

JATRAM HANDILIFT Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

September 18th, 2013

The meeting was held at the fifth floor conference room of the Hood Building, 200 South President Street. Attending today's meeting 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); Ms. Jerri Walton, Dr. Scott Crawford (Handilift Committee Chairperson); Ms. Jean McKinney; Mr. Jason Bunch; Attorney Kay Hardage (Disability Rights Mississippi); Mr. Elvin Tobin (New JATRAM General Manager); Mr. Dewayne Cheatham (JATRAM Director of Operations); and Ms. Crystal Hibbler (New Manager of Paratransit Operations).

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Cheatham read both the May and July minutes, which were unanimously approved with one correction to a listed phone number.

Introduction of New JATRAM ADA Coordinator:

- I. Mr. Tobin introduced Ms. Crystal Hibbler who is replacing Ms. Swannie Wilson as Manager of Paratransit Operations. Ms. Hibbler will also serve as JATRAM's ADA Coordinator per the Consent Decree. Ms. Hibbler comes to JATRAM having worked in various other transportation jobs, including the school system and Logisticare MEDICAID transportation.

Old Business:

- II. The chair took the opportunity to reflect upon the substantial progress Handilift has made in recent years, including improved scheduling, better buses, maintenance, capacity, reliability, and bus operator knowledge/training.
- III. Dr. Crawford noted that one of the outstanding issues at the end of the formal monitoring period was the prediction of- and planning for future paratransit capacity needs. Russell Thatcher of TranSystems mentioned in his last monitoring report that he spoke to the city about such methods/procedures. Mr. Allen said that the delay in accomplishing this goal is hiring a new Director Transit Services Division at the City. He has a person in mind for the job, and that this will be worked on as soon as the position is filled.
- IV. Lee Cole asked about other items that remained outstanding in the last Monitoring Report. Crawford stated that his recollection was to increase paratransit "runs" as the need warrants. This led to a discussion of how much JATRAM has increased Handilift runs both during the week and on Saturdays. Mr. Cheatham said that Saturday's runs have doubled since the onset of the Consent Decree (to five), and Weekday runs have increased by three. Mr. Tobin said that he is receiving a

substantial number of new paratransit applications, so will be discussing future need with the City.

- V. Crawford said that he is observing better compliance with bus kneeling when needed, at least on Route #1.

New Business:

- VI. Since the last meeting, both Ms. Cole and Dr. Crawford reviewed the latest update of the Handilift Riders Guide. Crawford made mostly minor wording and formatting changes, and clarified that the stated hours of operation should reflect the earliest and last pickup time for that given day (to avoid confusion). Ms. Cole reflected that much of this editing work had been done in years past. ADA Coordinator Gleese said that the document was now ready to be sent to the City's Legal Department and then will be forwarded to the Department of Justice for approval. Ms. Cole reminded the Committee that this new riders guide should be released in alternate formats (Braille, Large Print, and Audio CD) for those that request them.
- VII. ADA Coordinator Gleese reported to the Committee about a meeting with the Mayor's Chief of Staff Dr. Safiya Omari, Department of Human and Cultural Services personnel, and members of this Committee, regarding ways of providing accessible and affordable transportation during the evenings and on Sunday's, when JATRAM is not in service. A number of options are available, and can be funded, in part, through New Freedom (5317) or Elderly/Disabled (5310) transportation grants. Using existing JATRAM buses/personnel, accessible taxis through subsidized vouchers, or a purchase of service contract through private providers are among the possibilities being considered. Reverend Gleese said he would inform the Committee of the next meeting, yet to be determined.

Open Discussion:

- VIII. Jerri Walton said that the Handilift bus that transported her had difficulty deploying its lift properly. The ramp extension that typically comes down when the ramp reaches the ground failed to deploy. Mr. Cheatham opined that it might have been because of uneven pavement, which is frequently the case.
- IX. Ms. McKinney said that she feels as though she is being dissuaded from requesting service during peak morning time hours, especially around eight o'clock. Mr. Tobin said that this should not be the case, but that the reservationist may have to negotiate a pickup time that is within one hour of the time requested.
- X. Crawford said that he helped with bus operator training yesterday and that it generally went well. They used an El Dorado EZ Rider II. He did request though that the seat belt systems on the fixed route buses be cleaned periodically, otherwise, soot gets on the customers clothing. Mr. Tobin said he has already

spoken to his maintenance personnel about the matter (last week) and would follow up.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:02pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 20th, 2013.