

ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RIPTA board room, 705 Elmwood Avenue, Providence, RI
Thursday, September 2, 2021
MEETING MINUTES

Participants: Rui Cabral (Chair), Robert Beauregard, Jean Bousquet, Kerry Clark, Vincent DeJesus, Monica Dzialo, Barbara Henry, Justin Henry, Janice Musco, Mark Susa.

RIPTA Staff: Steve Fiorentini, Nate Hannon, Joelle Kanter, Yolanda Kuiee, Greg Nordin, Joe Solomon.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Rui Cabral called the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) meeting to order at 4:18 PM.

Monica Dzialo motioned to approve the minutes from the August 5, 2021 meeting. Robert Beauregard seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

II. ATAC Planning

In preparation for the next ATAC officer election in December, Rui Cabral encouraged ATAC members to review the committee by-laws. The document was last updated in early 2020 and includes general requirements for members, officers, and the RIPTA staff liaison, but does not include guidelines for virtual meetings.

Joelle Kanter will share a link to the by-laws on RIPTA's website. Any suggested changes should be presented at the October ATAC meeting for a vote in November.

III. RIPTA Reports

- Fall service changes: Greg Nordin reported that fixed-route changes went into effect at the end of August to better align West Bay service. Impacted routes include 9x, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, and 66. Routes 8x and 62 were discontinued, and a new route, 69, was added to provide service between URI and Galilee. RIPTA will continue serving the Warwick Mall, but the hub has been relocated to CCRI's Warwick campus with expanded facilities such as shelters, real time displays, and bathroom access. The Narragansett and Kingston Flex zones have also been combined into a new zone, #210, which also operates on Saturdays. The South Aquidneck Flex zone, #231, also has an updated schedule with some of the lower-ridership time points removed.

RIPTA is proposing additional service improvements to begin in January, effectively increasing the frequency on some routes and extending service on nights and weekends. RIPTA staff will provide an update on this in October.

- Key performance indicators: Joe Solomon shared RIde data from July 2021. During that month, RIde provided 11,868 van trips and 443 taxi trips for 18,091 passengers (including personal care attendants). Of the 3,893 customers approved to use RIde, 754 were active over a 90 day period. On-time RIde performance was at 93.3% for the month. jhAdditional data points were outlined in a report that was emailed to the group in advance.

RIPTA staff also shared fixed-route on-time performance data for May and June 2021. In May, 389,824 time points were sampled. 5.9% were early, 80.9% were on time, and 13.1% were late. In June, 376,793 time points were sampled, and 6.1% were early, 81.6% were on time, and 12.3% were late.

- Project updates:
 - RIPTA is kicking off a rider survey on fixed-route buses this fall to help staff understand how people use the system in order to improve service planning.
 - RIPTA's one-year pilot project in Central Falls is expected to launch this winter, offering free transit for people who travel by bus within the city.
 - RIPTA is starting to coordinate with two software providers to integrate the Wave fare system with paratransit service. Staff will share another update next month.
 - The agency has been awarded a \$5 million federal grant to electrify bus and Flex service in Newport. If additional funds are available, RIPTA may consider adding a new route from the North End to Middletown.

IV. Discussion

- RIPTA service feedback
 - Janice Musco asked RIPTA staff to check on a bus stop sign near Twin River Road and Angell Road. She also noted that the real-time information at bus stop G in Kennedy Plaza is not working.
 - Robert Beauregard mentioned a few RIde drop off locations that seem inaccurate in GPS. Staff suggested that he should contact RIde directly to request modifications in the system.
 - A Wave discussion focused on several issues:
 - **Purchasing RIde tickets**: Participants expressed concern about the availability of RIde tickets at grocery stores when they stop selling fixed

route fare products. RIPTA staff recently rectified an issue with Shaw's, and fare products should now be stocked through the end of the year.

- **Retail partnerships:** Greg announced that RIPTA has an agreement with many retail partners, but it does not include CVS. However, customers will be able to continue reloading their Wave cards at CVS, Walgreens, and other stores that do not sell them. Customers have also complained that retail staff is not well informed about Wave, and RIPTA staff will address this.
- **Customer service:** RIPTA customer service staff is also available to assist customers who experience issues with using mobile Wave cards. The group discussed RIPTA customer service hours, with one participant suggesting that a back-up answering service would be helpful. RIde has a dispatch service in place between 4:30 and 9 PM.
- General discussion
 - One participant expressed concern about the number of people meeting in the room. This discussion will continue next month.
 - The next meeting is scheduled on the Thursday, October 7th. ATAC participants will be able to pre-order RIde tickets and pay for them when they pick them up at the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:31 PM.