# AGENDA
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING

Tuesday, February 9, 2016
1:00pm – 3:00pm
Los Angeles County MTA
Union Station Conference Room, 3rd Floor
One Gateway Plaza,
729 Vignes Street, Los Angeles CA 90012

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ACCESS SERVICES DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY. ACCORDINGLY, ACCESS SERVICES SEeks TO ENSURE THAT INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WILL HAVE AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RANGE OF ACCESS SERVICES EVENTS AND PROGRAMS BY PROVIDING APPROPRIATE AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES TO FACILITATE COMMUNICATION. IN DETERMINING THE TYPE OF AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES FOR COMMUNICATION THAT WILL BE PROVIDED, PRIMARY CONSIDERATION IS GIVEN TO THE REQUEST OF THE INDIVIDUAL WITH DISABILITIES. HOWEVER, THE FINAL DECISION BELONGS TO ACCESS SERVICES. TO HELP ENSURE AVAILABILITY OF THOSE AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES YOU REQUIRE, PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO NOTIFY ACCESS SERVICES OF YOUR REQUEST AT LEAST THREE (3) BUSINESS DAYS (72 HOURS) PRIOR TO THE MEETING IN WHICH YOU WISH TO UTILIZE THOSE AIDS OR SERVICES. YOU MAY DO SO BY CONTACTING (213) 270-6000.

Note: Access Services Community Advisory (CAC) meetings are held pursuant to the Ralph M. Brown Act [Cal. Gov. Code §54950]
and are open to the public. The public may view and obtain all written information supporting this agenda provided to the board both initially and supplementally prior to the meeting at the agency’s offices located at 3449 Santa Anita Avenue, El Monte California and on its website at http://accessla.org. Documents, including Power Point handouts distributed to CAC by staff or CAC members at the meeting will simultaneously be made available to the public. Two opportunities are available for the public to address the CAC during a CAC meeting: (1) before a specific agendized item is debated and voted upon regarding that item and (2) general public comment. The exercise of the right to address the board is subject to restriction as to time and appropriate decorum. All persons wishing to make public comment must fill out a yellow Public Comment Form and submit it to the CAC secretary. Public comment is generally limited to three (3) minutes per speaker and the total time available for public comment may be limited at the discretion of the Chairperson. Persons whose speech is impaired such that they are unable to address the board at a normal rate of speed may request the accommodation of a limited amount of additional time from the Chair but only by checking the appropriate box on the Public Comment Form. Granting such an accommodation is in the discretion of the Chair.

The CAC will not and cannot respond during the meeting to matters raised under general public comment. Pursuant to provisions of the Brown Act governing these proceedings, no discussion or action may be taken on these matters unless they are listed on the agenda, or unless certain emergency or special circumstances exist. However, the CAC may direct staff to investigate and/or schedule certain matters for consideration at a future CAC Meeting.

"Alternative accessible formats available upon request."
CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Cohen called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL


CAC Members Absent: Tina Foafoa and Marie-France Francois.

Board Members Present: Theresa De Vera


Guests: Bill Zuke (Client), Cindy Soto (Cal Life Independence), Al Buck(QSS), Aisha McKinney (QSS), Rachael Goeman (QSS), Michael Sher (Access Rider), Shirley Pe (Global Paratransit), Beatriz Lara (MV Transportation), Trisha Avila (Mobility Management Partners), Chris Hernandez (Mobility Management Partners), Ms. Ortega (Intervention Job Coach), Wilma Ballew (Vice-Chair CCI LA Care), Frank Lucas (California Transit), Olivia Almalel (Access Rider) and Belinda Conrad (Access rider and QSS).
INTRODUCTIONS

Chairperson Cohen welcomed the members, staff and guests to the meeting and asked that everyone introduce themselves.

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF THE CAC MEETING MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 10, 2015

Motion: Member Lyons.
Second: Member Conrad.
Abstentions: None.

Minutes were approved.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Rachele Goeman made public comment by stating that she would like to discuss a couple of good and bad things. First, she stated that the Southern Region rides have improved in her area. Secondly, she stated that an Access driver drove down her street the wrong way and she has already filed a complaint. She also, asked if the drivers GPS shows what direction you’re driving. Ms. Goeman stated that a taxi driver took her harness handle and they shouldn’t have touched it.

Chairperson Cohen stated that Rogelio will respond back to her question.

Michael Sher made public comment by stating that he tried to make a reservation through the Southern Region and after pressing option three, the recording kept saying, due to high volume of calls our agents are currently busy, please try calling back again at a later time. He stated the Southern region computer systems are not reliable and that it’s very important to check the system to make sure there are no issues.

Chairperson Cohen stated that Rogelio Gomez will follow up with him.
Olivia Almalel made public comment by first, saying thank you for allowing her to use the Cedar Sinai address in place of the stand numbers, because the drivers were just lost and now they have more support. She stated that she gets picked up from the West Central Region and sometimes the trips are transferred between West and East regions. Ms. Almalel stated that she was told that the attribute didn’t go across the system correctly, and so when the vehicle showed up they sent a tiny taxi. Ms. Almalel stated that she told them her reservation shows she has a power chair with extended legs. She stated that they were good about re-booking a van, and the vehicle did show up at proper time. Ms. Almalel stated that she wants to know if this is an IT issue or just a lack of not looking at details between regions.

Chairperson Cohen stated that Rogelio will look into that and speak to her about it.

Board Member Theresa De Vera made public comment by stating Happy New Year to everyone. Ms. De Vera stated that she’s also a rider, and she filed a complaint against a driver a couple a months ago. She stated that the driver didn’t secure her properly on the last pick up. Ms. De Vera asked, when you file a complaint are they filed anonymously or are the drivers informed to who filed the complaint. Ms. De Vera stated that the driver was talking to dispatch and she over-heard the driver saying she didn’t want to pick her up.

Chairperson Cohen stated that Sherry Kelley will follow up and get back with her.

REPORT FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board Member Theresa De Vera stated at the last board meeting, if you were there was exciting, interesting and fun. She stated that Ms. Laura Brenton was awarded the Spirit of Excellent Validity award. Ms. De Vera stated that the most interesting part of the meeting was the Alta resources contract; the Board had many questions and agreed to table the item until all the questions are answered. Ms. De Vera stated that the Customer Service contract is on hold.
Chairperson Cohen thanked Ms. Theresa De Vera and introduced Mr. Eric Haack from Access Services to give his presentation on the Free Fare Program.

FREE FARE PROGRAM WORKING GROUP

Access Services Planner, Mr. Eric Haack gave a presentation that summarized the purpose of the Free Fare Program. He stated hopefully this presentation will lead to a discussion and the formation of a sub-committee to those who would be interesting in participating.

Mr. Eric Haack stated that the Free Fare Program began in 2002 with over 22 free fare partners in the program, and 17 of the participating agencies are reimbursed by Access for the rides provided to Access customers. He stated that the Access customers may ride fixed-route for free in Los Angeles County, with the use of their bright green Access ID card, by using Foothill Transit, Metro and Santa Monica Blue Bus, etc. Mr. Haack stated that the use of the free fare program does not affect a rider’s eligibility.

Mr. Eric Haack further stated that the purpose behind the Free Fare program was created to help stabilize the agencies cost by providing additional transportation options for eligible Access customers, and not having to rely exclusively on the paratransit system.

Mr. Eric Haack stated that there have been some concerns in the past associated with the misuse of the Free Fare Program, which introduced Access to enter into a contract with the Los Angeles Sherriff Department. He stated they are able to issue citations, make arrests and preform sting operations, if there seem to be incidents of misuse of Access cards. Mr. Haack asked if anyone had any questions.

Member Kurt Baldwin stated that Metrolink has brought up concerns, but they say we saw or bought up the story about a mother and daughter living on the Metrolink, and never quantified or proved the misuse of Free Fare or fraud. He further asked for clarification regarding where
these misconceptions come from.

Mr. Eric Haack stated that some of our partners have reported there have been issues with the selling of PCA cards, and when requested we would send out the Sherriff department to address the concern. He stated that the pie chart in his presentation shows the entire universe of the usage of Access and Free Fare services. Mr. Eric Haack also, stated that 40% of customers have no records of taking or using access services or free fare and 35% have used free fare only; the smaller 13% have used a mix of Access and Free Fare, as well as Access only.

Mr. Eric Haack stated that customer frequency for the use of free fare is based on Tap data, which shows the frequency usage of the Free Fare program, and that Access customers average about 2 to 2 ½ million free fare individual taps per month and approximately 32 million trips per year. He stated that the monthly free fare trip data speaks to which agency is providing trips, which Metro carries the largest amount of Access passengers. Mr. Eric Haack stated that almost 83% to 99% of all Free Fare trips were carried by nine agencies.

Mr. Eric Haack stated that Access and some of our Free Fare partners would like to meet to discuss the program with the CAC members, customers and advocates to discuss the short comings, and what we could do to improve the service. He stated that the meetings would determine if the program is doing what it promised, and would address the misuse/fraud concerns by creating a sub-committee to discuss the short comings and any improvements. Mr. Haack stated that New York has a per day cap in the number of trips a person would be able to use their Access card, which is four single trips per day. Mr. Haack concluded his presentation by stating the following would be considered for discussion and open for questions.

1- Reimbursement amount.
2- Concept of fraud and or misuse.
3- Concept of program changes.
Open to questions:

Member Jesse Padilla asked what you mean by short comings and how this would benefit the bus companies. He stated that the riders can be flexible in traveling, and the bus companies would get reimbursed more money.

Mr. Eric Haack stated that with the respect of short comings it really goes under the umbrella of the Free Fare program actually doing what it promised to do, by stabilizing Access’ cost. He stated that Access is a very expensive agency, and there are some who believe that providing additional options has managed to reduce paratransit demands.

Vice-Chair Conrad stated this was an issue quite a few years ago, and he’s not sure if it’s still happening. He stated that previously when an Access customer would go in for their renewal, they would be asked if they took the bus and if the customers’ response was yes, they would subsequently be granted restricted eligibility or denied use of Access. Mr. Conrad stated that his objection to this is if there is a change in the weather or the rider sprang their ankle, they would need Access. He further asked if this practice is still going on or has it been abandon?

Mr. Eric Haack stated that this question is specific to eligibility, and explained that generally eligibility is designed to determine those incidents where a person would be challenged in riding fixed route. Further, he stated that not knowing the specifics of that particular situation, he could not speak to this occurrence.

Member Phyllis Coto stated she would like to know what type of federal funding the 22 different paratransit providers get from the government, if any.

Mr. Eric Haack stated that all the public and bus agencies each get some federal and local money, and he asked Ms. Phyllis Coto do you mean generally or for their entire budget.
Member Phyllis Coto stated, yes like Culver City.

Mr. Haack stated that the funding is distributed through the regional funding agency which is Metro, and he couldn’t speak specifically. He stated that similar to Access, they each get a piece and there are very few that aren’t getting federal money.

Member Phyllis Coto asked do you have any idea of the average one ride per person $1, 2,3,4,5 dollars.

Mr. Haack stated that he does not know what the federal subsidy is, and asked one of our fix route partners to respond to that question.

Ms. Giovanna, Metro stated that there are different types of funding and it depends on how many trips are submitted; and that determines what type of funding they may receive. She stated that it’s really complicated, and involves a lot of numbers, and shared that she’s pretty sure it’s on Metro website.

Member Phyllis Coto stated that we need to have a big PR program to advance the cause of people using public transit, and put something in the mail regarding that to enhance ridership. Ms. Coto said thank you.

Member Liz Lyons stated that she travels with a friend who takes Metrolink once a week to Oceanside, and Amtrak to San Diego. She stated that not once have they been asked for their pass or ticket. Ms. Liz Lyons stated that she’s honest and asked how they can tell if they were in another county. She stated that they’re losing money for that reason. She further asked if Santa Monica is the Blue bus.

Mr. Eric Haack stated yes.

Member Liz Lyons stated that she didn’t know that she could use her pass to take that bus, and that she had already walked eight blocks, because she was unaware. She stated that the Sheriff department is doing a great and assisted her friend when traveling by bus.
Mr. Eric Haack stated that Metrolink has their own formula on how they track riders and samples are done on one train, and applied to others.

Member Liz Lyons stated it’s not fair.

Mr. Eric Haack stated that it’s how they do it and it’s okay with federal money.

Member Kurt Baldwin stated he would like to be on the sub-committee. He stated that he has two major areas of concern. One, he asked what are the fix route operators doing to make their systems more accessible to relieve the strain on Access Services. Mr. Baldwin stated that there was a presentation done a while back on Bus Stop survey, which should have been done a long time, and no one has any information about it. He stated that the bus stops around his Van Nuys and Lancaster offices are not accessible, and Lancaster has used the Article 8 funding to improve their roads. He further stated nothing is being done about the accessible path of travel by the sidewalk.

Member Kurt Baldwin asked what are the transit agencies going to do to make sure their system is more accessible to relieve the pressure on Access. Second, he stated transfers in the North County want to transfer from Palmdale, Lancaster and Santa Clarita, and he knows a lot of people use the Free Fare program as a way in being able to actually make that work, and those transfers do not work. Mr. Baldwin stated that if you’re rethinking Free Fare, and you know the people are using Metrolink, then how they will bridge the failure of Access Services in those transfers. He asked what Access is going to do to make sure people can actually get to different places in the county from North County.

Mr. Eric Haack stated that Kurt Baldwin is definitely hired for the sub-committee. He stated that you hit on one of the very critical issues associated with the Free Fare program. Mr. Haack stated that because of the size of those counties and trips, Metrolink coming from Lancaster, Palmdale, Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley areas into the basin and back will potentially be a significant impact on Access Services.
Chairperson Cohen stated the subcommittee has their work cut out for them.

Member Dina Garcia stated that she would like to be a sub-committee participant. She said that her concern is that Access stated that they have so many riders that they can’t accommodate. She stated that according to the numbers presented, that 75% of Access eligible riders do not take Access, and only 25% take Access only. Ms. Garcia stated that the numbers seem to be very low number, and if Access is so inundated then why are the numbers so low.

Mr. Eric Hack stated that some of the Access staff feels that the idea that only 25% of the Access eligible population are taking trips on Access, is due to a reflection of the success of the Free Fare program, and because we provided an additional options. He also stated that there are some customers who prefer or need to ride Access services, and that’s available for them, but for those customers that can choose another mode, then those are numbers that some staffs actually feels are very positive.

Ms. Dina Garica stated that she definitely feels that there is validity and uses her card once a month.

Member Terri Lantz stated that she’s going to echo both Kurt Baldwin and Dina Garcia, because she’s totally in agreement with them, and she doesn’t want to repeat what they said. She stated that she would like to add that many riders can’t ride a bus or train without someone going with them. Ms. Lantz stated that there have been so many changes back and forth as to whether or not someone can ride the bus or train with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) for free, and she’s afraid that we have discourage some people from even trying. She also, said wants to add to Kurt Baldwin statement, and suggested that we somehow come up with a cheat sheet that states exactly what is free and what isn’t, so that people will know. Ms. Lantz stated that the information should be put on the Access, Metro and UCP website to encourage people and for clarity.
Member Lantz said that she would like to repeat Dina’s comments, as she thinks the data provided doesn’t make sense. She is sure people are counting properly and the scary part is, if all those eligible Access riders were taking Access, what would that mean. She further asked if all eligible customers used Access would Metro provide additional funds to cover the costs for Access.

Ms. Lantz stated that she is now a senior officially, and she had three strokes years ago. She said that there are a lot of other seniors out there that had things happened that change their ability to use a car or to take a bus. She afraid of what’s going to happen, and is very concerned about the quality of service that our Access riders deserve.

Mr. Haack stated that the PCA information is on the Access website which provides information regarding fare and free fare. He stated that he will get that information to the group, and also asked Ms. Lantz if she will join the sub-committee.

Ms. Terri Lantz stated that she would like to join the sub-committee.

Mr. Haack stated that there are some issues associated with the paradoxes to the Access eligible customers using the free fare, and Access has provided a very robust Travel Training program to introduce people to free fare and fixed route.

Member Maria Aroch stated she would like to serve on the subcommittee. She also, stated that a lot of time she takes the bus and they are not reliable. Ms. Aroch feels that the numbers provided in the presentation are inaccurate. She further said that maybe the information isn’t being sent to Access or something is missing. She stated that a lot of people in Glendale area use San Gabriel Transit.

Mr. Haack stated that if our information on Glendale is inaccurate, then it’s their fault. He stated that they would benefit if they were reimbursed for their trips.
Member Padilla asked how we could assure and educate customers about the Free Fare program so that they would understand that their eligibility would not be taken away. He stated he was afraid as well that he would lose his eligibility if he uses the bus.

Member Howard Payne asked if American Disabilities Act (ADA) covers having an aid with a disable person.

Mr. Eric Haack stated that ADA says a person with a disability can travel with a (PCA), and that person would ride for free on paratransit ADA complimentary service, which is Access. He stated that fixed route can charge a PCA for their services, and if they are not a participant of the Free Fare program they can charge.

Member Howard Payne interjected by stating that ADA doesn’t cover that particular item.

Mr. Haack confirmed.

Member Payne stated that seems to be the more important one.

Ms. Sherry Kelley stated that she would like to add some clarification in regards to the Metrolink fare check which was conducted a few years ago. She stated that she was on the Metrolink team and led the fare checks, which was a sampling and the first time it was done, after 20 years of Metrolink operation. She stated that there were CSR’s and Security Guards onboard trains to check fare, which is no longer being funded and speaks to why someone can ride without ever being checked. She stated that there are 35 plus Sheriffs who are assigned to the Metrolink contract with 200 plus trains weekdays and weekends, so you could literally ride all week and possibly see one officer.

Ms. Kelley stated that Metrolink is planning to charge the free fare customers beyond the LA County at some point in the near future, and they have not provided a date as to when that will be.
Ms. Lyons interjected you’re talking about Metrolink.

Ms. Kelley stated yes.

Ms. Lyons asked if the fare would apply when you go to Ocean Side.

Ms. Kelley stated yes, and at some point you would have to pay once you go beyond LA County over into another County.

Rachele Goeman stated that her biggest question is that, they want us to use the free fare as Kurt Baldwin said earlier. She stated that for us blind people, while we are at the big transit centers where you have to walk from point A to point B to get to the bus, none of them have braille or have large print. Ms. Goeman stated that, if Metro and Access wants the blind community to start using more free fare, then they need to make it so, we can do it. She stated that for right now it’s almost impossible if you have to transfer from bus A to bus B, when there’s no braille, large print or talking devices. Ms. Goeman stated that we have to ask people and not every blind person is as outspoken as herself, Aisha or Mike. She stated that some are very shy, and so they will miss the bus.

Michael Sher stated there is another issue that he has with other people riding the bus. He stated he used to live up North, and was told by a sighted person you do not know who will be riding on the bus with you.

Ms. Giovanna from Metro stated that there is a civil rights ADA compliance department at Metro. She stated that with the most recent audit, FTA basically; said that all sub-recipients need to have ADA oversight for their services, and that they have appointed Metro to be that oversight agency. She stated that Metro will be looking at the different agencies to make sure they are ADA compliant and they are in the process of making videos, providing ADA riders guide books to assist the riders.

Ms. Giovanna also stated that Metro is making a huge push to assure that the agencies are working with the disability community. She stated that
just to back up what Sherry Kelley said about Metrolink, that there is a two million dollar cap on the Free Fare rides and it’s hard to determine how many Access riders are traveling. Ms. Giovanna stated that Metro has established a sub-committee that’s working on how to determine how many Access riders are travelling on Metrolink, and other services by possibly using the Tap method to track the Access riders without charging them for a ticket. She stated that Metro does not charge for Access riders or the PCA’s.

Mr. Haack stated that he thinks there were some very good points made. He stated that he’s looking forward to working with the sub-committee, and welcomed them to meet with him after the meeting.

Chairperson Cohen stated that the sub-committee will be chaired by Vice-Chair Michael Conrad.

Ms. Kelley stated that we have a couple of questions, and would like to know what the actual time-frame is for the sub-committee follow-up.

Mr. Eric Haack stated that he will meet with each sub-committee participants individually.

Chairperson Cohen introduced Access Services Operator Administrative, Mr. Jack Garate to give an update on the Alternative Pickup Procedures.

ALTERNATIVE PICKUP PROCEDURES AT PATSAOURAS PLAZA

Mr. Jack Garate stated he would like to discuss the Alternative pickup procedures at Patsaouras Plaza (downstairs). He informed that this process would only apply to Access meetings with more than 10 or more Access riders in attendance.

Mr. Garate said that came about because staff noticed safety concerns with how we were conducting our loading procedures to take our customers home. He stated that those of us who attended the Dynamic Fare meeting, may have noticed that it was well-attended meeting, and
explained how the Access vehicles were lined up around the circular area down stairs. This incident caused the staff to become very concerned about our loading and unloading procedures which can be unsafe when the circular is crowded.

Mr. Garate stated that it was also noticed how the Access vehicles were causing some safety issues with other patrons entering the Patsaouras Plaza, and also causing some difficulties for the buses to maneuver safely. He stated that Access reached out to Metro in the month of August, and thanks to Giovanna, the Metro Operating and Security staff helped to coordinate meetings, which resulted into opening bus spaces 8 and 9 for our use. He stated that the vehicles would travel in the same directions as the Metro buses, and these spaces would be used fully for Access to load and unload within a certain time frame, fifteen minutes before the meeting ended and thirty minutes after the meeting. He stated that in the month of November, some of us experienced a situation with having to travel across Patsaouras path area into the bus area, and a test was done to get a feel of the safeness and to being able to assure a safe flow. Mr. Garate stated that Access staff was involved; the Road Safety Inspector, Operation Manager, Project Admin, Metro Operating staff and Security. Mr. Garate stated that the results of the test run were positive due to the coordination of Metro and Access. He further shared that when meetings occur at Metro, we would determine the number of trips and initiates this procedure when applicable to ensure passenger safety.

Mr. Jack Garate opened up to questions.

Ms. Sherry Kelley stated we will start with Terri Lantz.

Member Terri Lantz stated that she don’t know if the crowding incident was when she was stuck for two hours, but there was one meeting when she had to wait for an extended period of time. She asked Mr. Garate to provide the location of space 8 and 9.

Mr. Garate said yes, the incident occurred at the Public Hearing meeting when we noticed the vehicles were lined up in the red no stopping zone.
area. He stated that he failed to announce the location area for space 8 and 9 earlier. Mr. Jack Garate stated that once the process is activated, Access staff will be assigned to help the Access riders to the location and communicate with specific riders to let them know they will be assisted to the location. Mr. Garate asked Ms. Sherry Kelley, would it be okay to send out a map which will show the location of space 8 and 9, and will he will filter it out to the group.

Ms. Sherry Kelley stated that she approves sending out the maps.

Chairperson Cohen asked is the space is located diagonally across from the current pick up, and what is the furthest most point. He stated that, if you come into the driveway from the street, it would be located to the left, instead of going all the way around.

Mr. Jack Garate stated that the location is at the Southern East section of the Patsaouras Plaza, and that each rider will be assisted to the normal loading area. He stated that there will be someone available to assist those that need assistance across the street to the location.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 7

Ms. Liz Lyons stated that, if she’s not with the group and she’s traveling by herself, because she found that if she goes to Olivera Street around that area it’s easier to tell Metro and Access to pick up and drop off from there. Ms. Lyons asked would she go to the same place for pick up and stated no, I’m asking if I’m by myself, not if I’m going to a meeting.

Mr. Jack Garate stated that drop offs will not be affected, and the process will only apply to return trips at Access meetings with 10 or more involved. He stated that if you come randomly to visit Giovanna, we will not activate anything. Mr. Jack Garate stated for example; if Metro holds their own CAC meeting, that’s when we will not activate the meeting, it’s only for Access meetings.

Ms. Liz Lyons asked if the area is located by the Vegas bus.
Mr. Jack Garate stated that you are right about the location.

Vice-Chair Conrad stated that he has two things to talk about. He stated first, he wants to make sure that Western knows to pick up from the same location, because he goes to a lot of Metro meetings, and he wants to make sure that all the drivers and providers know to pick up at the old regular place, and not go to the wrong area. He stated that the next thing he wants to talk about is the last time we did the alternative pick up program; he noticed that it’s a lot further to walk. Vice-Chair Conrad stated that we have a lot of the people here who have problem walking, and have made complaints about it. He stated that he wants to know what we can do about it.

Mr. Jack Garate stated that in regards to the trips, and on those days that we activate the alternative drop off, we are going to bring signage for the drivers coming up the ramp from the street to know that they have to make a left. He stated that we will have people staged to help the drivers get to bus spaces 8 and 9. He said that all other pick-ups and drop-offs will remain the same.

Vice-Chair Conrad stated that he’s worried about the individual driver who is used to picking up at the Access meeting that they may automatically go to that place, and he wants to make sure that its gets down to the driver to pick them up at the regular spot when they go to the Metro meetings. Mr. Conrad stated that he wants to make sure that the staff and drivers will be patient with the riders who walk a lot slower.

Mr. Jack Garate stated that in regards to the walking, we did take that into consideration, and we are looking into the bus space right across from Patsarous where we normally load, and unfortunately there’s too much traffic happening in that area. He stated that, please remember this was bought up due to safety concerns, and that’s why we decided to go with bus spaces 8 and 9. He further stated that the good thing is, there are seating areas for those who have to wait without having to stand. He said we will provide assistance to those who need help walking to the location.
Member Phyllis Coto asked if the MTA building has underground parking, and would it be feasible to pick from over there.

Mr. Garate stated that yes, MTA does have underground parking, and we would not be able to park underground, because some of our vehicle cannot fit inside that area.

Ms. Lantz stated that if we went out the doors and veered to our left after coming down the ramp, could we stay on the side walk to get to where you’re talking about. She also, stated that she’s not trying to be difficult, but we have people who come from UPC to these meetings that have a very difficult time driving their chairs and they don’t cross streets.

Mr. Garate stated that no, you would go the same direction that you normally would take, and once the meeting is activated, he will make sure that our Access staff will be available. He stated that he would assign someone to those who need assistance before and after the meeting.

Member Michael Gordon stated that he thinks the loading area is really small for this Union station, and the area in front of the Headquarters that used to be opened, is now roped off.

Mr. Garate stated that he understands, and that is why we took these measures to find a more safe secured location for us to perform the loading of the trips, and to make sure all would be safely loaded.

Ms. Goeman asked if there is any grass, bushes and gravel located where they are doing this. She stated that they have dogs, and will be going a very long way. Ms. Goeman stated that they need to be able to leave before they get into the vehicle. She stated that there are trees, bushes and a dirt path on the other side where they were being picked up, and she wants to know if there is anything like that near spaces 8 and 9.

Mr. Jack Garate stated that he knows that there are trees and he doesn’t know how accessible that would be. He stated that in regards to your
service animal having to do that, you would still have to pass all the trees that you normally would, and currently there aren’t any trees in the section where the loading would take place.

Chairperson Cohen thanked Jack Garate.

Chairperson Cohen stated that every time for the past year, he would introduce Alfredo Torales by saying that he had the most thankless job at Access, and tonight he can now say he has the most thankful job at Access.

Mr. Alfredo Torales thanked the Chair and the members of the Committee. He stated that he’s going to give an update on the Regional Paratransit Fare issue, and stated we all know already, that the fare didn’t change on January 1st, and that’s exciting.

Mr. Torales stated that he would like to recap the issue. He stated that over the last couple of years Access and several of our member agencies had received FTA findings that some paratransit trips in Los Angeles County were being charged more than twice the fixed route fare, and Access had until January 1, 2016 to ensure compliance.

Mr. Torales stated that on December 4, 2015, Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act became law, and that law included an amendment that allowed Access to keep its current coordinated fare structure.

Mr. Torales stated that early last year we were told that we had to comply and do two things. He stated that first, we had to develop and implement a new fare system that would be in compliant with the regulation; second, implement a program visible to the legislation and regulatory change. Mr. Torales stated that in terms of the first goal we are on track in doing that and our Member agency approved a fare system that was going to start on January 1st, and we are on track with that as well.

Mr. Torales stated that the Board in August 2015 and the Membership in October 2015 approved the motion, stating in the event legislative of
regulatory changes enacted before January 1, 2016 would allow for continuance of the current Access Coordinated Fare system, and the Dynamic Fare proposal would not be implemented. He stated that on October 22, 2015 the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved a bill which included an amendment on coordinated paratransit fares. On November 5, 2015, the House approved a long-term transportation bill, which included an amendment on the Coordinated Paratransit fares. He stated that as you know from your high school government classes, it’s the House, Senate and the President who signs the bill.

Mr. Torales stated that the Amendment on Paratransit Fare System read as following: He stated that Notwithstanding the provisions of section 37.131© of Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations, and any paratransit system currently coordination complementary paratransit system if you have 40 or more fixed route member agencies, which would apply to Access Services, and that means we could keep our fare system. Mr. Torales stated that this is what passed through the House. He said that he learned a lot about how congress works, and presented an illustration of how a bill starts and has to find its way through a maze, facing many challenges to finally reach the finish line.

Chairperson Cohen stated that he would like to thank Access staff, each and every one of you. He said that someone told him three years ago that this would never happen, and it did.

Mr. Torales stated that they started a sub-committee outreach to get the word out, and now everyone can keep our simple two-tier coordinated system, one that’s easy.

Chairperson Cohen asked Mr. Torales, how many other agencies have forty or more agencies.

Mr. Alfredo Torales stated that we are it.

Member Kurt Baldwin asked if this is going to be written into the
regulation, or is this just tied to a five year bill.

Mr. Torales stated that he would have to find out.

Member Coto stated for example; let’s say that MTA raises its fare next year, would the free fare ridership go up?

Mr. Torales stated that this has nothing to do with free fares, just Access fares.

Member Coto stated to Mr. Torales, you said if MTA chooses to increase their fare.

Mr. Alfredo Torales stated that if they would raise their fare down the line, then that would be the only time Access could consider changing its fare.

Chairperson Cohen stated that bottom line we don’t know the answer yet.

Ms. Giovanna stated that Metro changed their fare last year, and so they aren’t looking to do that again soon and she would let us know.

Member Lantz asked would you research Kurt’s question and get back to us, and to add on to Kurt’s question; what we all could do if anything to encourage that this is permanent, rather than a five year type of thing.

Mr. Torales thanked everyone for their feedback, supported comments and letters. He stated that a lot of this had to do with Congressional Representative Grace Napolitano; he continued to say that she served the San Gabriel Region, and helped push us through this whole process. Mr. Torales stated that he wants encourage everyone if you like, to Facebook or call Napolitano’s office to say thank you, because she played a major part through this whole issue.

Chairperson Cohen stated that historically, whenever we do a stand down in El Monte and Pomona, Grace Napolitano was right there and
she really looks out for her constituents, and we thank her.

Chairperson Cohen thanked Mr. Torales, and asked Ms. Lantz to give us a closing report on the sub-committee during her tenure, and then Vice-Chair Michael Conrad will take the new chair for the sub-committee.

Member Terri Lantz said Happy New Year. She stated that she personally wants to thank all the people who were on the committee, who showed up, and spoke at so many meetings; otherwise we wouldn’t probably have had things grow to the point where we could have pursued this as an option. Ms. Lantz stated that we all know who you are, and there were people who showed up meetings after meetings. She also, stated that she is so sure that Shelly and others were tired of all the points that were all raised, but it goes to prove what people can do when they get together on an issue and stick together. Ms. Lantz thanked all who did that, like the little train said; “I know I can”, and we did. She also, thanked the Access Staff, Sherry Kelley, Shelly Verrinder, Alfredo Torales, Andre Colaiace who she stated was incredible, and she knows that there were others.

Member Terri Lantz stated that the riders were touched by Access, the fact that not only did they listen, but they really put the money were the mouth is, and they went through this. She stated that we gained a lot of people supporting Access, and you’ll have us in your corner for other things that may come up. Ms. Lantz stated that on the Animal Service sub-committee, she wants to refer to Alfredo Torales and Michael Conrad to give a couple of punch lines as to where we are now on that sub-committee.

Mr. Alfredo Torales stated that Michael Conrad would need to speak on that topic.

Ms. Sherry Kelley stated that she knows that Mike Greenwood attended the last meeting and met with the sub-committee after the meeting. She also, stated that Mike Conrad could give us an update.
Vice-Chair Michael Conrad stated that basically, the meeting went well. He stated that there was some discussion on the tie downs for the dogs and that he’s not sure, because he doesn’t have a dog; but some of the handlers can tell you that there’s something wrong with the rings and that the leash will not go all the way through.

Ms. Rachele Goeman interjected by stating that the rings are not wide enough.

Vice-Chair Conrad stated that the rings aren’t wide enough and that is the only problem that we have. He stated that we no longer have handlers and service animals in the front of the sedan, and if there are two service dogs and handlers; they would ride in a van. Vice-Chair Conrad stated that what’s happening with the animal sub-committee and we are doing pretty well; other than the problem were having with the rings. He stated that once and awhile, still get comments about the cab drivers with the hair issue. Vice-chair Conrad stated that the cab drivers need to sometimes remember that they are obligated to take the service animals. He stated he would like to thank Mr. Michael Greenwood for all his help, and with that everything is going well.

Member Terri Lantz thanked Vice-Chair Conrad and Ms. Rachale Goeman both for being very instrumental in moving things forward and she really appreciates it.

Chairperson Cohen stated that the following members are on the sub-committee, and to see Co-Chair Michael Conrad if anyone else would like to be on the committee.

1- Kurt Baldwin
2- Jessie Padilla
3- Terri Lantz
4- Dina Garcia
5- Marie Aroch
6- Liz Lyons
Chairperson Cohen thanked everyone for their participation and asked Ms. Sherry Kelley to introduce the new asset to CAC.

Ms. Sherry Kelley said hello to everybody. She stated that as you know we last met in November and Ms. Araceli left us and went to Metrolink to take on a new role. Ms. Kelley stated that she came by to see us today and she is doing very well. She stated that we have a new addition to our team; Ms. Sharon Astier. She stated that Ms. Astier joined us as a temporary employee in Customer Service and is a full-time employee and a part of CAC team. She further stated that she will be her right hand for CAC; Ms. Kelley stated that she would like to welcome Ms. Astier.

Chairperson Cohen said thank you very much and stated that he would like to go around the table to see if anyone would like to share and stated that we are right on track to finish when should. Chairperson Cohen stated that we will start with Howard Payne.

Member Howard Payne stated that the yellow belt isn’t being offered by the drivers to person(s) in a power chair, and asked if there is a reason why this isn’t enforced. He stated that he thinks the yellow belt is important.

Ms. Sherry Kelley stated that Mr. Rogelio Gomez will follow up with him.

Member Padilla stated that he just wanted to say he’s thankful for the Free Fare Program, because the riders will have the flexibility to travel when they want to and not wait for next day. He stated that he’s really thankful. He personally thanked Mr. Alfredo Torales, because he will be coming to his center next week to give brief overview of Access.

Member Baldwin stated that he would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and he looks forward to serving on the sub-committee.

Member Terri Lantz stated that she wants to wish everybody also, a Happy New Year, and she also, is happy to serve again with everyone here. She stated that you may want to take a look at our state budget for the year, and hopefully those who are strong advocates may want to look
into some pretty significant issues involving people with developmental disability. Ms. Lantz stated that once again these issues weren’t resolved last year.

Board Member Theresa De Vera stated that she would like to thank all the CAC members that came out to speak on the outsourcing of the Customer Service. Ms. De Vera stated that she would like to encourage everybody to continue to speak to the Board, and she wants to make sure that she listens to everyone concerns

Member Michael Arrigo commented about the changes to the pickup area and expressed his concerns regarding it being further away. He disagrees with the changes. Mr. Arrigo said thank you and Happy New Year.

Member Garcia said Happy New Year and she’s looking forward to serving on the sub-committee.

Member Cardona stated that the Aquarium is providing free admission until the end of January.

Member Lantz stated that it’s free admission to all museums for seniors and people with disabilities. She suggested going to their website for more information.

Member Coto said Happy New Year. Ms. Coto stated that she got a new walker and she had a situation where her walker wouldn’t fit into the taxi’s trunk. She stated that the taxi driver had to unscrew the walker and she got a little nervous thinking the driver would break her new walker; and wouldn’t be able to secure it or not. Ms. Coto stated that the most recent driver cab was large enough to put the walker in the back of the cab. She stated that every time she calls Access, she informs them that she has a large walker and that was an issue. Ms. Coto stated that she had one more thing to share. She stated that a driver arrived to pick her up from an appointment and he didn’t want to stop closer to the curve and he was very nasty toward her, and said Thank you.
Ms. Sherry Kelley stated that she will have someone to follow-up with her.

Member Wendy Cabil stated that she attended the Access Annual Community meeting in Antelope Valley recently, and it was very nice. She stated that she was disappointed that it was such a low turnout compared to last year.

Ms. Cabil stated that however, she met Ms. Fayma Ishaq who helped with the presentation and she enjoyed what Mr. Steve Wrenn from Mobility had to say. She stated that Mr. Wrenn talked about improving the policy, and right now they’re going through some organizational changes.

Ms. Cabil stated that overall she wants to commend Ms. Laura who bought more clarity to how reservations are made. She stated that Ms. Laura discussed that the system went down on the day of the meeting, and that they had to do things manually. Ms. Cabil stated that she would like to give kudos to them for doing the best they could on that day.

Ms. Cabil further stated that she would like to share more about disabilities. She stated that she picked up some flyers from the Department of Social Services, and was happy to see they’re providing more awareness. She shared that the bottom of the flyer states “Not every Disability is Visible”. Ms. Cabil stated that she would like to encourage everyone to get on board and spread the word that we can we make a difference by coming together to help those with disability challenges.

Member Liz Lyons thanked Ms. Lantz. Ms. Lyons stated that you can bring in your old phones and she will provide the contact information as to where to send the phones. She stated that it’s for our Service Men, Women and their families. Ms. Lyons stated it’s just our way to say thank you for serving our Country.

Chairperson Cohen thanked Ms. Lyons and stated that last year Ms. Lyons bought in DVD’s and they’re enjoying her donations. He stated he wants to thank her again.
Member Maria Aroch said Happy New Year to everybody.

Ms. Kelley shared sad news of the passing of Jeff Lustgarten who worked as the Public Information Officer for Metrolink. She stated that he had addressed the CAC in the efforts to change their PCA cards. Ms. Kelley stated that Mr. Lustgarten committed suicide the day before Christmas and requested that everyone send good thoughts to his family.

Chairperson Cohen thanked Wendy Cabil for sharing her information and asked Vice-Chair Conrad to speak.

Vice-Chair Michael Conrad said Happy New Year and stated what a surprise that he has something to say. Mr. Conrad stated that he would like to paint a scenario; He stated that a rider gets into a shared ride vehicle, you pull up to the place and asked the driver what time is the next pick up; and let’s say its forty five minutes to wait. Mr. Conrad stated that’s unreasonable, and he wants to know what are the guidelines or rules. He stated that we need to set up something to state how long a person should wait inside a vehicle that’s not moving and waiting for someone else pick up time. Mr. Conrad asked if we could do anything about this problem, and he would like to talk to staff to see if they would come up with something. Mr. Conrad said thank you.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion: Member Padilla

Second: Member Lyons

The meeting was adjourned at 2:52 p
February 9, 2016

TO: ACCESS COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FROM: RYCHARDE MARTINDALE-ESSINGTON

RE: QSS APPOINTMENTS

ISSUE:

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is responsible for the annual and periodic appointment of members to the Quality Services Subcommittee (QSS). In April of 2015, the CAC ratified the last appointments to the QSS for the 2015-16 terms.

RECOMMENDATION:

At this time, the CAC is asked to approve the following list of twenty-one (21) applicants who have expressed a willingness to serve.

- Michael Arrigo;
- Kathleen Barajas;
- Gloria Broderick
- Al Buck;
- Myrna Cabanban;
- Wendy Cabil;
- Belinda Conrad;
- Michael Conrad;
- Tina Fofoa;
- Dina Garcia;
- Rachele Goeman;
- Ronald Harris;
- Roberta Hoffman;
• Pattie Hyland;
• Jan Johnson;
• Phyllis Koto;
• Liz Lyons;
• Carrie Madden;
• Aisha McKinney;
• Arturo Nevarez;
• Tonni Yi-Hemphill.

BACKGROUND:

The QSS is a standing subcommittee of the CAC, created in February of 2000. The QSS is tasked with advising the CAC and Access Services staff members on ways of ensuring quality control for the Access ADA Paratransit service. The QSS can:

- Hear and review customer and service provider issues that are presented to them;
- Prioritize those issues, formulate plans of action, and make recommendations to the CAC and Access Services staff members.

The QSS term is for one (1) year and begins in February 2016 and ends January 2017.

Three basic types of QSS membership can be approved by the CAC in any combination. Types of membership include:

1. One Access Paratransit rider from each existing service region appointed by the CAC;
2. One additional appointment from each existing service region appointed at the discretion of the CAC;
3. At least one member from the CAC appointed by the CAC.

All applicants wishing to apply for remaining seats can be voted on by the CAC throughout the year.
TO: ACCESS COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FROM: Mike Greenwood, Vice President, Operations & Safety

RE: Mass Notification System

ISSUE:
Staff will describe and demonstrate use of the Everbridge Mass Notification System to the CAC.

RECOMMENDATION:
Receive and file.

BACKGROUND:
In June 2014, Access contracted with Everbridge of Glendale, CA for mass notification and incident management services. Via a web portal, Access can send notifications to individuals or groups using various user group lists. Everbridge provides robust analytics, GIS targeting, flexible group management, and multiple options for contact data management. To date, Access has used Everbridge for communications to internal departments and contractors. In the future, Access could begin using Everbridge to communicate with riders via multiple formats including land-line telephone, cell phone, text message, and email. Messaging would be reserved for critical service alerts or information.
February 9, 2016

TO: ACCESS COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FROM: ALFREDO TORALES, SPECIAL PROJECTS ADMINISTRATOR

RE: TRANSPORTATION CONTRACT AMENDMENTS

ISSUE:

Staff is reviewing the transportation service contracts and considering amendments, if warranted.

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file.

BACKGROUND:

The operational environment for the transportation service providers has changed in recent years due to new laws, changes in regulations, and industry best practices. Accordingly, staff is reviewing the transportation service contracts and considering amendments, if warranted.