

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)
 OF THE MASS TRANSIT DEPARTMENT BOARD (MTDB)
 JUNE 16, 2015

MEETING MINUTES

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call.** Meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. The following Committee Members answered to roll call:

	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
MO – vacant		
D1 – Donald G. Pearson, Chair	P	
D2 – Karen LeMaster	P	
D3 – Everardo Sanchez		A
D4 – vacant		
D5 – Aziz Afravi	P	
D6 – vacant		
D7 – Noemi H. Rojas	P	
D8 – Leah M. Wood		A
ALT – Rebecca Hernandez	P	
ALT – Mark C. Steele	P	
ALT – James David Abernathy	P	

2. **Public comment and Welcome New Members.** John Eger commented on establishing alternate forms of punishment for passengers other than suspension; mentioned people could lose their jobs for lack of transportation. Julie Goosens commented on equal treatment for all passengers; mentioned that chronic abusers should not be given pardon since they are taking other passengers' time and privileges. Isaac Valencia expressed an interest in serving on the CAC and inquired about appointment process. Welcome new member Noemi Rojas, District 7.

3. **Approval of minutes of last meeting.** Chair motioned for approval of the minutes for meeting on April 21, 2015. Karen LeMaster moved to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Aziz Afravi. All voted in favor; none opposed; motion passes unanimously.

4. **Presentation and update on Summer Youth Transportation Program approved by Mass Transit Board on May 26, 2015.** Jay Banasiak provided presentation on pilot program to commence this summer. Mentioned this is an alternative for kids to get to summer youth programs around town. Mentioned ridership will be analyzed and tracked for determining service for future years. Mentioned state guidelines mandate that child companions ride for free. Mentioned there is no financial impact since city agencies will work with United Way for providing payment of summer passes. Mentioned does not impact LIFT passengers as they already ride for free on Fixed Route. Mentioned that most agencies that promote summer youth services may apply for the program by contacting the United Way. No action taken.

5. **Presentation and discussion on the I-10/Border Highway Construction Project.** Jay Banasiak provided presentation on TXDOT project for widening roads and connecting highways. Mentioned that Sun Metro is part of the Transportation Mitigation team vetting gridlock issues and bus detours. Mentioned lane closures around town will mostly affect Westside traffic at Executive Center and Sunland Park. Mentioned Eastside will see some delays but no detours. Mentioned that MPO had a call for projects, typically provides funding for roads and temporary transportation projects. General discussion about options and recommendations for alleviating road congestion and delays in service. Suggestions included: (1) New incentive *Metropia* which is like google maps; offers options for getting around traffic, plus incentives (like free dinners) from sponsors through

app generated point system; (2) Working with companies like Walmart and Kmart to provide a number of parking spaces (maybe 100) for park and ride services; (3) Promote weekly and monthly passes inside buses and at every park and ride location; (4) Do ad campaign with larger employers to market BRIO and Express routes by giving employee discount on monthly and weekly passes. Jay Banasiak mentioned these are good suggestions and all will be taken into consideration. Additional information will be provided in future meetings. No action taken.

6. **Discussion and update on bus route for The Fountains.** Jay Banasiak mentioned that there is access to the shopping center from Hawkins. Explained that Owners still don't want buses going inside the parking lot; that doing so would increase headways by 10-15 minutes, which is not justified by lack of ridership; and there's no future plans for circulator service. No action taken.
7. **Discussion and update on Route 14 service extension to Sunland Park Plaza.** Everett Esparza explained that Routes 13 and 20 already service the Sunland Park Plaza shopping center, with a transfer to Route 14 at Redd Road. Explained that analysis to extend Route 14 across the street to Sunland Park Plaza would add 10 minutes to the existing route, decreasing the number of daily trips from 25 to 22, and increasing the wait time from 20 to 30 minutes; defeating the purpose. Mentioned there are no future plans to extend Route 14. No action taken.
8. **Presentation, discussion and action on the LIFT No-Show Policy.** Julio Perez provided presentation on the LIFT No-Show Policy. Mentioned that lots of discussion has gone into reducing the number of no-shows. Mentioned no-shows have a huge impact on service as cancellations too often take place at the door or within 2-hour window of scheduled pick up time, causing last minute rerouting and unwarranted delays. Mentioned that 7-8% of LIFT trips result in no-shows. Explained FTA rules and regulations for misuse (or abuse) of no-show policy. Explained that two recommendations were made for decreasing number of no-shows: first, decreasing the 2-hour cancellation window to 1-hour; second, adding a threshold to allow minimum of 2 no-shows per month before enforcing disciplinary action. Mentioned that panel of peers was created for evaluating excessive misuse and enforcing passenger discipline. Explained that there are three levels of appeals process for seeking resolution; first to MV management staff; second to panel of peers; and lastly to a panel of key management staff who will render the final decision. Chair motioned for approval of the two recommendations to the No-Show Policy. David Abernathy moved to reduce the 2-hour cancellation window to 1-hour. Seconded by Rebecca Hernandez. All voted in favor; none opposed; motion passes unanimously. Aziz Afravi moved to add the minimum threshold of 2 no-shows per month before enforcing passenger discipline. Seconded by Rebecca Hernandez. All voted in favor; none opposed; motion passes unanimously.
9. **Discussion and action to appoint one member and two alternates to the LIFT Final Appeals Committee.** Julio Perez explained that after much deliberation, and passenger feedback, the LIFT decided to expand the level of the appeals process to include an additional tier of key city management for making the final decision in all appeals cases. Explained that this process is available for resolving all sorts of passenger disputes, not just for no-shows. Mentioned that a 3-tier adjudication process offers transparency by allowing passengers to be heard by management who are not previously involved in disputed matters. Mentioned that individuals will not sit on multiple panels. General discussion about roles and responsibility of CAC members appointed to Final Appeals Panel; explained that training on FTA rules and regulations will be provided; explained that CAC members will be contacted in rotation for scheduled hearings; and if for some reason an individual cannot serve, then the next individual in the rotation will be contacted. Chair asked for volunteers. Four members volunteered. Chair motioned for approval of Aziz Afravi, David Abernathy, Rebecca Hernandez, and Karen LeMaster to serve as alternating members to the LIFT Final Appeals Panel. Noemi Rojas moved to approve. Seconded by Mark Steele. All voted in favor; none opposed; motion passes unanimously.

10. **Update on monthly Paratransit Advisory Committee [PAC] meeting.** Julio Perez mentioned that the topic for this month's meeting was resolving the issue of passenger no-shows and misuse of the disciplinary process for suspension of services. Mentioned that last minute cancellations (no-shows) and schedule changes create a ripple effect on drivers, dispatchers and passengers. Mentioned PAC vetted making changes to the existing policy for decreasing amount of no-shows based on how many trips a passenger makes; regardless of whether it's once a month or once a day. Mentioned policy enforcement must be applied fairly and consistently. Mentioned that a recommendation to expand the appeals process by adding a 3rd tier was made so that passengers feel their concerns are reaching the appropriate city management for resolving issues. Explained that most issues are resolved quickly by having a conversation with passengers and reaching a common ground, and that most cases never escalate to an appeal. Explained that the appeals process is in place for special cases that require dispute resolution when a mutual understanding cannot be reached with a passenger. Explained that having CAC members engaged in dispute resolution would be a benefit for the greater good. General discussion about suspension of services: length of suspension periods; holding passengers accountable for adhering to the rules; enforcing the rules consistently by applying them to all passengers uniformly; that subscriptions are exempt in most cases of no-shows, i.e. dialysis patients do not dictate the length of doctor appointments; and that FTA does not allow collecting monetary penalty fees from paratransit clients. No action taken.
11. **Monthly Report on LIFT Services.** Rafael Fernandez provided monthly statistics and customer service reports for period ending May 2015. Mentioned the statistics report includes outsourced trips to Sun City Cab. No action taken.
12. **Director's Report**
 - A. **Monthly Customer Service Report for Fixed Route.** Robert Dominguez provided monthly statistics report. Mentioned there weren't too many changes from previous month; the numbers stayed pretty much the same in most categories. No action taken.
 - B. **Monthly Ridership and Operations Report for Fixed Route.** Jay Banasiak provided monthly revenue statistics. Mentioned gas prices are on the rise again. Mentioned that increase in number of collisions is due to new hires, inexperienced drivers, and that additional driving time will be added to future training. Mentioned that we are running out of storage space, so lost and found items will be held for only 7-10 days before going to City Property Management. No action taken.
13. **Opportunity for committee members to request a staff report on items of interest over which the Board has authority. Discussion of items announced at this meeting will take place during the next regularly scheduled meeting.** The Committee requested that the following items be added to the next meeting's agenda:
 - A. Update on ridership for summer youth pilot program
 - B. Update on TXDOT construction project, if there's any developments

Chair asked for motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:45pm. Karen LeMaster so moved. Seconded by Rebecca Hernandez. All in favor; none opposed; motion passes unanimously.

Approved by:

/s/ JAY BANASIAK
Department Head/Board Secretary