

**CTA ADA Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, January 8 2018**

**Members Present**

**Committee Members:**

Pierre Bance (Arrived late)  
Angela Davis (Acting Chair for this meeting)  
Melissa Fuller  
Grace Kaminkowitz  
Christina McGleam  
Susan Riley (Arrived Late)  
Donna K. Shaw

**Excused:**

Allen West

**Facilitator:**

Michael Connelly, Vice President Service  
Planning

**Angela Davis was asked to chair this meeting.**

**Ms. Davis called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.**

**Roll Call**

- Meeting members introduced themselves. Ms. Kaminkowitz stated this was her last meeting as her membership term has expired. Ms. Davis acknowledged and thanked her for her service.

**Announcements**

- Ms. Fuller stated that the National Federation of the blind is having a Benefit/Fund Raiser on March 15, 2018 at Zaney's Comedy Club, 1548 N. Wells, Chicago. Tickets are \$20.
- Mike Connelly announced that the CTA has received 19 completed applications related to filling the vacancies on the Committee due to the expiration of members' terms. The Chairman's office will review the candidates and the 5 openings (as of the end of this meeting) should be filled by the April 2018 meeting.

**Approval of Minutes**

- As there was not a quorum at the beginning of the meeting, the Minutes were voted on later during the meeting.
- There were no corrections to the October Meeting Minutes.
- Ms. Davis asked for a motion to approve the Minutes as submitted. Ms. Fuller moved and Ms. Riley seconded the motion. All voted "Aye" and the Minutes were approved.

**General Construction Report Update**

- Mr. Robert Wittmann, Vice President of Capital Construction presented the report dealing with the 95<sup>th</sup> Station, Wilson, Brown Line Signal and Quincy Projects. He

was joined by William Trumbull, Senior Manager-Fare Systems-Service Levels who provided additional information regarding the Wilson Station Update.

- 95th Station: There are 2 shifts of work going on almost 7 days a week. The track work and track level work on both sides of the terminal and both sides of the platform in the north and south sections were completed in November including installation of the new interlocking. The north terminal foundations are done. Work continues on both the exterior and interior of the new south terminal which is expected to open later this quarter.
- Wilson Station: The station is open and usable. All three entrances are now open and the Sunnyside entrance which is now accessible, opened in early December. Restoration work on the historic Gerber Building and additional site work is being done to wrap up this project.
- Brown Line Signal Project: Project is between Armitage and the Merchandise Mart. To support the future signal system, signal cables are continuing to be hung. Foundation steel is complete for 2 of the 3 new Relay Houses which will be installed later this year.
- Quincy Station: The foundation work and path work is being completed which will accommodate the 2 new elevators that will go from street to platform level. Structural steel work started that will accommodate the pathway from the platform level elevator to the station house. Also working on installing new floors within both sides of the station house.
- Illinois Medical District Station - IMD: Work at the Ogden and Paulina Station Houses continues as these areas become more accessible, including work on the ramp that goes from the Station House to the Platform on the Paulina side and the installation of an elevator at Ogden. As there was some concrete deterioration found at Ogden, additional shoring work and concrete slab work needs to be done prior to the installation of the elevator.
- Mr. Trumbull presented information regarding a newly installed accessible fare media and fare gate system at the Sunnyside entrance of the Red Line Wilson Station. The tall ADA door which is about 59" tall, operates the same as other gates where an individual taps their fare card and then can push the door open to pass through. It requires about 3 lbs. of pressure to push. It also pushes out when someone needs to exit. The door is clear and its height will assist regarding fare evasion so people cannot just reach over and tap the button as on a lower gate without paying.
- Ms. Kaminkowitz asked how does the CTA decide where to add elevators? She specifically asked about the Quincy Station. Mr. Wittmann stated that many considerations go into the planning and funding always needs to be considered. He also reminded people about the *All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP)* which addresses the planned accessibility of all stations. Ms. Carole Mooney, Chief Planning Officer who was present, explained that as the ASAP is being finalized, elevators are being added to the Quincy Station due to an opportunity the CTA had in relation to available TIF funding. CTA worked with the Alderman in the area to make this happen.
- Ms. Fuller asked about the Pedway from the Blue Line to the Red Line at Jackson (it's a Jackson Stop) but Adams is currently closed. Mr. Wittmann

explained that CTA was not doing this work but would check to see what information is available about the project and when that area may be open.

- Ms. Davis stated that she had used the new accessible Sunnyside entrance at the Wilson Station the day before and found it very convenient as she was going to the Target Store which was much closer to this side of the station.

### **Elevator/Escalator Efficiencies Report**

- The *Elevator/Escalator Efficiencies Reports* were sent to all Committee members in advance for review in addition to the hard copy provided in the meeting packets.
- Andre Cozzo, Senior Manager Escalator/Elevator Maintenance reported to the Committee on the status of the system's elevator and escalator efficiencies.
- For the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2017 vs. Q-4 in 2016, the following reflects **Elevator Efficiencies**:
  - Oct. 2017 = 97.3% vs. Oct. 2016 = 98.7% (-1.4%)
  - Nov. 2017 = 98.2% vs. Nov. 2016 = 99.1% (-0.9%)
  - Dec. 2017 = 98.4% vs. Dec. 2016 = 98.5% (-0.1%)
- For the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2017 vs. Q-4 in 2016, the following reflects **Escalator Efficiencies**:
  - Oct. 2017 = 82.9% vs. Oct. 2016 = 97.4% (-14.5%)
  - Nov. 2017 = 87.1% vs. Nov. 2016 = 96.0% (-8.9%)
  - Dec. 2017 = 91.4% vs. Dec. 2016 = 94.3% (-2.9%)
- The data also included information on the following **Escalator Reconditioning Projects**.
  - O'Hare Blue Line – completed March 3, 2017.
  - Loyola Red Line – completed June 9, 2017.
  - Chicago Blue Line – completed November 29, 2017.
  - Montrose Blue Line anticipated start date – June 1, 2018.
  - River Road Blue Line – anticipated start dates October 1, 2018.
- Ms. Fuller asked how the escalators are holding up and Ms. Kaminkowitz added the same question about the elevators. While Mr. Cozzo admitted that the weather has some effect on the systems, the age of the equipment also plays a role in their deterioration as some escalators are quite old.
- Ms. Riley asked if escalators could be covered to help protect them especially in cold weather and Mr. Cozzo stated that many are covered by a canopy.

### **Customer Service Report**

- The Customer Service Reports were sent to all Committee members in advance for review in addition to the hard copy provided in the meeting packets.
- Kate Kennelly, Manager Customer Feedback Programs presented the Customer Service Report to the Committee.
- Ms. Kennelly reported that, *“Overall in the fourth quarter, complaints decreased 10 percent from the previous period with the total of 193. ADA complaints were also down 9 percent from the same period last year. We logged 205. ADA related complaints accounted for 5 percent of all of our complaints, which is consistent with last year. In the fourth quarter, there were 3,993 total complaints,*

*193 of which were ADA related. ADA complaints were relatively steady throughout the quarter, but there was a small up in December when the total was 68.”*

- The following are the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter statistics regarding disability-related Customer Service complaints.
  - Total CTA complaints for all three months of Q-4 2017 (October, November, December 2017), = 3,993 of which 193 were ADA related complaints (4.8%).
  - Q-4, 2017 Bus Related Complaints: Oct. 55, Nov. 51 and Dec. 62 totaling 168.
  - Q-4, 2017 Rail Related Complaints: Oct. 10, Nov. 9 and Dec. 6 totaling 25.
  - During the 3 month 2017 Q-4 period, there were a total of 193 ADA Compliance Complaints which include things such as rude operator, pass up, ramp issues, stroller issues, refusing boarding with a legitimate service animal, failure to kneel bus, AVAS (announcements), priority seating, gap filler, elevator and escalator issues and touching passenger, service animal or personal equipment (if not requested to assist).
  - A breakdown of the top ADA Compliance Issue complaint categories for Q-4 2017 vs Q-4 2016:
    - ADA Compliance accounted for 60 complaints in 2017 vs. 60 in 2016.
    - Rude Operator totaled 40 complaints in 2017 vs. 43 in 2016.
    - Pass up totaled 31 complaints in 2017 vs. 41 in 2016.
    - Lift/Ramps totaled 12 complaints in 2017 vs. 10 in 2016.
    - Failure to Kneel Bus totaled 8 complaints in 2017 vs. 14 in 2016.
    - Stroller issues totaled 11 complaints in 2017 vs. 2 in 2016.
    - Priority Seating issues totaled 6 complaints in 2017 vs. 4 in 2016.
    - Failure to announce stops totaled 0 complaints in 2017 vs. 10 in 2016.
    - Year-end ADA compliance complaints totals were: 747 in 2017 vs. 806 in 2016.
    - All complaints for 2017 = 16,426 (5% of which were ADA) vs. 16,698 for 2016 (5% of which were ADA).
- Ms. Fuller asked why a Bus Operator might not kneel a bus and Ms. Kennelly replied that the Bus Operator may not have been able to lower the bus to be even with the sidewalk or he just might not have been aware to do it.
- Ms. Fuller also asked if complaints were sent to the ADA Manager and Ms. Kennelly replied that yes, they were.
- Ms. Kaminkowitz pointed out that sometimes Bus Operators are very far away from the curb so kneeling the bus doesn't always work.
- Ms. Davis asked for clarification regarding Priority Seating. Are people just not giving up their seats or is the Bus Operator not assisting and asking customers to move? Ms. Kennelly responded that she is aware of both issues when it comes to the Priority Seating Area.

## **Facilitator's Report**

- Amy Serpe, Manager, ADA Compliance Programs presented the following topics and updates.
- Policies and procedures:
  - In answer to some calls she has had, she explained that only individuals who have an active Paratransit Reduced Fare Program Card and are traveling with a Personal Assistant (PA) receive the reduced fare rate for both themselves, as well as their PA. This does not apply to customers who only have the Ride Free Program Card. Customers must have the Paratransit Card to receive the reduced fare for their PA. Bus or Rail personnel are allowed to ask to see the card to verify eligibility for the reduced fare.
  - She further explained that the Ride Free Card is only for the individual for whom it was issued. Cards can be confiscated if misused, (i.e., given to others).
  - Ms. Serpe stated that reminders of CTA's Boarding and Alighting policy has been sent to all garages. The policy clearly states that people who use wheelchairs or anyone needing the ramp board first, ahead of other customers and alight last, after other customers.
  - Regarding the Priority Seating Policy, Ms. Serpe pointed out that CTA personnel may request people to move to accommodate customers with disabilities however we cannot require anyone to do so. Also, people with or without disabilities may be able to move. It is up to the individual to decide if they are able to move. It is up to the Operator or CSA to make the request.
- Ms. Serpe will be participating in various bus and rail Rap Sessions which promote discussions of various policies and afford operators the opportunity to ask questions to clarify policies.
- On Oct 26, 2017, a familiarization training was provided at the Union Station Transit Center (USTC) Bus Terminal. This was the second training of its kind at that location. Many individuals who were blind or visually impaired, as well as one participant who was DeafBlind and Donna Shaw from the ADA Advisory Committee took advantage of the opportunity to walk-through the Station. Two Orientation and Mobility Instructors (one from ICRE Wood and the other from the MTM team) volunteered to assist at this training and one Sign Language Interpreter was hired to facilitate appropriate communication to participants who were Deaf..
- A similar training requested by the Blind Services Association was held on November 17, 2017 at the new Washington/Wabash Elevated Station. Blind Services had many participants, as well as volunteers and again, there were the same 2 Orientation and Mobility Instructors who volunteered their time to assist.
- Ms. Serpe announced that the ADA Unit will be sending out notices related to accessibility information using a new mail box. Anyone can sign up to be on a mailing list and announcements will come from a non-reply mailbox titled, [Access@TransitChicago.com](mailto:Access@TransitChicago.com). The subject line will also be clearly defined so individuals can either read or discard an e-mail quickly. Also the list will be sent out as a "blind copy" so only one name will be visible to each recipient.

Anyone not already receiving updates can either call Amy Serpe at 312-681-2608 or e-mail her at [aserpe@transitchicago.com](mailto:aserpe@transitchicago.com) to be put on the e-mailing list.

- Work continues on the Customer Complaints project to more clearly define the types of accessibility and accommodation issues the CTA receives. It is anticipated that additional training tools may be established from the analysis of this data.
- Ms. Serpe stated that, *“Lastly, we finally have the results from our FTA review that happened in May of 2017. They were focused on how CTA works with both PACE and RTA regarding paratransit services. The FTA found that CTA had no deficiencies. We were happy about that. So we do work appropriately with those other agencies.”*
- Ms. Davis asked for clarification between attending the Rap Sessions verses the ADA trainings. Ms. Serpe explained that she does ADA and Disability Awareness Trainings for staff including Bus Operators, CSAs, Rail Personnel, Managers, etc., on a regular basis. The Rap Sessions are the more informal discussions held at garages or terminals where staff can ask specific questions or various issues and concerns defined in customer complaints can be reviewed and discussed.
- Ms. Kaminkowitz also asked if additional trainings such as were done at the USTC would happen again. Ms. Serpe said, yes, that is something that can be arranged.

### **Public Comment**

- Scott Figved suggested that there should be more police presence throughout the CTA system and is concerned that people who are homeless present a threat to others. He also stated that sometimes at Jefferson Park, buses do not stop in the appropriate location to allow a wheelchair user to board. Additionally at Jefferson Park, he is concerned with individuals soliciting money and feels that CTA’s rules aren’t always followed or enforced.
  - Ms. Fuller commented that larger Blue Line Stations, such as Jefferson Park, are more heavily populated and security may not appear to be as present or enforcing of the rules. She stated that a smaller station such as Cumberland may be better at stopping certain activities such as soliciting.
  - Ms. Riley commented that people should not be discriminatory against the homeless as it is not illegal to be homeless.
  - Mr. Connelly stated that someone from the Safety Department can be present at the April meeting to address safety concerns and explain CTA’s Code of Conduct and other policies.
- Jacob Shinski wanted to know how quickly CTA can add elevators if funds are available? He is particularly interested in the Belmont Blue Line Station and other Blue Line Stations that are currently inaccessible.
  - As Ms. Morey was still present, she stated that, *“... the idea behind the ASAP plan is that it would be a 20-year comprehensive plan, funding dependent of course, to make all rail stations accessible. ... We have made significant progress on accessibility over the past few years particularly with the opening of Washington/Wabash and Wilson as well as the Quincy station project. The Red/Purple Modernization project, which is fully funded, will make an additional four stations accessible. Again, the purpose of the plan is to develop a 20-year*

*plan funding dependent and we'll need a lot of help I think from the ADA community to make sure that our legislators in Springfield understand the importance ... [of securing] local funding, so we will need some assistance in making sure that legislators understand that that is a priority."*

- Ms. Kaminkowitz asked when the 20 years started and Ms. Morey replied that CTA's President announced the initiative at the ADA 25 Anniversary celebration in 2015.
- Ms. Fuller asked Ms. Morey if the CTA was partnering with any organization at this time regarding legislative efforts to which Ms. Morey said, "...that there hasn't been any formal legislation that has been proposed." She was referring to the fact that the ADA Community works with various organizations and that they should let their legislators know that this issue is a priority for the community. Ms. Fuller then suggested that there are 2 attorneys that work with the National Federation for the Blind in Chicago and they may be useful in helping with the legislators as the NFB does a lot of advocacy work for various initiatives. Ms. Morey thought that was an excellent idea and will discuss it with CTA's Vice President of Legislative Affairs.
- Mr. Shinski asked when the ASAP report will be made public to which Ms. Morey replied that it will be published in 2018 but no firm date is set. It will also be available on CTA's Website.
- The next speaker, Allan Mellis had presented a written copy of his remarks to the CTA and asked that it be distributed to all Committee members. His verbatim testimony was as follows:
  - My name is Allan Mellis, a Community Leader for over 40 years, and a Public Transportation Advocate.

In January 2016, the Chicago Tribune reported, "CTA makes rail accessibility for riders with disabilities a long-term goal". Since then the CTA has announced major improvements to the Belmont and the Grand Avenue Blue Line Stations. **However, neither the very attractive Belmont station nor the Grand Avenue station will provide disabled access.**

#### **Belmont Blue Line Station**

In an article entitled "Why the Belmont Blue Rehab includes a futuristic canopy but no Elevators" [Streetsblog Oct. 27, 2016], the CTA spokesperson is quoted as saying: "...these constraints [limited footprints and proximity to buildings] make expansion to accommodate elevators difficult and **expensive...**"

#### **Grand Avenue Blue Line Station**

The developer of the project adjacent to the Grand Avenue Blue Line station said he would set aside part of the building to allow for elevators for CTA disabled access.

### **North/ Clybourn Red Line Station**

Previously, when Apple provided funding for the North/ Clybourn Red Line Station, disabled access was not included.

### **Conclusion**

On the CTA' website it says as part of its All Stations Accessible Program (ASAP): "We're committed to making our system 100% accessible". **It seems to me that the ASAP 100% accessible commitment is a hollow promise unless funding is identified and committed.**

The primary reason given to me for not providing accessibility to the three stations mentioned above is lack of financial resources to overcome the technical challenges. When the ASAP report is finally released, it must include specific, potential federal, state, and local financial resources including CMAQ, TIF, Neighborhood Opportunity funds, and local developer contributions.

Prepared by: Allan Mellis 1115 West Montana St. Chicago, Illinois 60614-2220 [mellisfamily@rcn.com](mailto:mellisfamily@rcn.com) 773-327-9123

Mr. Mellis added that he would like to have escalator outage notices posted similar to how the CTA posts elevator outages.

- Garland Armstrong, former CTA ADA Advisory Committee member is concerned that there are people who are homeless and continually ride the Blue Line and that someone should help them. He also stated that, when deployed, the bus ramps at Cumberland are still too steep for easy access. He said the ramps at Rosemont were much better.
- Mr. Connelly stated that at this time, there are not going to be any changes made at Cumberland but there will be changes to Jefferson Park which will better accommodate people who use wheelchairs in boarding or alighting buses.
- Mr. Armstrong also stated that he is concerned about people being on the tracks and that people should know that there is electricity there and should stay off the tracks. Ms. Fuller asked if he has seen this personally to which Mr. Armstrong stated that he has heard about such incidents on the news. Ms. Riley did point out that the CTA has signs up alerting people to the fact that the tracks have electricity and that the information conveyed is that, "*It's not worth it,*" to try and get something off the tracks that has fallen such as a cell phone, etc.

### **Od Business**

- Mike Connelly provided the following information in response to 2 issues that were raised by Susan Riley at the last meeting.
- Ms. Riley had asked what the procedures are if there are fluids (such as baby vomit) found on the bus?
- Mr. Connelly explained that the Operator should be informed of the situation. (Nothing can happen if (s)he doesn't know about it. The Bus Operator should



curb the bus and investigate. The Operator notifies the Control Center and follows their instructions. If there is a bus right behind this one, customers may board that bus. Depending on the severity of the situation, the bus may be evacuated, etc. Safety of all customers and staff is the primary concern. The bus will be cleaned.

- Ms. Fuller asked, *“What about on the train? What if the same situation [happens] on the train?”*
- Mr. Connelly replied regarding a *“Similar situation on the train in that the train operator, if it's brought to their attention, should be then bringing it to the attention of the control center, who will then intervene and do what needs to be done. The same kind of situation and the same kind of clean up procedure, always safety first depending on what's going on.”*
- Ms. Fuller asked, *“Can the train continue to operate, just close that particular car?”* To which Mr. Connelly stated, *“That can be done. It will be the control center's call as to what the material is, whether it's human waste, biological waste. There are a number of biohazards. Blood is different than baby vomit. Neither one is pleasant, but they're different situations.”*
- Ms. Riley had then asked a second question regarding what the procedures are if the bus ramp is above the curb?
- Mr. Connelly responded that the bus should be situated so that the ramp can be appropriately deployed. If the Bus Operator has to move the bus to deploy the ramp, this should happen. If needed, the Bus Operator should get out of their seat to assist the customer in alighting the bus safely.

### **New Business**

- Ms. Davis would like for someone from the ASAP group to address what are the recommendations related to way-finding especially for people who have visual impairments that are being considered based on recommendations from the ADA Advisory Committee.
- Ms. Davis stated that she would also like Ms. Fuller's comment from the October meeting addressed regarding the lack of contrast on the stairs at the Washington/Wabash Station at the next meeting.
- The Committee would also like follow-up from the Safety Department at the April meeting.
- Ms. Fuller would like additional information regarding the Public Comment Policy if any changes are being made. Ms. Davis replied that she believes the Chairman's office is still reviewing the policy to which Mr. Connelly stated that yes, it is still pending.

### **Adjournment**

- Ms. Davis noted the next meeting will be Monday April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018.
- Ms. Davis asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Kaminkowitz moved to adjourn the meeting and Ms. McGleam seconded. All voted, “Aye,” and the meeting adjourned at 3:02pm.