

Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Access/CSAC Combined Meeting

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

5:30 pm

Virtual Presentation

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CapMetro Employees: Yannis Banks, Louise Friedlander, Martin Kareithi, Molly King, Julie Lampkin, Melissa Ortiz, Edna Parra, Sara Sanford, Andrew Skabowski, Raul Vela, Roberto Velasquez, Dottie Watkins, Christopher Westbrook.

Access Committee Members: Estrella Barrera, Glenda Born, Mike Gorse, Paul Hunt, John McNabb.

CSAC Members: Arlo Brandt, Betsy Greenberg, Fangda Lu, B.J. Taylor, Ephraim Taylor.

Guests: Ruven Brooks, Valerie Perez.

Meeting called to order at 5:33 PM

Welcome / Introductions / Call to Order

Chair Hunt

Welcome & Thanks

Dottie Watkins, President & CEO

Dottie Watkins introduces herself, provides background on her experience, and extends an invitation to the Community Meet & Greet at Austin PBS on March 8, 2023.

Glenda Born asks how Dottie sees the future of CapMetro and MetroAccess, and **Dottie Watkins** explains that she sees MetroAccess being an integral part of CapMetro and something that helps to sustain one of CapMetro's core values of being accessible to the community.

Public Communications

Fangda Lu mentions that game day service for MetroRail was lacking in frequency, and that the actual service levels weren't reflected in the CapMetro app or in Google Maps. **Andy Skabowski** apologized, explained that there was a crash on the rail the night before as well as staffing challenges, and said that hopefully those issues will be addressed by the next game day.

Fangda Lu suggests that the information screens at the rail stops could be used for more than just real-time destination information, and **Andy Skabowski** says he'll follow up on that idea.

MetroRapid Update

Molly King, EVP of Project Connect Integration

Molly King shares an overview of the Expo and Pleasant Valley MetroRapid lines, which includes a project status update as well as new project enhancements.

Glenda Borna asks if CapMetro is receiving any federal funds for infrastructure purposes, and **Molly King** responds that they're currently applying for FTA grant funding for other Project Connect projects, and have already applied for and been promised some funding for the Expo and Pleasant Valley MetroRapid lines.

Glenda Borna asks if end-of-line charging may impact the life of the batteries, and **Molly King** explains that CapMetro is working with manufacturers to make sure the battery life is not significantly impacted.

Paul Hunt asks if there is a strategy to prevent buses from running out of charge if they don't have time to charge at the end of the line. **Molly King** explains that end-of-line charging is more of an opportunity to top-up to make sure that they don't run out of charge, rather than a required charge each time they get to the end of the line.

Glenda Borna asks roughly what scale of batteries is required to run a bus, and **Andy Skabowski** answers that he doesn't have exact dimensions.

Discussion is had about battery weights and sizes, and how that may affect passenger capacity and range of buses.

Ephraim Talyor asks if the charging strategy may impact the number of electric vehicles CapMetro operates. **Andy Skabowski** explains that currently, charging infrastructure is the main hurdle, and that CapMetro will continue to build that infrastructure and buy more electric buses to reach its goal of an all-electric fleet by 2035.

Ephraim Taylor asks how much charge a bus typically gets with a 15 minute end-of-line charge, and **Andy Skabowski** says roughly 5-6%.

Ephraim Taylor asks if the future MetroRapid stations that are currently regular stops will still get the upgraded amenities, and **Molly King** confirms.

Fares Update

Edna Parra, Manager of Community Engagement

Edna Parra briefly explains the upcoming fares programs, and invites committee members to join the pilot for the AMP program.

Mike Gorse asks if fare capping will apply across all services types, such as Reduced Fare or MetroAccess. **Edna Parra** responds that that is the end goal, but that not all programs may be integrated at the same time.

2023 MetroAccess Eligibility Appeals Calendar

Martin Kareithi, Director of Systemwide Accessibility

Martin Kareithi explains that due to presumptive eligibility being no longer extended to MetroAccess applicants, eligibility appeals have started to be scheduled, and Access members will need to help staff those meetings.

Self-Evaluation and ADA Compliance Update

Martin Kareithi, Director of Systemwide Accessibility

Martin Kareithi gives an overview of the program, which includes a full-system evaluation by 3rd party contractors, an organization-wide stakeholder group named the ADA Liaison Committee, and public meetings with community as well as the Access Advisory Committee.

Mike Gorse asks if the project will investigate the eligibility process for MetroAccess, and **Martin Kareithi** explains that the project will mainly look at the operations side.

Glenda Born asks if the project will look at CapMetro's planned projects, such as Project Connect, and **Martin Kareithi** explains that they will be looking at the accessibility for all service modes – such as MetroAccess, MetroRail – and the policies and procedures of the organization.

Glenda Born asks what effects the findings may have on funding, and **Martin Kareithi** explains that any findings would be ranked by what is most important to fix, and CapMetro would work on fixing any issues on a certain schedule to be determined later.

MetroAccess Operations Technology

Julie Lampkin, Director of Demand Response

Julie Lamkin overviews the new Demand Response technology being tested and implemented, and how it will improve the experience for MetroAccess riders. She also extends the opportunity for Access members to help test the new system.

Paul Hunt asks if the app will have audible maps for those with vision impairments, and **Julie Lampkin** confirms.

Paul Hunt mentions that reliability is a key aspect for these types of services, and asks if the new technology is more reliable than the previous system. **Sara Sanford** explains that the new system is cloud based, rather than being hosted on servers that are administrated by CapMetro, and that should solve many of the reliability issues that have occurred in the past.

Paul Hunt asks whether operators will be able to give their feedback when the new system is implemented, and **Sara Sanford** says that there's already a robust feedback system in place for the operators that will continue to be used.

Glenda Born asks if operators have already been engaged and able to give feedback on the new system, and **Julie Lampkin** confirms. **Sara Sanford** adds that before the new system is implemented, all operators will be able to practice and test the system before it goes live. Discussion is had on operator engagement and feedback, operator training, and how dispatch may be impacted.

Meeting adjourned at 7:23 PM