

Metro Public Safety Advisory Committee

General Committee Meeting #23

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, March 16, 2022

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

a. **Zoom Meeting Protocols**

- i. Facilitator Richard France called the meeting to order. Facilitator Thomson Dryjanski announced Spanish and American Sign Language interpretation services would be available during the meeting.

b. **Agenda**

- i. Facilitator France reviewed the agenda for the meeting.

c. **Roll Call**

Present: Andrea Urmanita, Ashley Ajayi, Clarence Davis, Carrie Madden, Darryl Goodus, Florence Annang, Charles Hammerstein, Sabrina Howard, Glenda Murrell, James Wen, Jessica Kellogg, Jose Raigoza, Maricela de Rivera, Chauncey Smith, Constance Strickland, Mohammad Tajsar, Chauncey Smith
Absent: Scarlett de Leon, Raul Gomez, Esteban Gallardo, Florence Annang, Ma'ayan Dembo

d. **Approval of Meeting Minutes for 03/02/22**

- i. Committee members voted to approve the meeting minutes for the March 2nd, 2022, meeting.
- ii. Meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

II. General Public Comment

Public comment was taken from meeting participants. There were no requests for public comments.

III. Discussion

Guest Speaker

Cynde Soto and Carrie Madden facilitated a presentation from members and affiliates of Communities Actively Living Independent and Free Independent Living Centers (CALIF-ILC). Speakers shared their experiences as riders with disabilities or advocates for those riders and responded to PSAC members' questions and comments.

- a. **Context Setting:** Bridgette Wallman provided an overview of CALIF-ILC, the services provided, examples of access barriers to transportation for elders and/or

people with disabilities and called for Metro to take the lead in creating accessible transportation.

- b. **Accessibility for visually impaired riders:** Jared Rimer, second vice-chair of Metro's Accessibility Advisory Committee, shared Metro services and amenities that improve the safety and experience for visually impaired riders such as tactile pathways, in-person sensitivity training for Metro operators, and emergency phones. He also shared areas for improvement including sidewalks, bus stops, curb ramps, and lighting. Jared also stressed the importance of improving operator training.
- c. **John Kindred** of the Long Beach Grey Panthers commented on the deteriorating condition of Metro buses and trains and urged for time and resources to be dedicated to keeping them safe and clean.
- d. **Fernando Roldan** shared his negative experience navigating Metro as a wheelchair user including dirty elevators, at-times unhelpful drivers, unmasked riders, and trouble with ramps. He stressed the impact of the current driver shortage and urged for Metro to hire more.
- e. **Kristy Madden** commented on her frustrating experience as a rider with muscular dystrophy and a power wheelchair. She mentioned two incidents where her safety was compromised by a lack of police response and urged for Metro to go fareless.
- f. **Dina Garcia** shared her experience with safety issues as a female Metro rider with cerebral palsy who uses a wheelchair. She mentioned two situations of her belongings being stolen on Metro, highlighting the importance of consistently functioning elevators, operators/officers with sensitivity training, and more visible safety officials.
- g. **LaKenya Pitchford** provided an overview of disability sensitivity training and mentioned the importance of person-first language, how to train for communicating with people with speech disorders, and sensitivity for ADA rights.
- h. **Augmentative Communication Devices:** Kathleen Barajas spoke on the experience of individuals who have difficulty speaking/cannot speak at all and shared the different types of communication devices available for these individuals' usage.
- i. **Questions and Comments:**
 - i. Member Tajsar asked how many riders with disabilities ride the system on a daily or annual basis. He also asked for speakers to comment on the forthcoming transit ambassador program.
 - 1. Cynde Soto replied that she is excited about the ambassador program and the help it will provide to riders with disabilities.
 - 2. Armando Roman, from Metro's Office of Civil Rights, Equity, and Inclusion, added that it is difficult to quantify the number of riders with disabilities. There is data on the number of TAP users with a disability designation and riders with wheelchairs, but there are many riders with hidden disabilities who are not noted.
 - ii. Member de Rivera shared the importance of transit ambassadors to

ensure riders with disabilities can access services and receive assistance when necessary. She thanked all speakers who shared their stories.

- iii. Member Davis shared the experience of his visually impaired mother and echoed the suggestions for optional fares and cleaner elevators. He highlighted the Metro Micro service and added that these available services are not being promoted enough.

Budget Allocation Exercise: Initial Guidance

Members reviewed the draft of the [PSAC Metro FY23 Budget Guidance document](#), provided questions and comments, and participated in a poll to gauge funding for the transit ambassador program.

- a. **Poll exercise:** Members voted on the question “Next year, how should funding be allocated to the Transit Ambassador program?”
 - i. 71% of votes were supportive of increased funding, 24% for the same level of funding, and 6% in favor of decreased funding
- b. **Questions and comments:**
 - i. Member Davis shared he is in favor of more funding for the transit ambassador program and stated that often those who need the most help is those being overpoliced.
 - ii. Member Ajayi asked if any of the panelists from the previous item could speak on what their ideal bus stop lighting situation would be.
 - 1. Jared shared his experience of being missed by drivers at bus stops because of lack of lighting. He stated that there are new bus stops with tactile pathways and charging stations that are very helpful to riders with disabilities.
 - 2. Member Madden added that lighting at every bus stop is one of the organization’s goals. She also recommended using beacons that signal there is a rider with a disability waiting.
 - ii. Member Davis asked if the committee could make recommendations to Metro on lighting.
 - 1. Metro staff shared that they could work with PSAC members on this topic and are currently applying for grants and other funding opportunities.
 - a. Jared added that the ADA should be part of this process.
 - iii. Member Davis asked if Metro is open to increasing the number of providers for the customer service line to accommodate callers who do not have access to the Internet.
 - 1. Jared shared that there is a specific line for riders with disabilities that riders can call and get assistance.
 - 2. Metro staff responded that they would provide more information on this service and are open to recommendations for improving it.

IV. General Public Comment

Public comment was taken from meeting participants. There were no public comments.

V. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

VI. Next Steps

- a. The committee will reconvene on 04/06/22.