanted to

designate the quiet cars the same cars as the accessible cars. Metra balanced out their cars so that the accessible car is not always the quiet car.

- Ms. Bogus asked if the beeper buttons will remain in bus shelters even though there are complaints from the general public regarding the sound/beeps. Ms. Serpe replied that yes, the buttons were staying.
- Once again, the subject of the Stroller policy was raised. Ms. Serpe explained that the policy states that a Bus Operator may allow a passenger with a stroller to board if the bus is not crowded. If that passenger wants to sit in priority seating, the Operator must inform them that if the bus becomes crowded or if a person with a disability boards and needs accessible seating, they will be asked to fold their stroller. If a passenger with a stroller would like to board and the bus or train is crowded, they must fold their stroller prior to boarding. If the stroller cannot be folded, that person may need to wait for the next bus or go to a different rail car if possible.
- Ms. Serpe also stated that Bus Operators can call the Control Center and ask for support from a supervisor if necessary to help resolve any situation.
- Mr. Armstrong added that it is sometimes hard to ask passengers to move from priority seating because they are listening to music in their earplugs. Ms. Serpe reminded Mr. Armstrong that that is why the Bus Operator should be assisting customers as needed.
- Ms. Cappelleri discussed a time when she witnessed a passenger with a stroller board a bus and use priority seating for their stroller. An elderly couple boarded the bus soon after and told the passenger with the stroller that those seats are not for strollers. Ms. Serpe stated that these types of issues are known to occur and again encouraged individuals to ask for the Bus Operator to assist in securing a priority seat if needed. Passengers should not confront other passengers.
- Ms. Kaminkowitz suggested that the CTA mark the seats closest to the doors that do not flip up for securement as priority seating. It is often difficult for Ms. Kaminkowitz or other people with disabilities that do not use wheelchairs to sit anywhere other than the seats next to the exits, especially on rail cars, because she waits until the train stops before she stands to exit.
- Mr. Armstrong thanked CTA for the great job done during the Blue Line detour at Rosemont.

New Business

- There was no new business.

Public Comments

- Ms. Heather Armstrong thanked the CTA for doing a great job when they detoured the Blue Line at Rosemont at O'Hare.
- Mr. Christopher Watts asked the Committee what happened with the hybrid buses that formerly ran on 31st and Indiana streets? Ms. Serpe informed Mr. Watts that CTA is replacing older buses with more updated modern buses. Mr. Hastalis also added that the hybrid buses are also used on busier routes.
- Ms. Apeksha Gohil asked what kind of renovations did CTA perform on the Argyle Red Line station in 2012? Mr. Hastalis commented that the renovation that was done was not enough to trigger ADA guidelines that call for complete reconstruction and installations of elevators. Ultimately, the internal renovations that were done will need to be redone in order to make those stations accessible. Ms. Serpe added that when there is construction being done, at a certain point, it is required to make the entire station accessible. A little over 67 percent of rail

stations are accessible and work is being done towards making the entire system one hundred percent accessible.

- Ms. Gohil notified the Committee that there is no Braille signage at the entrance of the Argyle Red Line station.
- Ms. Donna Shaw commented that there is no way to notify riders [who are deaf or hearing impaired] that a train will go express. The marquee does not change and the lights do not flash. The train will pass through a few stops which has caused Ms. Shaw to have to get off the train and go back and pay a fare again. Ms. Shaw also noted that the Blue Line Illinois Medical District stop does not have exit signage to indicate which direction to go for the different hospitals. The ramp leading to the station is misleading in regards to being able to find the Pink Line for transfers.
- Ms. Shaw commented that sometimes when using a Ventra card on bus and train, it will say there is not any money on the account after just adding more money. There had been times when Ms. Shaw has tapped her Ventra card and could not tell if the fare went through so she re-tapped her card which causes double charging. Ms. Serpe informed Ms. Shaw that money added to a Ventra card is not instantly available but after a short time, customers should be able to use the funds.
- Ms. Bogus added that whenever the turnstile says “Go” the Ventra card is being charged.
- Ms. Serpe confirmed to Ms. Kaminkowitz that for any Ventra complaints, to call 877-NOW-VENTRA.
- Ms. Serpe sent out an e-mail to Committee members that detailed the accompanying messages to the phone prompts when calling Ventra’s customer service.
- Mr. Jamal Powell thanked the CTA for fixing some concerns he has had about the audio output at some bus shelter buttons that were not working properly.
- Ms. Serpe reiterated that there were staff changes which caused some concerns to be dropped, but the CTA has fixed many of the buttons with only a few left to be done. If there is a place that does not have properly working buttons, report them, and they are being fixed a lot quicker.
- Mr. Powell stated that the bus shelter button on the northwest side of Michigan Ave. along the Cultural Center does not work.

Adjournment

- Chairman Hastalis asked for a motion to adjourn.
- Mr. Armstrong moved. Ms. Kaminkowitz seconded the motion. All voted “Aye” to adjourn
- The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

The next ADA Committee Meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 14th, 2014