

**Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities (ACPD)
January 20th, 2021 – 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm
Microsoft Teams Remote Meeting**



MINUTES

Welcome and Opening Comments

Committee Chair Jaime Lewis called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Virtual Protocol/Roll Call

Gabe Christie, RTD's ADA Manager, reminded the committee of the virtual meeting protocols and called attendance.

In Attendance:

Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities

Aaron Pasterz, Earl Lee, Greg Martinez, Kyle Bradell, Jamie Lewis – Chair, Krystin Trustman, Brenda Carney, Tim DaGiau, Doug Wooley, Aly DeWillis – Marcano, Tex Elam
APAC Representative

RTD Board Members:

Director Kate Williams

RTD Staff:

Gabe Christie, Kathryne Grove, Bob Grado, Dave Jensen, Paul Hamilton, Larry Buter, Doug McLeod, Paulette Tonilas, Sara Francois, Phoebe Fooks, Douglas Monroe, Jessie Carter, Jessica Hernandez, Cooper Langdon, Clara Bechtel,

Safety Moment

Gabe Christie reminded the attendees of proper precautions regarding falling bodies of snow.

Public Comment Period

No public comment.

Updates for ACPD Committee:

- **New Members**

Jamie stated he's exceptionally proud to finally have a full slate of members for the ACPD. The new members are announced to be Kristen Trustman, Brenda Carney, Timothy DaGiau, Doug Wooley, and Aly Willis-Marcano and were asked to introduce themselves and share what makes them excited to work with ACPD.

- *Timothy DaGiau* stated that he has recently moved to Denver and has been using public transit for 24 years. He has never used a car, so he's always been very excited about public transportation as well as biking. He is also working with the Colorado cross disability coalition.
- *Doug Wooley* stated That he is a professional volunteer and mischief maker. Majority of his volunteer time is used in support of accessibility advocacy as well as food security. He sees mischief making as going against the systems that have already established inaccessibility as the norm, making good mischief.
- *Aly DeWillis-Marcano* stated She's a lifetime RTD transit user, that her grandmother taught her to use the buses and the trains from a young age. Her service on the ACPD is a dedication of her time towards improving public transportation in memory of her grandmother.
- *Kristen Trustman* stated that she has been a volunteer for the Colorado Cross Disability Coalition. She's been working with RTD since 2013, mostly on paratransit to raise the community's voice. She feels that things have very much turned around in the time that she's been working with RTD. She volunteers with other organizations but her primary focus is volunteering with RTD.
- *Brenda Carney* stated that she's visually impaired and uses both fixed route and paratransit service. She's very interested in improving the accessibility of RTD's light rail stations and bus stops for people with visual impairments. She's excited to have this opportunity is excited to make a difference.

Jamie thanked the new committee members for their introduction. Jamie gave a shout out to Ed Newberg, RTD previous ADA manager, and Zamy Silva, RTD's previous director of civil rights, For the hard work that they've done. The work of both people, along with the ACPD members both past and present has helped shift the perspective of both groups, and now RTD is more of aware of what it can do for the community, and the ACPD is more aware of the limitations of RTD. This group has a lot of work to do but it has established good dialogue and good communication.

- **Position Recruiting – Kathryn Grove, Director, Civil Rights**

Kathryne introduced herself as the new director of civil rights , and thanked Jamie for the shout out for Zamy and Ed. Kathryn also stated that the civil rights division at RTD is hiring a manager of the Equal Employment Opportunity office, and to recommend any persons to apply. Kathryn is working with Raquel as well as Jamie to review position descriptions at RTD. The review is to ensure that problematic language is removed and physical requirements, such as the requirement to lift 50 pounds, be directly related to the role. This review process has been underway for approximately three to six months.

There are some opportunities for RTD to connect with community members regarding opportunities for employment at RTD. There is work reviewing positions that could be considered natural progression positions. RTD is ensuring that recruitment processes are biased free through the training of managers

and supervisors. There is also training related to reasonable accommodations of employees, like identifying trigger words that could give managers an indication of an employees needs; as well as training supervisor and managers on creative ways to accommodate employees. There was discussion about how to support employees with disabilities through the employment process, through the exploration of partnerships. The goal is to be as inclusive as possible in our recruitment efforts, but to also produce a sense of inclusion and belonging once the employee is hired.

Jamie stated this discussion started approximately a year ago as a goal to get more people working in the labor sector of RTD . He believes this is a good start to work with the job descriptions first. There's the potential for a liaison style relationship with the community in which their support for employees as they come on board. The goal of this would be to help prevent unnecessary separation buy establishing methods of support that would be beneficial for employees with disabilities. Jamie stated that there are efforts to acquire the skill sets necessary to fill RTD positions, so that RTD can work with the department of vocational rehabilitation and the local schools to focus on building skill sets. This collaboration would help ensure that students and vocational rehabilitation participants have the skill sets necessary to fill RTD positions. More updates will come monthly

- **ADA Complaint Advertisement – Gabe Christie, ADA Manager; Sara Francois, Specialist, Marketing Communications**

Gabe Christie informed the committee of the development of the ADA advertisement, that is intended to be on fixed route buses, flexride, and light & commuter rail trains. The advertisement will provide information on how and where to provide an ADA related. The Ad provides the complaint phone number and email address which to file complaints. The intention of bringing this to the committee is familiarize the committee members with this advertisement, as well as receive feedback on the contents and copy of the advertisement.

Sarah displayed for the committee the bus decal that is being proposed, that will replace the current Title 6 Civil Rights Notice to the Public, that is affixed behind the operator in fixed route buses. The new bus decal is a combination Title 6 – ADA notice, although the ADA portion is abbreviated. The abbreviated notice will be pair with a larger ADA Bus interior card. This would be the lengthier of the ADA advertisements, would be available in both English and Spanish, and include more details. Sara notes that her team has taken into consideration not only the size and space available, but also font size and color contrast to ensure full compliance. On light and commuter rail there will be a full combination advertisement that will have a full size advertisement of both the title 6 and ADA advertisements.

Brenda Carney asked what considerations will be made for those who are unable to see the signage. Gabe stated This advertisement is secondary to the information that is currently provided on the website which is fully accessible. Brenda Carney suggested the inclusion of this information in audible announcements. Jamie asked what the QR code on the channel card provided. Gabe stated that the QR code provided direct link to the ADA complaint form, which is optimized for mobile as well as web

use. Jimmy also asked if the QR code could be used as an audible piece of information which Gabe stated it could not. Brenda Carney suggested that the QR code be provided on a piece of paper that could be available on request, Jamie suggested putting it on the back of the bus number card.

Doug Woolley ask is there a way to improve the accessibility of the by ride number that is available on top of bus stop numbers. Gabe stated There has been a concerted effort at RTD in the last few months in conjunction with several partners both in the community and in the ACPD to explore how we can improve the My Stop number as well as identify other general station wayfinding and accessibility improvements. Brenda Carney stated that she would like to be involved in this program. Aly DeWillis-Marcano recommended that the ADA not be the only language used to describe accessibility. Gabe Christie thanked everyone for their feedback comment stated that this will likely be brought back before the committee during the March joint meeting with APAC.

- **APAC Update – Tex Elam, APAC Liaison to ACPD**

There's been a new election of board officers, and they have decided that there is an interest in the issues of an APAC, ACPD, and CAC. Tex will be making a presentation to the full board on Tuesday January 25. Jamie asked Gabe Christie to find additional clarifying information regarding ACPD's report to the full board. Director Kate Williams informed Jamie that the reason for these reports are to provide the board a direct voice from the committees. Director Williams stated that is important for the Board members to be able to inform their constituents about the work of these committees. New Board rules are coming forward with the change in board leadership. Jamie asked that Gabe Christie and Director Williams work together to determine when during the meeting the report will be delivered. Kathryn Grove stated that the report will be given General Manager's Report which occurs at the start of the meeting, but Gabe will reach out to Jamie once they are able to confirm.

Tex stated that members of the APAC visited the RTD parts department to review what changes would be coming up with new buses fir the Agency. Text stated these recommendations we'll be taken into consideration, but they will not be made in buses that will join the RTD fleet this year or early 2023. this is because the buses that are to join the fleet in 2022 and early 2023 are already far along in their production. Jamie, considering the implementation delay of recommended improvements on buses, asked if these recommendations that felt needed will be able to be adopted sooner than the next iteration of buses. Tex stated that these will not be available until the next iteration of buses as the production of the buses slated to arrive late in 2022 is already too far along. Tex believes that anything that is considered pressing or important would be adopted, but that the conversation took too long to occur.

Tex stated that the Uber Pilot Program has become available to all elements of the RTD Community. The customer will pay the initial \$2 and RTD will pay up to the next \$20 per ride. Ambulatory Customers should use the Uber app to hail rides, while customers who use wheelchairs will receive direct coverage through RTD via the RTD white label app. Uber service is curb-to-curb rather than door-to-door. More information will be provided at the next Joint meeting. Jamie asked if the Uber Pilot means that an

Access-a-Ride Card holder who does not have a mobility issue could call Uber, give them the card number, and Uber would pick them up. Tex confirmed that this would be the case, but that there is nothing in writing about what the app will say in support of Access-a-Ride customers.

APAC was shown an updated version of the RTD Travel Guide and provided feedback that the updated guide is too lengthy. RTD provided APAC with a shortened but still robust for review, which has been returned to RTD for review. Tex anticipates the guide will return to APAC within the next 3-6 months for a hopefully final review.

RTD's Application will soon be able to handle mobile tickets including Access-a-Ride passes. Single Tickets, Long -term Ticket, and more should be in the app. This should be available between February and March. Brenda Carney asked how this information will be disseminated – Tex stated that he was told that once the information was available it would be transmitted to all members of both APAC and ACPD, as well as more broadly.

RTD changed dispatch and scheduling service providers from RouteMatch to HBSS. HBSS is a business that has operated systems like RTD and is based in Boston Mass. They visited Denver in December and spent 4 days reviewing the relationship between dispatch and operations. It is anticipated that they will be a very effective partner in providing service.

- **Denver Transit Speed & Reliability Focus Group – Doug Monroe, Manager, Corridor Planning; Malinda Reese, Consultant, Apex Planning; Phoebe Fuchs, Consultant, Apex Planning**

Doug Monroe, RTD's Manager of Corridor Planning, is working with the city of Denver on a project related to bus speed and reliability within the Denver City Limits. Doug has been working with Apex Design consultants Phoebe Fuchs and Melinda Reese.

Malinda provided a slide deck about the Bus Priority Network Study, which aims to give buses priority over cars on Denver city streets. The consultant group is currently undergoing a review of bus speeds in Denver, where they are the lowest, where buses are most delayed, where these delays effect the most customers, and what causes these delays in Denver. They are also reviewing the reliability of buses in Denver, primarily the punctuality, reliability and headway variability of high frequency buses in Denver. The intention is to take this information and begin to discuss potential improvements which could reduce delay and improve efficiency. potential improvements include roadway configuration adjustment, Signal adjustments, stop improvements, and stop balancing. All of this information will then be compiled and brought to a focus group to provide feedback on potential improvements. Melinda closed her presentation by asking members of the ACPD who would like to participate in the focus group, which will be held on February 10th from 2:00 to 3:30 PM, to please volunteer.

Jamie asked if anyone would like to volunteer, Brenda Carney, Earl Lee, and Greg Martinez stated they were interested in volunteering. Earl reminded the consultant team and Doug that in his experience

many delays are passenger-based, e.g.: fare disputes, fare not being ready, multiple loading trips, etc. He also stated that he has seen many cars performing unsafe maneuvers in front of buses. Aly asked if the Focus Groups charge extends to the Greater Metro Area; Malinda stated that this project is focusing solely within the city and county of Denver city limits. Tex asked what arrangements have been made to provide this notice to APAC. Doug stated that there haven't been any meetings with APAC, but that they are open as they would like as much feedback as possible. Jamie asked that information be provided to Gabe for distribution to the committee.

- **83L Stop at Denver Health – Jessie Carter, Acting Senior Manager, Service Planning & Scheduling; Cooper Langdon, Service Planner, Service Planning & Development; Clara Bechtel, Service Planner, Service Planning & Development**

Jessie Carter began with a point of clarification, as he and his team did not have a presentation but were looking to be informed about the request for service on the 83L. Jessie stated that when RTD reviews service plan changes three major challenges have to be considered: First is the roadways that the plan change would be impacted; Second is the impact on scheduling; Finally is the impact on the customers who are riding. The 83L is a route that begins in the Eastern Suburbs goes through Denver and ends in the Central Business District Downtown. Having a substantial stop or wait time going to Denver Health will have a strong impact on customers commuting past Denver Health. Jessie stated that his team will return to this group after conducting an analysis. They will measure the deviation time of the suggested stop as well as the potential impact to customers currently riding the route, and its impact compared to the service standard.

Jamie stated that he was the one who brought forth the concern. He rides the 83L to work and home and has seen the 83L stop at 9th picks up customers and gets onto Speer and places the bus at the Emergency Room entrance. He has witnessed people asking the operators to be let off at Denver Health, but not realizing that the bus will not stop there. Jamie reported one incident of frustration in which the operator did not stop at Denver Health and a customer deboarded the bus and threw a rock through the window in frustration. Jamie brought this up to provide perspective as the next stop after passing Denver Health is over a half-mile away which can be confusing to customers who intended to go to the hospital or simply boarded the wrong bus. Jamie stated that his perspective is that customers would benefit more from the stop than the time savings.

Jesse thanked Jamie for his perspective and stated to Jamie that the stop on 9th Street is a stop on a one-way street. When service adjustments are considered the return route for the bus is key, and the stopping at Denver Health would have an impact on the return trip as well. Jessie stated that this deviation is one of the facets he considers most. Cooper Langdon pointed out that, from an operations standpoint, turning onto Speer, making a stop at Denver Health, and then getting across lanes of traffic prior to the Speer Tunnel could be a complicated maneuver. Jamie stated that he disagreed that this turn would be complicated for the bus but could have an impact on other commuters turning into Denver Health. Jamie opened the discussion for questions and comments.

Kyle Bradell stated he reviewed the route map and asked if the bus stop could add by rerouting the bus over the tunnel. While this could complicate the return route, Kyle suggests that the bus cross 8th to Speer to Bannock, utilizing the stop for the 52. Jamie stated that there was no way that the articulated buses could make this turn.

Jamie asked how return bus schedule route proximity works, as when riding the 6 route it travels down 6th street but on the return trip the bus travels down 8th street. Jessie stated RTD recognizes that the return bus being 2 blocks away is acceptable, especially on one way city streets. However long gaps between stops and across major streets would not be acceptable. Doug Wooley asked if there is a route that service Denver Health; Jessie stated that the Route 52 on Bannock Street and the Route 0 both provide services to Denver Health.

Jamie thanked Jessie and his team for taking on this issue and being willing to take this suggestion into consideration and recommended that RTD communicate with Denver Health about the potential impact of this service change. Jessie thanked the committee for its feedback and reminded the attendees that if they are interested in this work, there are multiple openings in the Service and Planning Department at RTD.

Closing Comments & Adjournment

Jamie thanked everyone for their participation and shared his excitement with the new members have joined the committee. He is excited to see everyone at the next meeting.

Adjourned at 3:25 pm – Jaime Lewis