

**ADA Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 13, 2015**

Members Present

Chairperson: Steve Hastalis
Committee Members: Rhychell Barnes
Christina Mullins
Dorrell Perry
Suzen Riley (Arrived late)
Allen West (Arrived late).
Bryen Yunashko
Excused Absence: Grace Kaminkowitz
Laura Miller
Unexcused Absence: Angela Reneau
Pierre Bance
Facilitator: Amy Serpe, Manager, ADA Compliance Programs

Steve Hastalis, Committee Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:31p.m.

Announcements

- Ms. Serpe announced that this is the last meeting for both Rhychelle Barnes and Laura Miller as they have each completed their service terms. The CTA greatly appreciates their contributions and thanks them for their service.
- Grace Kaminkowitz has an excused absence. Tim Fischer has moved to Texas and Laura Miller may be late or not be able to attend so she is excused.

Roll Call

- Committee members introduced themselves.

Approval of Minutes from October 14, 2014 Meeting

- When the meeting began, there were only 5 members present which was not a quorum. Therefore, the minutes could not be voted on.
- However, by 2 p.m., both Suzen Riley and Allen West did come so the minutes from the April 13, 2015 meeting were voted on and approved, following the Construction report, which was out of the agenda sequence. Mr. Hastalis asked for a motion to vote to approve the minutes from the April 13, 2015 meeting. Mr. West moved and Ms. Riley seconded the motion. The Committee voted to approve the minutes as written.

Remarks from Dorval Carter, CTA President

- Dorval Carter, CTA's new president (for about the last 7 weeks) addressed the Committee.
- Mr. Carter provided some background information explaining that he was an attorney at the CTA in 1984. He then joined the Regional FTA Office in Chicago and returned to the CTA in 2000 as an Executive Vice President. He remained at the CTA for about 9 years before taking a political appointment with the Department of Transportation in Washington, D.C. where he stayed for 6-1/2 years. He is now returning to the CTA as its new President.

- President Carter was engaged in ADA issues during his previous employment with the CTA, including working on the Jones vs the CTA case back in the 1980s. He stated that he has both a local and federal perspective of the ADA and accessibility issues.
- He also thanked the Committee members for their time and commitment to the ADA Advisory Committee.
- President Carter stated, *"I know from having spent some time many years ago meeting the staff that serves this Committee how much time and energy it takes for all of you to participate in these issues. You learn a lot about CTA and transit being on this Committee. I think it gives you a unique perspective to understand both the opportunities, as well as the challenge that we face in terms of meeting the needs of the disability community and I think that is important and critical for not only me, but for our Board as well as for my executive team to hear from all of you about what issues you think are important, what advice you can give us on opportunities and initiatives that we're pursuing and how we can continue what I believe is a very productive relationship with the disability community and serving their needs going forward"*.
- President Carter also addressed questions and comments from the Committee and audience. (The audience does not usually have the opportunity to talk to presenters but as this was a special circumstance they were invited to make comments).
- Mr. Ken Borst explained his frustration when a bus stop is moved and he is unaware of the change so is waiting at the wrong place for a bus that will never stop where he is standing.
- President Carter apologized for this experience and also stated he has discussed such information with Karen Tamley, Commission for the Chicago Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD). He and staff will continue to look for ways to improve communications to the disability community when there are service changes or disruptions.
- Ms. Serpe did remind everyone that the CTA does have a system for individuals to sign up for alerts for specific bus or train routes so that whenever there is a change, a notification would be sent out. Ms. Riley reiterated that she uses these alerts and they are quite helpful.
- Mr. Yunashko commented that he would like to see this Committee more engaged in the beginning processes of projects so that access is considered in the planning stages of all projects. He commented on the Ventra mobile app which he wants to be sure is accessible to individuals with various disabilities. Ms. Serpe pointed out that Mr. Mike Gwinn has been working with various individuals regarding the apps accessibility and that he will present a report later in this meeting. President Carter responded by thanking Mr. Yunashko for his comments and stating that he will be working with the ADA Department to ensure that accessibility will continue to be an element addressed in the beginning of the planning process for CTA projects.
- Ms. Serpe pointed out that the CTA does host open Public Hearings where anyone can attend and look at project designs and information and provide input and ask questions. There are always people present who can describe any of the posters for individuals who have difficulty seeing or understanding any of the drawings or printed information.
- The Committee thanked President Carter for coming to this meeting and President Carter thanked the Committee for the invitation.

Construction Projects Update

- Robert Wittmann, Vice President Capital Construction, gave an update on the CTA's current construction projects.
- Mr. Wittmann informed the Committee that the KIPS power substation project at Kimball, Princeton and State is underway. There is ongoing electrical work at these 3 substations. Work is phased in in such a way as to keep the substations working throughout the rehab process. It is anticipated that the project will be complete by the end of 2015.

- Work continues at the 95th Street Station reconstruction project with lighting, utility work, foundation work including construction of walls, etc. *"The final contract for the completion of the station is currently out for bid and that procurement comes in this August"*.
- Mr. Wittmann explained that work at the Wilson Station reconstruction Project is going well and is on time and on budget. Stage one which encompasses the deep foundation work is about 85% complete. Structural steel is getting ready to begin in late July 2015. There is utility work happening at street level. *"...Wilson continues to go well. So there will be a lot of progress between now and the end of the year at Wilson"*.
- Mr. Wittmann reported that the Ravenswood Loop Connector Track project is about half complete and has included seven weekends of work on this project. The scope of this project includes track replacement between Armitage and the Merchandise Mart on the Brown Line. The majority of the track between the Armitage and Sedgwick Stations has been completed. There are a few more weekends of work to be scheduled and efforts are made to avoid conflicts with any festivals and events so as not to disrupt service during those busier times. It is anticipated that this project will also complete by the end of this year.
- Mr. Wittmann reported that the five-station project on the Blue Line to include work at the Addison, Irving Park, Montrose, Harlem and Cumberland Stations is a design build contract and the CTA is now in the middle of the design phase. This is part of the Your New Blue (YNB) Project and the Addison Station is to be equipped with an elevator. Construction of the platform at Addison is expected to start later this fall. The entire project should complete at the end of 2016.
- Elevators are also going to be added to the Illinois Medical District Station and the Quincy Station in the loop. These projects are currently in design with construction starting in 2016.
- There are also CDOT and IDOT projects happening which are not CTA projects but we do monitor them in terms of progress, etc. The Clark and Division Station project should complete by the end of the 3rd quarter of this year. While the new LaSalle Street entrance which includes elevator access has been open for some time, work is finishing up on the Clark and Division Streets side.
- The new Washington/Wabash Station construction project is also underway. This accessible station replaces the Madison and Wabash and Randolph and Wabash Stations which will be torn down.
- IDOT is working on the Peoria Station which will include an elevator. Work is ongoing and hopes to wrap up around the end of this year.
- In answer to a question from Chairman Hastalis, it was explained that the elevators to be constructed at the Quincy Station will go from street level directly to the platform level and will include a new walkway to get into the Station House where the fare machines are located. One elevator will be on the east side of the street and the other elevator will be on the west side of the street. Anyone using the elevators will need to decide at street level which platform they want to access as they will bypass the mezzanine level of the station.

Elevator/Escalator Report

- Jim Kissane, Director Facilities Maintenance reported on the status of elevators and escalators.
- Committee members did receive advance copies of the Elevator/Escalator Efficiency reports prior to the meeting.
- For the 2nd quarter of 2015 – April, May and June – elevator efficiencies are up for all 3 months in comparison to the same period during 2014: April 1.6% (99.2%), May is .50% (97.9%) and June is 1.6% (98.4%), *"...So we're trending up in the right directions for elevators"*.

- Escalator efficiencies in Q-2 are also up for all months compared to the same time period in 2014: April is up 2.00% (97.6%), May is up 3.69% (97.1%) and June is up 1.69% (97.1%).
- Mr. Kissane explained there is a current elevator installation project at the UIC Halsted Station on the Blue Line and a future elevator installation project at the Quincy Station on the elevated line.
- There have been many escalator reconditioning projects during 2015. Current scheduled reconditioning is for escalators at Roosevelt (Orange) which should begin in July, Lake and Randolph (Red) to begin in August, Clark and Lake (Blue) to begin in September and Clark and Division (Red) to begin in October. When planning escalator reconditionings the age of the escalator, as well as when it was last conditioned are considered.

Customer Service Report

- Kate Kennelly, Manager Customer Feedback Programs provided the Customer Service update report.
- Committee members were sent the Customer Service reports for review in advance of the meeting.
- Ms. Kennelly went over the graphs and highlights for the Customer Service reports for the second quarter of 2015.
- ADA Related Complaints total 248 or about 6% out of all Q-2 2015 CTA complaints totaling 4,326 for April, May and June. There was an overall increase in ADA related complaints from Q-1 in 2015 which totaled 173 vs. Q-2 in 2015 which totaled 248 overall complaints.
- The following areas showed increases from the first quarter complaint totals: Rude behavior totaled 61 complaints (24.6%), Pass ups totaled 33 (13.3%), issues re: use of the ramp totaled 22 (8.9%) and issues re: the AVAS systems totaled 19 (7.7%).
- There were no gap usage complaints in Q-2 and failure to announce stops remained the same in Q-1 and Q-2 which was only one complaint.
- Ms. Barnes asked what types of behavior were included in the Rude Operator category. Ms. Kennelly explained that, *"Generally, rude [operator related] complaints is any time a customer reports that an operator's behavior did not meet expectations. They were unfriendly or overall, you know, not -- not a pleasant ride with the employee"*. Ms. Barnes commented that she hoped this area improves. Ms. Kennelly then responded, *"Definitely. And that has been improving. April was -- was the worst month. We had 30 total complaints. That was cut almost in half in May. We only had 18 and 13 in June. So I really hope to see that trend go down in the coming months"*.
- Ms. Riley explained that often the visual parts of the AVAS systems do not function. This makes it difficult for anyone who has a hearing impairment to figure out where they are.
- Mr. Yunashko would also appreciate more information in terms of where streets are located when getting off a bus. Ms. Serpe explained that anyone who needs additional information when alighting a bus such as is "X" street ahead of me or behind me may ask the Bus Operator for clarification before alighting the bus. Mr. West stated he has also asked for such information and received it. Anyone who has an issue receiving such requested information should report it to the Customer Services department (1-888 YOUR CTA, 711 Relay Service or feedback@transitchicago.com) so the issue can be documented, investigated and resolved.

Mobility Management Program Update from the RTA

- Michael VanDeKreke, RTA Director Mobility Services Department provided information on the new model for their Mobility Management Program.
- The essence of this program combines how individuals will be informed of and evaluated for ADA Paratransit Certification Services, travel training or reduced or ride free programs.

- Mr. VanDeKreke explained that, “... *this study has five phases. We're in -- we're finishing up the second phase now. I'll explain what those five phases are. The first one was project scoping where we looked at what is it that we wanted to actually research and I explained that already, which was how do we better integrate all of our services so that customers have the best education possible and revamp our ADA certification program to make it more cost-effective and useful for the customer. And then the second phase was requirements gathering which was a lot of research that we've done on industry best practices and, you know, seeing just different ways that it's being done across the country and then in phase three, which we're finishing up now, is our approval of the approach which is including all of the public outreach that we're doing this quarter and this is part of that approval of the approach process. After we finish getting approval of the approach, then we're going to move into procurement and then the transition into the new model*”.
- In looking at all of the research including a cost analysis, as well as how other states conduct ADA Paratransit assessments and certifications, Mr. VanDeKreke stated that the RTA will be transitioning in August 2016 to a 2 site model (1-north and 1-south) to conduct the Paratransit assessments. (The 2 sites will replace the current 5-site model).
- There will also be Mobility Outreach Specialists who will be County based (3 in Cook County and one each in the Collar Counties) to provide information regarding all types of transit options and services, as well as to sign people up for ADA Paratransit certification appointments. The intent is to take the information to the locations where people live.
- Ms. Riley commented on how confusing it can be to figure out the Paratransit transfer systems if more than one vehicle comes into play. Mr. VanDeKreke commented that the Mobility Outreach Specialists can provide some information about the process and pointed out that Pace puts out an information guide related to Paratransit processes. Ms. Riley commented that the guide can be really confusing. Ms. Serpe suggested that Ms. Riley talk to Pace as they have regular meetings for both their city and suburban Paratransit ADA Committees. She suggested that the “how to use this service” topic might be covered at one of their meetings if the public needs that information as a supplement to the Paratransit written guide book.
- Mr. Hastalis raised the issue of does the RTA use Orientation and Mobility Specialists to conduct travel training for individuals who are blind or visually impaired? Mr. VanDeKreke stated that there was someone who was certified who just resigned but the hope is that a certified person will be hired in the future.
- Mr. Hastalis suggested that someone with a visual impairment might be a good travel trainer but both Ms. Serpe and Mr. VanDeKreke explained that there would be liability issues for an organization and a certified individual needs to be used for this service.
- Ms. Barnes asked if both a Sign Language Interpreter, as well as an Orientation and Mobility Specialist would be used if travel training was requested by an individual who was deaf/hearing impaired, as well as blind/visually impaired. Mr. VanDeKreke stated that yes, both specialists would conduct the training.

Ventra Program Update

- Mike Gwinn, Director of Revenue and Fare Systems provided an update related to the Ventra Fare System Mobile App that is being developed.
- Mr. Gwinn stated, “*Since my last appearance we've made some important steps. We have successfully submitted a test version of the app to both Apple and Google for distribution to beta testers through the iTunes store and through Google Play and part of that was passing each company's review process of the app. What that means is we can now really begin public testing in earnest through iTunes or through Google Play in a much more user friendly process than what we've had. Last week we released the mobile app to a very limited number of public testers with the Smart Chicago Collaborative Civic*

User Testing Group or the CUT Group. The CUT Group is a network of dedicated testers for mobile app developers to access prior to an app's launch and their involvement as an early testing cohort should really pay dividends on the success of the app in general because early on in that test period getting that feedback we'll have maximum time to incorporate any of their suggestions as we layer on more members of the general public in the testing community. We have also completed an initial build of the app that has more complete accessibility/functionality and with some of the delays in submitting the apps and testing and certifying them for public release it's still going to be another few weeks until that version is available to the general testing public, but we're in the process of making this available to certain key ADA stakeholders that includes people who are blind and who have low vision for an initial review just to make sure that it's – we're on the right track and if we have to make changes we'll be able to get them in earlier than otherwise waiting until later on in the general release project. So we're very excited to hear feedback both from the CUT Group and from that initial group of accessibility reviewers and we are going to make sure that the app is valuable, worthwhile and really a benefit to our customers”.

- Mr. Hastalis asked if anyone had specific questions or concerns related to the accessibility standards, who should be contacted? Ms. Serpe would be the contact but will need the request via e-mail or in writing (unless impossible to do this) so that a specific issue can be addressed.
- Mr. West stated that he has heard that Microsoft has been doing a lot more with the attempt to make Windows more accessible on the phone. He asked if there was any plan to put the Ventra app on that platform as well as on the iTunes and Google Play apps? Mr. Gwinn responded that, at this time, the app is only for iTunes and Google Play.

Facilitator's Report

- Amy Serpe, Manager, ADA Compliance Programs and ADA Advisory Committee Facilitator, presented the Facilitator's Report.
- Ms. Serpe announced that the Committee is currently seeking new members to replace those individuals whose terms have expired or have left the Committee for other reasons. She also stated that a new Chairman will be needed because Chairman Hastalis' term ends after the October 2015 meeting. Any current member interested in chairing this Committee should contact Ms. Serpe.
- Ms. Serpe will be sending out information regarding the search for additional Committee members to various organizations and encouraged Committee members to also spread the word.
- Ms. Serpe wants the public to know that, in recognition and celebration of the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, there is an initiative called ADA 25 Chicago which highlights many organizations and events throughout the Chicago Metropolitan area focused on educating the public about disability-related issues, as well as providing an array of programs and services for people of all abilities.
- Ms. Serpe mentioned the following events in conjunction with the ADA anniversary including:
 - The Disability Pride Parade on Saturday, July 18th, featuring Senator Tom Harkin as a keynote speaker. The CTA will have a group marching and Committee members and others are welcome to join the CTA contingent.
 - An Open Mic Night to proceed the Parade on the evening of Friday, July 17th.
 - The Dept. of Human Services (DHS) ADA Anniversary Celebration Event on Tuesday, July 21st at the Chicago James R. Thompson Center.
- Information on all these events was provided in members' meeting packets and can be found on the Websites of the various event sponsoring organizations.
- Ms. Serpe explained that as part of the ADA 25 Chicago Initiative, there are 2 national touring buses to highlight the overall disability movement. The Legacy bus which will be at the

Disability Pride Parade is a wrapped Pictorial bus illustrating the disability movement. There is another bus which is the national ADA bus that will be at the Shedd Aquarium. This is a bus that people can go into and it will have artifacts and other items related to the history of the disability movement.

- Ms. Barnes stated that the ADA Legacy (pictorial wrapped) Bus will be at the Progress Center from 3 to 6 p.m. for an event on July 17th and all are invited. (The event address is the nearby park located at 7501 Harrison Street).
- Ms. Riley stated that from Noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday, July 19th, there is the Waters Beach Party at Hollywood Beach which has a variety of activities, food, etc., and is a lot of fun.
- Ms. Serpe provided an update on the audio beeper buttons located at many bus shelters. She stated there are now 350 shelters equipped with both visual LED signs and accompanying audio information with both providing bus tracking information. Constant beeps are replaced in some of the shelters by beeps about every 5 seconds as the constant beeping was not always the most helpful for everyone.
- Any issues with mal-functioning LED signs or the audio component (volume non-existent or too low) should be reported to Ms. Serpe either via e-mail or voice mail. Messages are forwarded to the appropriate department and, In many instances, issues can be resolved remotely.
- Lastly, Ms. Serpe pointed out that there is an excellent historical visual and audio described display related to the disability movement at the Chicago Historical Museum located at North Avenue and LaSalle Streets. The pictures, from Access Living, are captioned and audio described and put into chronological order providing a historical perspective of the movement.

Old Business

- Ms. Serpe provided a written “cheat sheet” (which was also e-mailed to all Committee members) outlining the steps to be followed to obtain ongoing notice of CTA Alerts for both bus and rail activity. The issue had been raised at the last meeting as some individuals did not understand how to access this information on an ongoing basis.

New Business

- No new business.

Public Comment

- Mr. Garland Armstrong commented that there are some places where a person transfers from the Pace suburban system to the CTA bus system and appropriate signage is not always present. In particular, he stated that there were no signs for the 82 Kimball/Homan or the 96 Lunt bus stops.
- Mr. William Owens stated that sometimes on the Red or Green Lines fights break out and the train stops as the police are called and he has to get off a train and wait for the next train to continue his trip because the train (with the fight) is now running express and skipping stops. Mr. Owens asked what can be done to detour violence on the CTA system. Ms. Serpe did explain that the CTA takes such matters very seriously. She went on to say that all rail cars and all buses are equipped with cameras which do help the situation. Also there are CSAs/CSRs at all rail stations, as well as security personnel with dogs that patrol CTA rail stations. This is a public issue. One suggestion Ms. Serpe made was perhaps individuals may want to sit in the head car where the Conductor is which may provide some safety. Unfortunately, this is a human issue as people don't always respect others or other people's property. Ms. Serpe reiterated that safety for customers, as well as staff, is a primary concern of the CTA.

- Ms. Heather Armstrong reiterated that it is sometimes difficult to hear the AVAS announcements on buses and that sometimes the LED visual displays are not on. Ms. Serpe reminded her that these incidents can be reported but specific information must be given in order for the complaint to be investigated.
- Melissa Fuller commented that the platform at the State and Lake Elevated Station is quite narrow and does not have detectable warning strips. She went on to explain that she has a visual impairment and is very uncomfortable on that platform. Ms. Serpe explained that the CTA is working towards making all stations accessible but in the meantime, if someone is uncomfortable getting onto or off of a train at any station, the CSA can be notified, as well as the Rail Conductor so that someone can meet the train and provide whatever assistance (such as a sighted guide) is needed. Support can be requested prior to boarding a train at one station letting the CSA know that you will need help at your alighting station. The CSA can call ahead and arrange for someone to meet the train. Ms. Serpe also stated she would be following up with the CTA's Safety Department to see if anything can be done to alleviate this situation until such time that the station is rehabbed.

Showing of Mobility Management Video

- Due to the fact that there was time at the end of this meeting, Mr. VanDeKreke was able to return and show the Committee the first in a series of 6 videos that the RTA is creating regarding access to mainline transit. The first video highlights the accessibility features on CTA buses, trains and at el stations, on Pace buses and on Metra trains. Subsequent videos will be developed providing specific "how to" information for individuals with disabilities in order to promote mainline transit use.

Adjournment

- The next ADA Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 13, 2015, as the second Monday of October is Columbus Day and many people will be off work or on an extended weekend.
- Chairman Hastalis asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. West moved and Ms. Barnes seconded to adjourn the meeting. All voted, "Aye," and Chairman Hastalis did so at 3:55 p.m.