

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Wednesday, March 13, 2019

10:15 a.m.

Quincy Street Station

Committee Members present: Dennis Tenpenny, Deborah Dawkins, Maria Ruiz, Anthony Fadale, Mark Webb, Brian Snodderly and Mike Nolting.

Committee Members absent: Nancy Johnson, Mary Thomas, Shelby Fry, Libby Adams, and Linda Kehres.

TMTA Staff present: Denise Ensley, Al Bradley, and Kris Lubber.

The meeting was called to order by Denise Ensley at 10:15 a.m. There were no other guests present or public comment offered.

There were no corrections to the prior minutes.

Denise Ensley briefly discussed Topeka Metro's policies, procedures, training and practice drills operators and staff practice in case of a severe weather issue.

Al Bradley discussed the importance of utilizing the same pick-up door at a facility as the drop-off was, especially at facilities that have more than one available entry. If a facility does have more than one possible entry, Topeka Metro's scheduling staff have been noting in Revel which locations are best accessible for our paratransit vehicles. We will use that location for both pick-up and drop-off unless an alternative has been requested. During inclement weather, if the passageway to the paratransit vehicle is not clear of snow/ice, we will not be able to transport.

Ms. Ensley announced that Safety and Security Supervisor Tom Baumgartner is now assessing all home locations once passengers are approved for the Lift service. This way, supervisors can address accessibility problems before they become an issue the operator must deal with out on route. This might include having no ramp, a damaged ramp, broken concrete, a pathway of mud, etc. Staff can review, communicate with the passenger, and offer possible solutions. Anthony Fadale suggested contacting the public works department in cases where it may be a public street issue. Ms. Ensley asked Mr. Fadale if he knew whether or not a facility must display a height restriction if they have an overhang that vehicle drive under. Mr. Fadale was unfamiliar with any mandatory requirements for displaying height restrictions, but, he would look into it further and forward any information he finds to Ms. Ensley.

Mr. Bradley discussed the location of the new Compassionate Care facility that opened on Van Buren Street. Transportation services were not taken into consideration when they opened this facility. Currently our lift buses are not able to utilize the parking/drop-off staging area without requiring the operator to back up the bus onto the main street, which is a safety concern. We are still communicating with them for possible solutions. Mr. Fadale stated he would bring this issue up at the ADA Advisory Council meeting.

Ms. Ensley stated Topeka Metro is looking into creating service animal designation ID's for passengers. Sample ID's were created and shown to the TMTA Operator work group. Although the operators liked the ID's several concerns were raised. Considering Topeka Metro cannot require passengers to obtain this particular ID if they choose not to nor can we require a service animal to have a license or certification, the customer service staff may have to make a judgment call in a situation they would not have training for. Currently management staff is

looking into all options. Ms. Ensley will advise the committee once a decision has been made. Mr. Fadale offered to forward the slide presentation on service animals from the 2018 ADA training he attended.

Ms. Ensley announced as of April 1st, 2019, Topeka Metro buses will no longer stop for passengers after they have pulled away from their staging area due to safety issues. After the bus departs, passengers will need to wait for the next bus.

Ms. Ensley stated it is Topeka Metro's policy for buses to pull over to the curb and stop for a funeral procession. In the event of a long procession, operators are to wait for at least twelve cars to pass by before they are to proceed on.

Ms. Ensley presented the January 2019 ridership report. Fixed route ridership is up 6.5% compared to last year. Lift ridership is increasing, ridership was up 16.1% over last year. It is unknown why lift ridership continues to increase. Topeka Metro will be purchasing new paratransit vehicles. Currently, various vehicles with different set ups are being reviewed and considered.

Ms. Ensley discussed various upcoming events at Topeka Metro:

- “Spring Fling” Families Ride Free – 3/11 thru 3/16 – *fixed route only*
- Bus Driver Appreciation Day – 3/18
- Topeka Metro Board Meeting – 3/18
- Volunteers Ride Free Week – 4/8 thru 4/13 – *fixed route and Lift (limit 2 free rides)*
- Seniors Ride Free Month – 5/1 thru 5/31 – *fixed route only*
- Public Employees Ride Free Week – 5/6 thru 5/11 – *fixed route only*

Upcoming meetings for 2019 were scheduled as follows at **10:15 a.m. at QSS**

- **Wednesday, May 8th**
- **Wednesday, July 10th**
- **Wednesday, September 11th**
- **Wednesday, November 13th**

The meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Manson
Topeka Metro Operations Assistant