

**Arlington Transit Advisory Committee
Accessibility Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2020
5:00 p.m.
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Azalea Conference Room**

Attendees:

Members: Alexa Mavroidis, Herschel Kanter

County Staff: Lynn Rivers, William Jones, Andy Wexler, Paul Mounier, Cala Fils, Kirk Dand

Contractors:

- Diamond Transportation – Tom Furlong
- Red Top Cab – John Sawyer, Brian Shaw, Josh McCullough
- STAR Call Center – Sabrina Brown, Mary Blyther

Public: Derek Anderson, Roseann Ashby, Catherine Bonnette, Joseph DePhillips

Introductions and Approval of Minutes

Attendees introduced themselves. The meeting did not have a quorum of Subcommittee members, so the August and October meeting minutes were tabled. The Subcommittee will consider all unfinalized minutes at its next scheduled meeting in April.

Public Comments

Members of the public commented on the following topics:

- Recent experiences with Red Top:
 - A visually impaired rider reported several recent instances of drivers refusing to accept her trips, possibly because of her service dog. Members of the Subcommittee expressed concern over this issue and asked how often it occurs.

County staff emphasized that Red Top is contractually obligated to accept all STAR trips. They asked the rider to contact the STAR Call Center with more details about the incidents, and directed Red Top to investigate them thoroughly.
 - One rider likes using the automated system to speak with her drivers, but has noticed that only the independent contractor drivers (i.e. non-Red Top employee) seem to be connected to it.
- STAR's fare structure is expensive for riders traveling with children who are too old to qualify for discounted fares.
- One rider would like to be able to speak directly with her assigned drivers by phone, in the event she cannot locate them at pick-up time.

- Both Red Top and Diamond frequently send accessible vehicles for STAR riders who do not need them, which may limit their availability for riders who do need them.
- Public attendees and Subcommittee members would like the opportunity to provide meaningful input as the County negotiates a new contract with Red Top, and asked when they will be given a chance to do so. County staff briefly outlined the procurement process and explained how and when input will be gathered.
- A public attendee advised that he occasionally finds technical glitches on the STAR web site that leave riders' personal information exposed and vulnerable. He has reported it to the STAR Call Center, but they do not seem to understand the problem. County staff asked the Call Center to inform them of such problems promptly so that the webmaster can be notified.
- Despite their various concerns, riders continue to feel that STAR provides superior service to MetroAccess and other paratransit programs in the United States.

STAR FY 2020 Service Performance

County staff provided an update on STAR's service performance during the first half of Fiscal Year 2020 (July-December 2019). Total ridership was slightly over 43,000, a decrease of 5.8% from FY 2019, and vehicle revenue miles and hours also decreased. As a result, the cost per passenger has increased slightly. Customer satisfaction has improved, however, with second quarter complaints (October-December) decreasing 11% from FY 2019 to FY 2020.

Ridership and on-time performance on ART, the County's fixed-route bus service, has increased substantially from the first half of FY 2019 to the first half of FY 2020.

Other Business

Members of the Subcommittee expressed concern about the flow of information from County staff. They often feel out of the loop and unable to answer questions they receive from constituents. County staff acknowledged the need for transparency but also asked for patience, stressing the need to coordinate with the providers before commenting on ongoing issues.

County staff will ask the full TAC to consider changing how the Subcommittee's runs its meetings and accepts public comments. The Subcommittee's meetings offer an unusual amount of interaction between the service providers and the public; by contrast, the full TAC's comment period is more structured, and the providers are not usually present.

Adjournment 6:00 PM

**Next Meeting Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020, Time TBD
Bozeman Government Center, Conference Room TBD**