

City of Albuquerque  
**Advisory Committee for Transit of the Mobility Impaired (para-transit)**  
December 14, 2010 – Minutes

**PAB Members Attending:** Tracy Agiovlasis (Chairman), Mike D’Arco, Jayne Frandsen, Judy Moore and Bill Richardson (TAB Liaison)   **Absent:** Olimpia Castillo (excused)

**Transit Staff Attending:** Danny Holcomb, Bruce Rizzieri

**Guests Attending:** Ellen Nolan, Joe Sorenson, Diana Marquez and Donald Good

Tracy A, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:44 am. Roll call noted above. Mike D moved to approve the agenda, Judy M seconded & all approved. Mike D moved to approve the November 2010 minutes, Judy M seconded & all approved.

**Public Comments: (2-minute limit) –**

1. Diana M – commented that the CSR (Customer Service Representatives) are asking her what she will be doing at her destination and feels this is inappropriate. She asks why they ask this personal information. Danny H stated that they want to obtain information to indicate which door or side of a building to arrive at, but they should not be asking what the rider is doing. Bruce R asked for the CSR’s name and Danny H will follow through on talking with that person.

**ABQ Ride Performance Metrics:** Danny H provided these statistics and offered to provide any others this committee needs in the future. For November 2010 in comparison to 2009:

<b>Statistics</b>	<b>Yr 2010</b>	<b>Yr 2009</b>
Reservations Made	23,095	20,541
Placements (all rides provided)	320	0
Cancellations	5,114	4,000
No Shows	453	419
Number passengers	17,239	16,053
Number companions or attendants	2,075	1,475
Percentage of Subscriptions	42.7 %	30.4%
Percentage of On Time Performance	86.4%	79.9%

Bill R asked for statistics on the complaints from riders and a breakdown of what type they are as we have been given in the past. Danny H said he will provide that in January and welcomes other feedback. Tracy A asked that we be provided the number of rides scheduled within 15 minutes, 30 minutes, 45 minutes and 1 hour from the requested time as promised. Tracy A added that last month Annette P reported that all rides were scheduled within 15-30 minutes of the time requested, but she is personally aware of several scheduled close to an hour from the requested time. She also described a situation that allowed a rider to be at their destination for only about 45 minutes versus the 2 hours desired, due to scheduling difficulties getting to and back from that destination. Tracy A stated that while ABQ Ride is within the Federal regulations, providing rides within an hour from the requested time or offering a “Placement” that falls outside that requested time, SunVan service is not reasonably friendly to riders needs. Bruce R stated that in regard to the specific example given by Tracy A, the fixed-route bus ended on that particular route earlier than the rider

using SunVan service requested, so even if he relied on the fixed-route bus, he would not be able to stay past the last bus run.

### **SunVan Rider Satisfaction:**

- **Complaints:** Danny H noted that they would no longer use TCD numbers for complaints; they are switching to PeopleSoft software in which a CSR can enter complaint information directly into the database. This is the same software used by 311 so it will be compatible and no longer require ABQ Ride staff to re-enter 311 information into their different database. When asked, Danny H said the advantages are not only in streamlined information input, but also complaints will get to the appropriate supervisor staff faster to be addressed. Plus a feature will be that if a supervisor has not entered the action in response (using a drop down menu in the program) after approximately a week he will automatically get a notice that it has not been attended to. He will follow up with the supervisor to attend to the issue and if it is still not attended to after another period of time, an automatic notice will be send to Bruce R. Tracy A asked if the supervisor responsible for a particular issue will call the rider back about the issue and Danny H assured us that when it is specified in the complaint that a call back will be placed.
- **Silent Rider project completed:** Danny H noted that Delta Services Group have completed the quality review for SunVan using silent riders during August and October of this year. While ABQ Ride does a review of the fixed-route every year, this is the first time it was done for SunVan and the results are in. Danny H will arrange for David Rishel from Delta to give a presentation at the January 2011 meeting of their findings. Tracy A will allow ample time for this presentation at that meeting.

**Adjacent taxi and Senior Affairs van service to provide needed SunVan rides:** Tracy A noted that at the beginning of 2010 Bruce R proposed utilizing Senior Affairs vans to supplement SunVan service when needed and asked for an update on the progress of a plan. Bruce R stated that DSA (Department of Senior Affairs) physically moved their office, which delayed discussions, but there has been some progress. They had clarified that Federal funding for DSA includes stipulation that as long as they fulfill their primary purpose, which is to transport seniors, they can offer excess seats to ABQ Ride for any SunVan certified rider. Another issue noted in the past was that training for DSA drivers must meet SunVan regulations. Bruce R stated that they are working to have universal training provided for both ABQ Ride and DSA by Rio Metro that would cover all bases needed. Insurance and equitable cost sharing are also issues to iron out. Judy M ask for clarification that seniors would not be charged a fee other than that paid to a Senior Center (as is currently the practice) and SunVan riders would be charged. Bruce R stated this would be the case and will be discussed as they move forward.

In regard to taxi's being used for riders who are ambulatory when supplemental rides are needed. Bruce R stated that David Rishel from Delta Services Group discussed this option with him, as they are a major assessment group for mass transit services across the country. Beyond the issues noted above such as training, there is also requirement of drug and alcohol testing required by ABQ Ride but maybe not for taxi drivers. David R told Bruce R that in small communities they are sometimes the sole provider of public transportation and so cabs are used appropriately. In larger communities, they are sometimes used during peak ride times, but the demand for use must be large enough to make it feasible as often there is a minimum amount of use that taxi services require. In this case, they would be charged a minimum amount whether cabs were used or not. Tracy A asked if a contract could be

negotiated without a minimum requirement and Bruce R said he could check should they proceed with this idea. Danny H added that in his recent para-transit ADA training conference in Louisville KY that did not find any city across the country that used taxis to supplement services.

Tracy A asked if they would still consider other entities to supplement para-transit rides needed as the number of certified riders continues to climb regularly, such as Jewish Family Services vans that Bruce R had proposed in the past. Bruce R stated that he would like to focus on DSA first, making a successful project before adding other entities, but is open in the future.

**Policy & Procedure Manual – Appeals Process:** Tracy A noted that this committee had been asking for an updated manual from the last one done in 2008 for almost 2 years and asked first asked for progress regarding the appeals process this committee is responsible for each month. Danny H stated that it was suggested at the conference he attended that the appeals committee be separate from the advisory committee. Tracy A asked if that was the direction desired, then let this committee know since Judy M and she will begin the process for changing the wording in the City Ordinance early next year and that directive can be removed. Tracy A also added that while this committee brings nursing, special education and personal disability expertise to the process, it is fine to create an appeals committee separately but asks it include persons with appropriate expertise.

**Policy & Procedure Manual – General Processes:** Bruce R stated the first priority is to revamp the application and retrain staff in the certification practice. He added that ABQ Ride has the most liberal eligibility in regard to ADA than most others in mass para-transit. Bruce R stated that most cities do a functionality live test, taking an applicant on an actual fixed ride route, and are also doing similar full re-assessments on current certified riders. Tracy A noted that in February 2010 Annette P had reported that the Dallas Area Rapid Transit service had taken 2 years in planning and 3 years in re-assessment of certified riders in a comparable manner, reducing the number of certified riders from 17,000 to 6,000. Danny H stated he is using Miami Dade and Portland Oregon applications to assist in redesigning ours since they seem to be the best of all he has reviewed. In regard to the retraining in the certification process, they have many of the needed real life tests right in the ATC (Alvarado Transportation Center) for functional testing. He admitted that the process currently is not asking questions, but explaining how to use SunVan. Bruce R stated that by the February 2011 meeting they will present an outline of the process and a working draft of a new application and certification process, then they will look at appeals. Danny H added that there may be less appeals in the application process is good enough. Bill R asked that they provide comprehensive training in this process.

**ADA Training for staff and this committee:** Tracy A noted that at the last meeting, this committee requested Danny H provide specific ADA training to staff he received at the conference he attended, especially Bianca C who is a key person in the current certification process. Danny H said this has not been done yet. Tracy A asked if training will be provided to current staff involved during this time before the new process is in place. She added that she also forwarded information on a free Webinar to be held today suggesting that Bianca C could participate in it at no added cost to ABQ Ride. Danny H stated that it is necessary for staff to show initiative and if Bianca C had requested to participate, they would have arranged for it in her schedule. He added that the Webinar speaker was Russell Thatcher, one of the trainers at his recent conference. There was no official training plan given by staff for the interim time between now and the new process.

Tracy A noted that in the manuals she and Judy M assembled for our committee members has ADA information for para-transit systems, but asked if Danny H could provide updates for us from his recent training. He stated he would be happy to share information at the January meeting as time allows.

**Spring Newsletter / Next Newsletter:** Since the October 2010 meeting Tracy A has reminded staff that the website still had “Spring SunVan Newsletter coming soon” and Bruce stated he would get it posted. Tracy A admitted the last time she checked was just over a week ago, it was still not posted, and while it was mailed in July 2010 some of the information is useful for those who have web access. Again, Bruce R said he would follow up and added that the target date for the next one will be March 2011. Mike D reminded them that while the information on how to request the newsletter in any format was on the middle page of the last one, the overall para-transit website address was not listed anywhere. He asked that not only the website address be listed but that the notice of asking for an alternate format be prominent on the front page. Danny H stated that only 2 emails were received at the email address set up and listed in the last newsletter to request other formats.

**Report from TAB (Transit Citizens Advisory Board):** Bill R stated that they note fixed-route buses continuously are overloaded and rides, often wheelchair users, are not picked up due to the bus being too full. Danny H noted that the federal rules state a driver can ask a passenger to move seats to allow for wheelchair space, but they cannot demand it so if a passenger does not move and there is no other wheelchair space, there is not anything they can do. Bruce R stated that Route 5 has been notoriously overloaded and the plan to help relieve that problem, having buses at stops every 20 minutes versus every 25 minutes, will occur the end of January 2011. He welcomes feedback from the community on routes with high demands so they can adjust scheduled appropriately.

Bill R noted they do not have an official meeting planned for this month, but the TAB members plan to tour the Daytona station together. In January 2011, they plan to narrow their focus to compliment the current active members.

**New Business &/or January 2011 agenda:** Tracy A reiterated that they will allow ample time for the report on the quality review by Delta, with some time for questions at the January meeting. Thanks to all the community members who attended. Thanks to the committee members and staff for attention to improving para-transit service in the Albuquerque area.

**Adjournment:** Tracy A adjourned the meeting at 11:49 am. **The next meeting will be held Tuesday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010 (the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday) here at ATC from 10:30 am to 12 pm.** The public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

*(Approved January 11, 2011 by committee quorum)*