

ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

Participants: Rui Cabral (Chair), Benny Bergantino, Tyson Bottenus, Jean Bousquet, Liza Burkin, Frank Cummings, Vincent DeJesus, Laurie Diorio, Grant Dulgarian, Monica Dzialo, Deanne Gagne, Elisabeth Hubbard, Grace Pires, Heather Schey, Angelina Stabile, Lisa Stamp, Mark Susa.

RIPTA Staff: Joelle Kanter, Greg Nordin, Joe Solomon.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Rui Cabral called the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) meeting to order at 4:05 PM and welcomed the group to Zoom as the new platform.

Angie Stabile motioned to approve the minutes from the November 5, 2020 meeting. Heather Schey seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

II. RIPTA reports: key performance indicators

In October, RIdE provided 11,440 trips, which is a 48% reduction from October 2019. 8,286 were subscription trips, and 3,154 were on demand. 10,216 were ambulatory passengers, and 1,224 used wheelchairs. Included in that monthly total are 2,224 trips for Honeywell employees. RIdE also provided 1,114 deliveries for Meals on Wheels.

For RIPTA's fixed-route service in October, 81.4% of trips were on time, 9.2% were early, and 9.3% were late.

III. RIPTA project update: One-Call/One-Click study

RIPTA is conducting a study to guide the development of a One-Call/One-Click transportation planning resource that would provide a one-stop shop for customized trip planning information by phone or through a website. It would be targeted to older adults, people with disabilities, and others with mobility challenges.

Since the last ATAC meeting, the Nelson\Nygaard consulting team has continued a survey of other systems around the country and hopes to interview a few of them soon. The team also had a call with United Way/2-1-1 and held a focus group for transportation providers. Another provider focus group is scheduled next week.

In response to a question about including RIdE in a One-Call/One-Click system, RIPTA staff said that it would be possible but would require customers to select specific qualifications.

RIPTA will continue to keep the group informed about the project as the consulting team works toward developing a recommendation.

IV. Discussion

- Committee communication: After the November meeting, it became clear that some information should be communicated by ATAC members instead of RIPTA staff. Chairman Rui Cabral will set up a Google group as an independent communications channel to share information using a list of meeting participants from 2019 and 2020, provided by RIPTA staff. People will have the ability to opt out. RIPTA staff will continue to prepare meeting agendas, draft meeting minutes, and share general ATAC announcements. Non-ATAC related information may be disseminated through the Google group.
- Response to plans for multi-hub bus system: At the November ATAC meeting, the group discussed drafting a formal letter in response to plans for the multi-hub project, but a decision was tabled. Elisabeth Hubbard, Disability Rights RI, noted that the purpose of an advisory group is to express opinions, particularly when a policy impacts riders. She suggested that ATAC members should figure out exactly what the issues are and describe their impacts on individuals with disabilities.

ATAC members will begin drafting a letter through the new Google group. They can also email Rui directly with specific concerns. He planned to share a link to a Mass Streetsblog article and encouraged everyone to read available news about the project.

The group also discussed other formats for giving their opinions, with Rui noting that RIDOT plans to hold public forums. Heather Schey had requested a presentation on the project at a recent ATAC meeting. RIPTA relayed the request but has not received a response yet.

- RIPTA service feedback
The group discussed the most efficient way to have issues addressed, either by calling RIPTA's customer service department during regular business hours or submitting a complaint online. It is important for RIPTA to log complaints, document their follow-through from staff, and identify patterns.

The issue of Ride trips arriving early for appointments was noted. This is a problem at locations that require patients to wait outside, particularly when it's cold or rainy. Greg Nordin agreed to speak with Brooks Almonte about Ride scheduling software parameters and will provide an update to the group.

In another case, a Ride driver arrived at the wrong office suite for a pick up. The customer was advised to call Ride immediately to redirect the scheduler to the right location. The suite number should be re-entered in the system correctly.

- Present amendment to ATAC By-laws Article VII re: 2021 meeting schedule
The ATAC bylaws state that regular meetings will be held monthly on an annual schedule provided in January of each year. Bylaws may be amended by a simple majority vote, but bylaw changes must be presented at one meeting and voted on at the next meeting.

In response to Rui's proposal to meet every other month in 2021, attendees said that they prefer to continue meeting monthly, particularly since meetings are now virtual. If needed, meetings can be canceled or end early. This discussion will be tabled.

The next meeting will be held on January 7th.

The meeting adjourned at 5:31PM.