**City of Albuquerque**

**Advisory Committee on Transit for the Mobility Impaired**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, May 21, 2013**

**Call to Order, Roll Call and Introduction by Mike D’Arco.**

Committee Members present: Jayne Frandsen, Douglas Miller, Rene Mullen, Mike D’Arco, Joe Yake, Jim Copeland, Darlene Fattorusso, Lorna Cross, John Standish, and Tonia Trapp. Bill Richardson, liaison from the Transit Committee, was also present. Danny Gonzales, Amanda Trujillo, and Richard Weiner represented the Albuquerque Transit Department. Mike D’Arco chaired the meeting until after elections were conducted.

**Approval of Agenda and Past Minutes**: A motion was made by Joe Yake and seconded by Rene Mullen to approve the agenda. Motion passed. Approval of past minutes for April 23, 2013: A motion was made by Tonia Trapp and seconded by Joe Yake to approve the April minutes. Motion passed.

**Public Comments:**

1. Joe Sorinson commented that he is glad to see that the IVR service is now up and running and working well.
2. Margie commented that her mother had used Sun Van for about a year and a half, and the service was very helpful to her.
3. Norma asked if there are options available to potential paratransit passengers who cannot afford to pay the two dollars per trip, and she asked what kind of input the senior services department is providing regarding paratransit service.
	1. Transit staff responded that there is no provision for indigent passengers who cannot pay for the trips, and to their knowledge, no input is being given from the senior service department about paratransit services. Margie inquired about the role of this committee, which was explained to her.
4. Holly Ridgway commented that one of the customer service representatives named Mike is especially helpful. She also requested and received clarification that when people who have unpredictable illnesses receive a no-show as a result of the illness, that person should contact either Danny Gonzales or Rebecca Torres to discuss the matter; these matters will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

ABQ Ride Performance Metrics: Danny Gonzales gave the report for the Transit Department for the month of April. The rate of cancellations was 25.7%, and no-shows were at 7.3%. Subscriptions are at 34% of the total rides. The on-time rate was 79.3%. 975 calls were made to 311, and the Transit Department is still working on breaking down those numbers into categories of calls that they can share with this committee.

Other Business: Richard Weiner of Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates is serving as a consultant to the Transit Department. He has many years of experience with ADA transit planning, and he has been hired by the city to examine the eligibility process for the paratransit service. Mr. Weiner reported the following: There has been a 4% increase in ridership over the last year, and a steep increase of 65% of registrations for the service over the last five years. The quality of assessments currently being done for paratransit eligibility in Albuquerque is not good. Almost everyone who applies is made eligible, whereas the typical rate of denial of eligibility is approximately 5%. It is estimated that approximately 20-30% of our paratransit writers can use the fixed-Route at least some of the time, which means they could be made conditionally eligible for the paratransit service. The overall goal in changing the eligibility process would be to make the process more accurate, equitable, and sustainable. This committee overturns almost all denials of eligibility, whereas normally an appeals committee would overturn only 20-40% of denials. Revisions need to be made to the paratransit website, application form, and denial letters. Mr. D’Arco commented that most likely, this committee would overturn fewer appeals if the city had a better application and eligibility process. Mr. Weiner also commented that having an appeals committee consisting of 10 people is intimidating for the appellants, and Mr. D’Arco responded that this is the first time in many years that we have had a full committee, or anything close to that, at one of these meetings. Mr. Weiner suggested that the committee could consider appointing a much smaller subcommittee to handle the appeals. He is also recommending that a different recertification process be developed. He closed by saying that he is not advocating for more approvals or more of denials of paratransit service, but he is advocating for a more accurate and equitable eligibility process, which would enable the city to provide better paratransit services overall. The city is seeking input from various community groups regarding possible future changes to the paratransit eligibility process.

**Elections**: Elections were held, with the following results: Rene Mullen, Chair; Jane Frandsen, Vice Chair; Tonia Trapp, Secretary. All three officers were elected by acclimation.

Newly-elected Chair, Rene Mullen, conducted the rest of the meeting.

Ms. Fattorusso asked if there is a way that we could recognize Transit Department employees, such as customer service representatives and drivers, who have been especially helpful to the passengers. Mr. Gonzales responded that they choose an employee of the month, so it was discussed that perhaps an option could be added to the website that would allow the public to nominate staff for this award.

Mr. Gonzales announced that his last day with the Transit Department will be May 31, as he is retiring. We congratulated him and thanked him for all of his assistants, and we asked him who will replace him as the Transit Department representative to report to our committee. Mr. Gonzales stated that the temporary representative will be Annette Paez.

**Next committee**

Next meeting will occur on Tuesday, June 18, 2013 at 10:30 AM.

**Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 11:37 AM; motion by Rene Mullen, second by Tonia Trapp.

Tonia Trapp, Secretary

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