



**Para-Transit Advisory Board
Tuesday, March 19, 2019
Alvarado Transportation Center
100 First Street SW, 2nd Floor
10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

Members Present

Jayne Frandsen; Chairperson (Drove), Jacqueline Smith (Drove), Darlene Fattorusso; via phone (Drove), Rene Fernandez (Sun Van), Maria Lisa Gonzales (Drove), and Coby Livingstone (Drove).

Members Absence: John Standish and Mary Hinderla

Staff Members Present:

Sandra Saiz; ABQ Ride Operations Supervisor (Drove) and Ernest Apodaca; Administrative Assistant (Drove).

Public Attendees:

Ellen Sorenson (Sun Van), Joe Sorenson (Sun Van), Rico Gonzales (Drove) and Roberta Serra Mahunik (Drove).

Approval of Agenda:

Before the agenda was approved, Mr, Fernandez asked to have the agenda and the previous months minutes read.

MOTION: Ms. Frandsen moved to accept March's agenda as presented, there was a second, and the attending PTAB members unanimously approved the motion by voice vote. Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: Ms. Frandsen moved to accept the minutes of January 15, 2019, as presented with corrections. There was second, and the minutes for January were approved. Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

Changes made were as follow(s): under ACTION ITEMS, changed and added: "Ms. Fattorusso excused herself from the conversation and the meeting."

Public Comments:

There were no public comments.

Announcements:

Ms. Frandsen started announcements discussing the upcoming Robert's Rules training in May.

Ms. Saiz added to the discussion stating ABQ Ride Executive Assistant, Rita Chavez is working on getting training set up and will contact the PTAB (Para-Transit Advisory Board) members once everything is in order.

Presentations:

There were no presentations, however, there was a brief discussion about Robert's Rules.

Ms. Saiz informed the PTAB members if they ever need a presentation on anything to let her know.

Action Items:

Ms. Frandsen started action items discussing the new by-laws from the City of Albuquerque's Board and Commissions Department. Ms. Saiz suggested to postpone the by-laws discussion until the next meeting in May. Ms. Frandsen agreed and this was the end of action items.

Chairperson's Report:

Ms. Frandsen stated that she had heard only one negative complaint about the SunVan's new color. She had also heard a complaint about a SunVan driver, which was very unusual. Ms. Saiz added to the discussion and encourages anyone to report drivers regardless of the situation.

Director's Report:

Ms. Saiz, gave the Director's Report in Director, Bernie Toon's absence. There has been much discussion about the bus passes for the Advisory Board Members and Sandra explained some research was done and the legal department determined what we (ABQ Ride) were doing was illegal and should have never been allowed. She then explained that we will give out Sun Van coupons, and parking vouchers for PTAB members attending the meeting.

Ms. Saiz stated this issue is being addressed with both Advisory Boards. Director Toon is working on a letter for PTAB and TAB members to make this change official.

Ms. Frandsen added to the discussion stating when the PTAB was first created 16 years ago, It was announced that as a volunteer it was against the law for a volunteer to receive any type of reimbursement for anything.

Ms. Livingstone inquired about the record keeping of 311 complaints and how does that work with the Transit Department?

Ms. Saiz answered the inquiry by stating complaints do include the fixed route bus service, the calls are broken down into division complaints, and those complaints are then forwarded to the appropriate person to research or investigate.

Unfinished Business:

Ms. Frandsen asked about the status of PTAB meeting posters.

Ms. Saiz responded stating the Transit Department's graphic designer is working on it, however, he has a very large workload, and it's definitely on his to-do list. She also said we are in the process of hiring another graphic designer to help speed the process up.

Ms. Sorenson then wanted to know about phone announcements in different languages when you call ABQ Ride.

Ms. Saiz explained to Ms. Sorenson that Transit is currently working with another division within the City of Albuquerque that's helping with language translation and also working out some kinks in call order.

Ms. Livingstone mentioned the ABQ Ride website still does not have the updated PTAB minutes posted. The Transit Executive Assistant, Rita Chavez is currently working on getting the website updated and minutes posted. Please be patient this is taking a while due to various processes.

New Business:

The Certification and Interview process is taking longer than anticipated as this is a very detailed job with a lot of data to compile and enter into the computer system. Ms. Smith has some concerns about new and re-certification applicants on how the process works, it seems riders with hidden disabilities are being denied. This issue came up during a recent appeals meeting she had. The person from the appeals meeting had really good documentation from their doctor and proof that they were on the DD waiver waiting list. The DD waiver doesn't automatically qualify you but the interviewer needs to be looking very carefully at the documentation and giving less credibility to the individual being interviewed because cognition or mental health issues may not allow that information to be reliable.

The PTAB members then had a brief discussion about HIPAA (The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and concluded that information is being provided by the applicant and we don't have to worry about HIPAA.

Ms. Saiz asked the PTAB members what they think the percentage of appeals being denied because of hidden disabilities are at. They think about 50% if we put together the ID, intellectual disability, developmental disability, and the mental health piece. Making decisions under pressure versus an interview process is different and sometimes people with these types of disabilities, mental health issues or intellectual disabilities will panic. We (PTAB) are concerned about people not going through the appeals process and why there's such a high denial percentage. We also want to make sure all people in the community, disabled or abled are able to navigate this community. We feel it is important to pay more attention to the documentation and less attention to the subject person in question.

Ms. Saiz acknowledged the concern by declaring to everybody that Richard Weiner who specializes in ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) certifications is coming April 2nd and will continue his training of the current ABQ Ride staff.

Mr. Fernandez added to the discussion saying if you have any questions or concerns regarding legal stuff, Rita Chavez or Adam Leushel are the best people to talk to.

Ms. Livingstone then asked how are people turned down and how are they notified.

Ms. Saiz answered the question by stating they are notified via mail within twenty-one days and the denial person can provide more supporting material.

Ms. Fatterusso wanted to thank the Sun Van drivers who have gone the extra mile to make sure customers get to where they need to and dropped off safely. She also feels these drivers should get some kind of perk or a small token of appreciation for their helpfulness.

Ms. Saiz replied to Ms. Fatterusso stating the way we document our complaints is the same way we do our compliments which happens through the 311 Department. In fact, it just happened two weeks ago where a driver received the ONE Albuquerque award for going the extra mile.

Mr. Gonzales then asked what is the average phone time or wait time when calling Customer Service?

Ms. Saiz answered saying it depends on when you're calling, it's a big misconception with people that you have to call at eight o'clock in the morning to get the best times. We do have less staff on the weekend, it can get heavy depending when you call, and there is a weekend supervisor to assist the employees. "We have a shortage in the city right now, we're short customer service reps, dispatchers, and drivers," she said.

MOTION: Ms. Smith moved to have the meeting adjourned, there was a second, and approved. Motion approved unanimously, 6-0.

Meeting adjourned at 11:34 am.

Next meeting: 10:30 am, May 21, 2019, at the ATC.

Meeting minutes are written with strength and honor by:
Ernest Apodaca
ABQ Ride, Administrative Assistant