

ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Virtual meeting: RIPTA Webex Thursday, September 3, 2020 MEETING MINUTES

Participants: Rui Cabral (Chair), Robert Beauregard, Benny Bergantino, Jean Bousquet, Laurie Diorio, Monica Dzialo, Ray Gagne, Elisabeth Hubbard, Grace Pires, Angelina Stabile, Lisa Stamp, Mark Susa.

RIPTA Staff: Sarah Ingle, Joelle Kanter, Chris McKenna, Greg Nordin, Barbara Polichetti.

One-Call/One-Click Consulting Team: Anne Galbraith, Eryn Rosenblum, Bill Schwartz.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Rui Cabral called the ATAC meeting to order at 4:05 PM.

Angie Stabile motioned to approve the minutes from the June 4, 2020 meeting. Grace Pires seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

II. One-Call/One-Click Project Overview

The group heard a presentation from Bill Schwartz, Nelson\Nygaard, who is leading the consulting team on the One-Call/One-Click planning project. RIPTA is in the early stages of planning a One-Call/One-Click resource that may offer one-stop trip planning information for transportation services across Rhode Island through a single website and phone number. These resources are targeted to older adults, individuals with disabilities, and others who have mobility challenges, but they are accessible to everyone. Some systems also allow individuals to book and pay for their own trips.

Bill reviewed project tasks and deliverables including a review of best practices and convening of stakeholder focus groups. He encouraged riders and those who assist them to sign up for the virtual meetings which will be scheduled within the next few weeks. Feedback from the discussions will be summarized in a report that will guide development of a business plan. The entire project should be completed within the next 6 months.

ATAC members gave feedback to RIPTA staff and consultants:

- Buy-in from partner agencies will be essential.
- The website must be accessible to people who use screen readers and should be tested with a few different brands.
- Members would like more information about how One-Call/One-Click systems work, and they are interested in how RIPTA plans to train riders to use the system.
- They recommended contacts to include in outreach.
- They expressed concern about partnership development and data integrity, noting that

information must stay fresh as programs and parameters change.

III. Update on RIPTA projects

Greg Nordin, RIPTA Chief of Strategic Advancement, shared the following information:

- Downtown Transit Connector: The DTC project is wrapping up, and construction should be completed within the next few weeks. Increased service on certain routes began in January, which also extended the corresponding paratransit service window.
- Wave fare collection: The Wave system launched to the public on fixed-route buses on Monday. RIPTA is identifying funding sources that will enable the system to expand to paratransit as well.
- Service changes: Fall service changes went into effect last week, increasing weekend frequency on Routes 20, 31 and 56.
- Website redesign: RIPTA launched a more streamlined, user-friendly website design over the summer. The marketing team has flexibility to make changes, and ATAC members are encouraged to give feedback.
- Central Falls geofencing: RIPTA received a grant from the Federal Transit Administration to partner with the City of Central Falls on a 1-year pilot program that uses technology to expand ridership. The grant will cover the cost of free fare within city boundaries and may assist RIPTA with planning to apply the same technology in other areas.

IV. RIPTA reports: key performance indicators

- RIPTA reported that in July, 80.4% of fixed route buses were on time, while 12% of trips were early and 7.6% of trips were late.
- Ride is providing about half of the trips that it operated pre-COVID. Ride provided 12,265 trips in July; 10,106 trips in June; and 7,044 trips in May. A portion of these trips are for new services such as Meals on Wheels and service for employees to Honeywell.
- Of the 4,525 customers approved to use Ride at the end of July, 574 actively used the service in the last 90 days. This was an increase from 349 active users at the end of May.

V. Ride/RIPTA service feedback

- An ATAC member recently requested use of a lift to bring heavy bags in a carriage onto a Ride van. The driver opted to carry the bags up the stairs and did not secure the carriage. RIPTA staff advised the rider to contact customer service immediately.
- Another ATAC member noted that once or twice a week, drivers on Route #54 have not hooked up his wheelchair properly. He has been in touch with customer service, and they have contacted the transportation department.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM.