

**ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**RIPTA Transportation Conference Room  
705 Elmwood Avenue, Providence, Rhode Island 02907  
Thursday, February 23, 2017  
4:00 PM – 6:00 PM**

**Attendees:** Rui Cabral (Chair), Angie Stabile, Barry Humphries, Monica Dzialo, Mark Susa, Jane DeMelo, Deb Farrah, Jeanne Ouellete, Deanne Gagne, Vincent DeJesus, John Carvalho and Kimberly Genereux

**RIPTA Staff** in attendance: Mark Therrien, Jim Vincent, Jamie Perreira, Nathan Hannon, Ben Salzillo and Cristy Raposo

**MEETING MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Angie Stabile made a motion to approve the January meeting minutes. John Carvalho seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**II. FOLLOW UP FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

No discussion.

**III. RIPTA REPORTS**

**•Ride Call Time Performance**

The ATAC received a chart of the Ride call center performance comparing the months of December and January 2015 to December 2016 and January 2017. Attached is a copy of the report.

**•Stop Announcement Compliance**

Jim Vincent, RIPTA's Compliance Officer, is overseeing the Professional Security Services, the company that monitors RIPTA's fixed-route performance. All ADA compliance requirements, including stop announcements, wheelchair securement, use of the lift/ramp, and basic customer service functions will be monitored and documented.

Jim Vincent provided the following RIPTA Bus Monitoring and ADA Announcement Compliance Report:

- 97 bus trips were monitored in December
- Of those 97 trips, 94 of the automated announcements worked (97% functioning).
- 2 bus drivers made zero announcements when the ATMS malfunctioned.

Jeanne asked if there is anywhere where the quality of the announcement is

reported. Jim Vincent will find out if there are any issues with the microphone and he will have the monitoring company monitor the clarity of the audio.

•**Wheelchair Lift Failure**

There were zero total wheelchair failures for the month of January.

**IV. REDUCED FARE BUS PASS PROGRAM**

At the December ATAC meeting, members brought up concerns regarding the new Reduced Fare Bus Pass Program. RIPTA's Customer Service Manager Nathan Hannon, Chief Legal Counsel Benjamin Salzillo and Chief Security Officer Jamie Perreira were in attendance to answer any questions or concerns regarding the program.

Jane DeMelo stated that there are people who have a disability, who may not receive SSI. Unfortunately, under the new program guidelines, they are not able to qualify for RIPTA's new Reduced Fare Bus Pass Program. Mr. Salzillo stated that RIPTA is now aware of instances where an individual should be in program but is not on SSI or SSDI. He assured the ATAC that RIPTA wants to make sure people can get access to the pass based on their disability. Going forward, he instructed individuals who have disability but for some reason do not qualify under the current program, to contact Customer Service directly to have their application reviewed. We may request back up information as we have to keep some consistency and controls on the program to prevent fraud and abuse. Mr. Salzillo assured that RIPTA wants to be as responsive as we can to instances like this.

Jeanne Ouellete stated that the Office of Rehabilitation Services has clients who do not receive social security in anyway. She asked what will RIPTA accept from these clients going forward that we will not accept now. ORS recognizes these clients as having valid disabilities. RIPTA currently does not accept letters from ORS stating proof of disability. Ben Salzillo stated that going forward, as we review applications on a case by case basis, we would request that letter. He instructed her or any individual to call Customer Service and set up an appointment.

Mark Therrien stated that no one person can determine all types of disabilities. RIPTA may decide to accept certification of disability by additional approved agencies, but not as many as we once did. Rui Cabral stated that trusted community partners are necessary. Having a Certification of Disability Letter from an approved partner agency would help eliminate these individuals that are falling through the cracks who have disabilities but do not have SSI or SSDI. Other ATAC members agreed. Monica Dzialo stated that the Office of Services for the Blind documents blindness by ophthalmologist; RIPTA should accept their documentation as proof of disability.

Ben Salzillo stated that RIPTA considers disability much more broadly than FTA. Under FTA guidelines, mental issues would not qualify you for a Reduced Bus Pass.

It's not a perfect system and RIPTA will have to work on an ad hoc basis.

Mark Therrien stated that RIPTA will work on revising the policy and will present a draft to the group at an upcoming meeting.

## **V. HOW TO ENGAGE THE RIPTA BOARD**

At the last ATAC meeting, John Gaffney expressed concerned how this committee is communicating to the new RIPTA Board of Directors. Since John was unable to attend this meeting, the ATAC agreed to table this discussion until the March meeting. In the meantime, the ATAC will draft a letter to the Board and will ask the Board Chair to attend the May ATAC meeting.

## **VI. RIDE/RIPTA SERVICE FEEDBACK**

### **•Wheelchair Securement**

Debbie stated that some of her clients have had to strap themselves in onboard fixed-route buses. She asked if the drivers are supposed to strap them in. Mark Therrien stated that the driver is supposed to secure every wheelchair passenger that boards. He instructed passengers to report any instance where a driver does not directly to Customer Service. RIPTA just held refresher training for Ride drivers on how to secure passengers and will be doing the same for fixed-route in the future.

### **•Wampanoag Plaza**

ATAC members reported that the ATMS is still announcing the location before the bus arrives. There are reported ATMS issues at this location. Mark Therrien stated that we will have RIPTA's IT Department look into this.

### **•Reveal Mobile App**

ATAC members reported issues with the new version of the Reveal app. If the ride changes from a taxi to a Ride van or vice versa, that information is not updated on the app. ATAC members also stated that if you do not use the app daily, it will make you reenter all your information after a few days even when you click the box that says "Save My Information." Mark Therrien stated that RIPTA will look into this.

### **•TDD Relay**

Angie Stabile asked if RIPTA offers TDD Relay. Cristy Raposo stated yes, passengers can call **TDD RI Relay** - 1-800-745-5555, or 711. Cristy will email directions on how to use the service to the committee.

## **VII. OTHER BUSINESS AND MEMBER REPORTS**

### **•Q-Straint**

Mark Therrien informed ATAC members that Q-Straint, a company that produces wheelchair passenger safety solutions for public and private transportation, has a

new product – Quantum. Quantum guarantees self-securement in under 25 seconds without requiring the driver to leave their seat to help. This is the transportation industry’s first fully automatic rear-facing wheelchair securement station. Quantum lets wheelchair and scooter passengers board the bus or train, position their chair and simply push a button to secure themselves in a stable and safe rear-facing position. The device locks your chair in and holds you in place. Mark stated that RIPTA will ask Q-strait can bring a device to the transit conference being held in Providence this April. ATAC members expressed concern that it is rear-facing, but are interested in testing out the product and giving feedback.

Angie Stabile made a motion to end the meeting at 5:54pm. John Carvalho seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**When calling to schedule your Ride to the ATAC meeting, please be sure to tell the Customer Service Agent that you are going to and from the ATAC meeting so that you will not be charged. If you would like to take the complimentary Ride trip from Kennedy Plaza to the ATAC meeting, you must contact Cristy Raposo by 4:30pm on Tuesday, March 21, 2017 to reserve your ride ([raposo@ripta.com](mailto:raposo@ripta.com) or 784-9500 x242).**