



Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities
MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING
(08, March, 2010)

The Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities convened in a regular meeting on 08, March, 2010 at 301 West 2nd Street in Austin, Texas.

Chair Norman Kieke called the Board Meeting to order at 12:05 PM

Board Members in Attendance: Norman Kieke, Chip Howe, Kathy Kasprisin, Jesus Lardizabal, George Luc, Ron Lucey, Tanya Winters

Staff in Attendance: Dolores Gonzalez

1. **Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made by Commissioner Kathy Kasprisin to approve the February 08, 2010 minutes; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Chip Howe. The motion was approved unanimously by all.
2. **OLD BUSINESS-** No old business was discussed during March 8, 2010 AMCPD Meeting.
3. **NEW BUSINESS-**
 - a. **Presentation: Inez Evans - Metro Access Paratransit Manager**
 - Updates on Metro Access Paratransit Service
 - It will take roughly 6 months for pending changes to take effect including: eligibility, taxi vouchers and open returns. Changes that are already approved are the name change, no shows, 30 minute window rule and reservation dates and times.
 - The punctuality of para-transit drivers can now be tracked using CMTA's newly acquired devices, which can monitor a driver's route.
 - A process for public input will be included on the Capital Metro Transportation Authority (CMTA) website. The procedures for the public input process will be sent to the AMCPD.
 - CMTA is still working on an accessible application form, but for now can provide an MS Word document, to request one please email eligibility@capmetro.org
 - For pickups at City Hall, CMTA will use the 2nd street entrance.
 - CMTA Metro Access Paratransit Service provides a Door to Door or Door thru Door Service, this program is designed 100% to assist persons individually.
 - CMTA is working on a call notification service that will notify users when a vehicle is close.
 - CMTA is adding 25 passengers per month to their call notification program.
 - CMTA will use the reservation system to ensure that drivers know the pick up location at both malls for users. There had been a number of complaints by users regarding the pickup location at both malls.
 - A question was raised as to how many passengers, who were denied eligibility for services, got a response from CMTA within 2 weeks. In 2009, 2292 applied; of those, 78 were denied or 3.05 %. In 2010, 472 applied 10 were denied.

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- CMTA working group is still determining the time period for recertification.
- CMTA does not require in-person interviews for eligibility at this time, but will make calls during the application process to verify information.
 - Written eligibility requirements used by CMTA are found under Section 49 CFR part 37.123 of the Federal Transit Administration Code. Ms. Evans will send this information to Dolores for distribution to AMCPD members.
- Ms. Evans will send the number of appeals that were filed after denial of para-transit services to Dolores. CMTA uses a third party to hear cases that does not report to the MetroAccess director or department; the full appeals process is explained in the 2002 guide, but has some outdated information.
- CMTA would like to partner with AMCPD on an outreach campaign for improving independence (respecting people with disabilities as individuals.) Questions on conditional eligibility such as architectural barriers, medication, and night use, are only considered at this time during the application process; the customer is responsible to report any changes in their status.
- Taxi Voucher Program
 - Taxi's encompass 30%-40% of the daily service. This amount is extremely high since the operators are independent operators. CMTA will look to improve dependability by adding a performance clause to individual contracts. The contract is up in October 2010 and any contractual changes will be apart of that document.
- The CMTA Board of Directors is considering consolidating all advisory boards into a "customer" advisory board. The matter of the ¾ rule is also before the board of directors for consideration.
- It is CMTA Service, Mission, and Goal to work with the disability community. CMTA looks to put forth a newsletter in the future to reach out to the disabled community.

b. Discussion and motion for March 08, 2010 Meeting

- Motion: AMCPD revised resolution will be sent to City Council and changing language to read as stated below. Complete resolution is attached to these minutes. The motion was made by Commissioner Chip Howe and seconded by Commissioner Ron Lucey. The motion was approved unanimously by all.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, The Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities respectfully urges the Austin City Council to address these issues with the Capital Metro Board with the goals to:

1. Revert to eligibility and operational policies and procedures in place prior to changes implemented since 2004;
2. Restore eligibility to riders denied MetroAccess services since 2004; grandfathering service for passengers when Capital Metro moves bus routes beyond ¾ of a mile from their residence.
3. Conduct public review of proposed revisions of MetroAccess policies and procedures;
4. Finalize policy and procedure revisions with various workgroups; and
5. Implement changes to MetroAccess policies and procedures in a manner that is sensitive and responsive to the needs of Metro Access customers.

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6. Preserve the Metro Access Advisory Committee.

b. **Subcommittee Reports**

➤ Access/Youth Subcommittee –Chair Tanya Winters

- The Access subcommittee will be setting up a meeting with Channel 6 to discuss the Accessible Parking PSA.
- Commissioner Jesus Lardizabal updated the committee that local amendments to the Uniform Building Code (UBC) were in line with the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS). Staff is working to harmonize the International Building Code (IBC) with TAS. The Residential Building Code is not up for revisions, this could possibly occur in 2010.
- Commissioner George Luc met with transitional counselors from DARS, UT, and St Edwards to grow potential programs for youth with disabilities. Communication with Mc Beth recreation Center continues.

➤ Employment/Awards Subcommittee –Chair Ron Lucey

- An Employment/Awards Subcommittee meeting is planned for March 11 at the Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center (CCRC) from 11:30am-1:00pm. This includes planning for the Business of Work Job Readiness Seminar planning; seminar is planned for Mid May.
- Commissioner Chip Howe is wrapping up submissions for the Governor's Committee Employment Awards Program.
- A White Cane Day planning meeting is scheduled for May 16 at CCRC.
- Community Career Expo job fair planning is underway; expo is scheduled for May 12.

4. **Action Items:** March 08, 2010 meeting. The passing of an AMCPD resolution regarding Capital Metro changes and impact on the community be sent the City Council after adding #6 and changing some language was the only recorded action item for the meeting.

5. **No PUBLIC HEARINGS** were held during the March 08, 2010 Meeting

6. **CITIZEN COMMUNICATION:** March 08 2010 Meeting

- a. Diane Bomar Aleman Metro Access Advisory, Chair: CMTA Para-Transit eligibility changes were made without input from Metro Working Group (MMIG). People with conditions that vary from day to day should have unconditional eligibility. Persons who are given conditional eligibility should be given all reasons as to why. The Metro Access Advisory Committee recommends that all drivers have cell phones for communication and that at least one Metro Access Committee member be present at all user appeals.
- b. Pat Bartel, Austin Council for the Blind: CMTA cannot put limitations on conditional vs. unconditional eligibility, only based on what is in their policy. Travel training under FTA guidelines has unconditional eligibility. There is a need to reevaluate all conditional eligibility decisions made by CMTA, thus far.
- c. John Meinkowsky - ARCIL: As the MetroAccess process changes, applicants must provide more descriptive information on the application. The application form is being revised, and hopefully it will result in better information for eligibility determination. The appeals process must be revised. Conditional eligibility for Para-Transit Services can be negotiated, but should not be imposed. The disability community generally has lost trust in CMTA. The community regards CMTA "as an agency trying to use any excuse to deny existing services to people with disabilities". The result is people with disabilities are hurting from a denial of services.
- d. Cheryl Fszol; Austin Council for the Blind: Received a letter of conditional eligibility, went through the appeals process, called CMTA but has heard no response to date. She was never

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told for what reasons that CMTA changed her unconditional eligibility to conditional. She lost two employment positions as a result of that change.

- e. Hannah Riddering, Citizen: Explains that 98% of her rides are for CMTA passengers; CMTA has not followed a fair process and has suspended services by arbitrary application of the no show policy. This caused suspension of her customer's services and exacerbation of their medical conditions. CMTA cell phones policy is a bad idea due to non confidentiality of passengers.
- f. Michael Zitz, Citizen: Trained on fixed route while at Mary Lee Foundation. He did not have a visible disability, but it was real nonetheless, he was denied services.

7. **STAFF BRIEFINGS:** Dolores Gonzalez

- a. Budget: There were no expenses for the month of February 2010, balance of \$6,005.00 remains.
- b. Dolores will be working with contractors and disability community to ensure accessibility to the City's website through the current web redesign. As a result the contractors may be asking for people to review and test the site for accessibility. Dolores will be assembling a group of interested persons from the community to give input. She will keep everyone posted on developments.
- c. Calendar
 - March 09 7:00pm-8:30pm Mary Lee Foundation Brain Injury-Information Training
Mary Lee Community Center 1327 Lamar Sq.
 - March 11 Employment Subcommittee meeting Criss Cole Rehab Center
 - March 15, 1:00pm White Cane Day Planning Meeting at Criss Cole Rehab Center
 - March 17 ADAPT Fun Run Planning Meeting at 1640 Ste A East 2nd Street
 - May 12 Community Career Expo Goodwill Community Center 1015 Norwood Park

8. **ADJOURN** – A motion was made to adjourn the March 08, 2010 meeting of AMCPD by Commissioner Ron Lucey; the motion was seconded by Commissioner George Luc. The motion was approved unanimously by all.