

**Arlington Transit Advisory Committee  
Accessibility Subcommittee  
Meeting Minutes  
February 21, 2019  
5:00 p.m.  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard  
Azalea Conference Room**

**Attendees:**

**Members:** Alexa Mavroidis, William Staderman, Laura Miles MacNeil, Hershel Kanter

**County Staff:** Lynn Rivers, William Jones, Andy Wexler

**Contractors:**

- Red Top Cab – John Sawyer, David Berg
- STAR Call Center – Sabrina Brown, Mary Blyther

**Public:** Roseann Ashby, RaeCarole Tekeste

**Introductions and Approval of Minutes**

Attendees introduced themselves. The December meeting minutes were approved, and will be posted at <https://commissions.arlingtonva.us/transit-advisory-committee/>.

**Public Comments**

Attendees expressed concern over how the Transit Bureau communicates Subcommittee activities to the public. Some STAR customers feel they do not get sufficient notice of meetings, and have difficulty finding information about meeting dates, agendas, minutes, and follow-up actions on issues before the Subcommittee. The Bureau reminded them of the recurring meeting schedule and explained how to obtain information online and by phone. Staff will try to post updates more regularly and send meeting reminders further in advance.

Other concerns included seat belt use on Red Top vehicles and a fare dispute during a recent Red Top trip. Seat belt and restraint issues were discussed in greater detail during other portions of the meeting (see notes below). Staff recommended contacting the STAR Call Center for help with the fare dispute.

**STAR Quarterly Performance Report**

Bureau staff presented and explained data on STAR performance for the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2019 (October-December 2018). Performance measures include total STAR ridership; revenue hours and miles; passengers per hour and trip; and cost, revenue, and subsidy per passenger. Customer service includes all customer comment, both positive and negative, for which the STAR Call Center opened tickets.

The Subcommittee noted that the customer service summary does not distinguish between compliments and complaints, and expressed interest in being able to view customer comment trends over time. Staff will refine the data and share it with the Subcommittee.

## **Disability Advisory Commission Update**

Ms. Rivers and Mr. Jones shared information from the Subcommittee's December meeting with the DAC at its February 19 meeting. Discussion focused on issues pertaining to Red Top, such as complaints, the corrective action plan, and Red Top's contract with the County. The DAC noted that STAR drivers would benefit from additional training on both sensitivity and wheelchair securement, especially the differences between safety harnesses in various kinds of vehicles.

### **Training for STAR Providers**

Committee members, public attendees, and Bureau staff expressed concerns over Red Top's wheelchair securement practices. Some drivers seem to have difficulty using the equipment and/or do not enforce the rules consistently with all customers.

Mr. Sawyer explained that Red Top vehicles have two different types of restraints, and that drivers are trained to use them based on manufacturer guidance. Red Top uses small and medium-sized unpowered wheelchairs for securement training, but does not own the type of large powered wheelchairs that are becoming more common among STAR customers. Keeping up with changing technology is an ongoing training challenge since the larger wheelchairs have different restraint requirements. When asked if drivers may be confused when switching vehicle types, Mr. Sawyer explained that individual drivers use the same vehicles all the time and do not switch back and forth.

Bureau staff acknowledged the importance of proper securement, and will ensure that Red Top and its drivers have the resources needed to secure all STAR customers in their vehicles.

A public attendee with low vision also noted that Red Top drivers occasionally try to guide her by holding onto her cane, which may be well-intentioned but is not the proper way to help visually impaired people.

### **Transit Bureau Updates**

- ART RFP
  - The RFP for a new ART operations contractor should be complete in the next 2-3 weeks, and the new contractor should be in place by the summer.
- Summer 2019 Metrorail station closures
  - All Blue and Yellow Line stations will be closed for platform replacement from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend. Regional transit providers, including ART, will provide shuttle bus service at Pentagon City and Crystal City. The Transit Bureau will work with Traffic Engineering & Operations to provide extra curb space to accommodate the increased bus traffic.
  - The Transit Bureau is considering whether to designate dropoff/pickup locations in these areas to facilitate STAR service during the shutdown. Staff will discuss options with the TAC in March.
- Amazon HQ2
  - Several capital projects have been proposed to increase transit access in Crystal City and Pentagon City, including adding a second entrance to the Crystal City

Metro Station and extending the Transitway to Alexandria. The Transit Bureau's leadership and capital projects team will be involved with these projects.

- Bus stop design guidelines
  - The Transit Bureau is developing new standards for bus stops and zones, which will increase access to stops and improve existing stops that are not ADA-compliant. The standards will be shared with other DES bureaus.

### **Other Business**

Ms. Mavroidis asked what can be done to alleviate crowding at the East Falls Church Metro bus bays. Buses on layover sometimes block other buses from using their assigned bays, causing difficulty for disabled riders who have to hurry to other bays to catch their buses. Bureau staff acknowledged that the bays are overcrowded, and will work with National Express and WMATA on curb space management in the short term. The Bureau has also received funding to construct 1-2 new bus bays at East Falls Church, but cannot begin the project until additional staff can be hired to manage it.

### **Adjournment 6:29 PM**

**Next Meeting Date: Thursday, April 18, 2019, 7:00pm**  
**Courthouse Plaza Conference Room 311**  
**(Note: this meeting will be a bi-annual public comment forum)**