

**Arlington Transit Advisory Committee
Accessibility Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
January 18, 2022
5:00 p.m.**

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Attendees:

Members: Alexa Mavroidis, Laura MacNeil, Herschel Kanter

County Staff: William Jones, Andy Wexler

Public: Roseann Ashby, Joseph DePhillips

Introductions

Attendees introduced themselves. The October/November meeting minutes were approved.

Public Comments

Members of the public discussed the following topics:

- Diamond should provide call-out phone calls and text messages when vehicles arrive for pick-ups, similar to the automatic notifications Red Top provides. This is especially important for blind customers who may be at a different building entrance than the driver.
- Red Top service in the evening remains unreliable with long wait times.
- One attendee expressed concern that only one Subcommittee member was present during the public comment period. The other two members joined later in the meeting.

STAR FY 2022 Q2 Service Performance

County staff presented a summary of STAR operating statistics for October, November, and December 2021.

The Subcommittee noted that STAR trips were assigned almost equally between Diamond and Red Top. County staff explained that the Call Center did this intentionally to address COVID-related driver shortages at various times during the period. The Subcommittee also asked the County to research and report on the number of driver no-shows.

STAR Policy Changes for Fiscal Year 2023

Continuing the discussion from the October/November meeting, County staff presented a white paper summarizing its research on policies used by paratransit programs around the U.S. The County studied four peer agencies: three from metro areas of similar size that supplement their regions' ADA-designated paratransit providers, plus MetroAccess due to its role as the DC region's main paratransit provider.

The white paper covers the following policy areas:

- Reasonable Accommodations
- Will-Call Return Trips
- Where Is My Ride?
- Trip Service Times and Locations
- Passenger Assistance
- Pick-Up Window (for drivers and customers)
- Cancellation Advance Notice

Subcommittee members and County staff discussed the following topics during and after the presentation:

- The Subcommittee asked whether the peer agencies' no-strand policies apply to return trips that happen late at night after scheduled fixed-route service has ended. Staff reiterated that the peer agencies offer service only at times and locations served by fixed-route services, and that customers who wish to travel outside those times and locations must use other means to do so.
- The Subcommittee expressed concern over how drivers get in touch with customers during the designated pick-up windows. Staff will research the matter further.
- County staff reiterated that STAR treats late cancellation requests as no-shows.
- The Subcommittee asked whether peer agencies take disciplinary action against excessive on-time cancellations, noting that they want to prevent repeat-cancelling customers from abusing the system. Staff will research the matter further.
- The County will share the white paper and draft policy changes with the public via the TAC website, STAR website, rider alerts, e-blasts, and other methods. Public comments will be summarized and shared with the Subcommittee.

Other Business

Mr. Kanter will share the draft white paper with the Commission on Aging, on which he also serves.

Adjournment 6:19 PM

Next Meeting Date: March 8, 2022
5:00 pm
Virtual via Teams