

**JATRAM HANDILIFT
Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2013**

This meeting was originally planned to occur on November 20th, but was rescheduled due to meeting space conflicts. It was held at the Community Room at the Arts Center of Mississippi, 201 East Pascagoula Street. Attending today's session were: Rev. Sam Gleese (City of Jackson ADA Coordinator); Mr. Carl Allen (Deputy Director, City of Jackson Office of Planning and Development); Ms. Lee Cole (ADA Council Chairperson); Ms. Ollie Lester (Addie McBryde Rehab Center for the Blind); Dr. Scott Crawford (Handilift Committee Chairperson); Ms. Jean McKinney; Mr. Elvin Tobin (New JATRAM General Manager); Mr. Willie Cook; Ms. Janice Yancey (MDOT Public Transit Division); and Ms. Jill Brewer, the new City of Jackson Manager of Transit Services Division.

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Lester read the minutes from the September 18th, 2013 meeting. There were no corrections and the minutes were adopted by acclamation.

Introduction of New Manager of the City's Transit Services Division:

- I. Ms. Brewer introduced herself to the Committee. She formerly worked for the City of Jackson Transit Services Division, but spent the past few years at Jackson State University in Government Training and Technical Assistance. She said she also has experience managing community transit in southeast Mississippi.

ADA Coordinator Update:

- II. Reverend Gleese said that he contacted both Veterans' Taxicab as well as the Jackson Municipal Airport Authority in hopes of securing accessible transportation to and from Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport. According to Reverend Gleese, the manager of Veterans' said he would pay for the monthly pass for an accessible taxi to serve the airport. However, it will be important for customers to call **in advance** for a ride. Ms. Cole said that this might remain unaffordable for some, as it could cost upwards of \$60 for a one-way trip. She also expressed concern that there remains only **one** accessible taxicab provider in the whole city. The Chair said he thought the best (most reliable/affordable) solution would be having Handilift serve the airport. Rev. Gleese said he would follow up with JMAA staff.

Old Business:

- III. Ms. Cole said that she thought the four-year recertification process was unnecessarily burdensome, in that it requires visiting a health care professional to fill out forms, even if the disability is deemed "permanent". Crawford expressed the opinion that recertification for people with permanent disabilities might be streamlined (without a medical form but including confirmation that the person still lived in Jackson and had the same address/contact information). Mr. Tobin said he thought there should be a more thorough recertification process to prevent people from abusing the system, adding that he believes some may have temporary disabilities but claim permanent status. Added expense of seeing a doctor was Ms. Lester's primary concern with a complete recertification. Mr. Allen asked if there were federal requirements for a "complete" recertification that included repeating medical examinations, or if

an abbreviated process was permissible. Ms. Yancey of MDOT said she would look up the answer and bring it before the committee next time.

New Business:

- IV. Ms. McKinney filed a complaint with JATTRAN alleging that a Route #12 bus left her on Tuesday, November 5th, at the Kroger Shopping Center on I-55 Frontage Road. She said that she just received a written investigative report by General Manager Tobin and was satisfied with the result. Ms. McKinney added that this happened before in March of 2013. Mr. Tobin said he is in the process of retraining his operators, counseling them to stop whenever they see someone in a wheelchair or other disability (e.g., carrying a red-tipped cane) waiting on the roadside facing traffic. Additionally, more signs will be placed to remove any doubts about bus stop locations. It may take some time to get full compliance because various bus operators have been trained by different management companies and therefore, know different rules.
- V. Ms. McKinney raised concerns about the number of trip denials, especially on Saturday mornings. Crawford asked Mr. Tobin if he had the most recent data. Tobin said he was “uncomfortable” with the data, adding that he questioned its accuracy. However, he believes that recent retraining of staff on the RouteMatch software will help reduce or eliminate trip denials by more efficiently deploying the buses.
- VI. Ms. Cole said that she was hearing complaints from other riders who allegedly leave scheduling messages and later find they were not added to the roster. Mr. Tobin encouraged Ms. Cole to have them contact him or Ms. Hibbler and report these incidents as soon as possible. Crawford agreed, stating that it is up to the Handilift ridership to report problems to the right people (JATTRAN administration) in a timely manner.
- VII. Ms. Cole inquired about whether or not the four new paratransit buses recently delivered were on the street. Mr. Tobin said not yet, but questioned his maintenance staff about it and will place them on the road soon. Crawford indicated that these buses may be easier to use, because of their stow away seating, leaving more room for the operators to secure client’s wheelchairs.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.

These Minutes were written by Dr. Scott Crawford and approved at the January 2014 meeting.