

RTA Citizens Advisory Board (RTACAB)
Meeting Minutes
4/25/2022

Call to order:

- Jackie Forbes, Committee Chairperson, called to order the meeting of the RTA Citizens Advisory Board (RTACAB) at 10:03 AM on 4/25/2022

Attendees:

Voting Committee Members Present:

- Jackie Forbes, Chairperson
- Jodi Hefler, DuPage County
- Laura Saltzman, City of Chicago
- Wendie Garlich, Will County
- Joe Surdam, Lake County
- Ryan Peterson, McHenry County
- Sherrine Peyton, Suburban Cook
- Jon Paul Diipla, McHenry County
- David Ogunbode, City of Chicago
- Adam Kerman, Pace Citizen Advisory Committee

Non-Voting Members Present:

- Joe Albritton, CTA ADA Advisory Committee
- Jemal Powell, Pace Suburban ADA Advisory Committee
- Michael VanDekreke, Director, Mobility Services, RTA
- Rachel Arfa, Commissioner, MOPD

Other RTA/Service Board Staff Present:

- Doug Anderson, RTA
- Elsa Gutierrez, CTA
- Irma Gomez, CTA
- Sarah Blair, RTA
- Jessica Hector-Hsu, RTA
- Linnea Cummings, RTA
- Jeremy LaMarche, RTA
- Mark Koljack, RTA
- Tina F. Smith, RTA
- Peter Kersten, RTA
- Jim Ferneborg, Metra
- Sally Williams, Pace

Public Present:

- Jazmin Vega
- Michelle Lee

1. Introductions

- Jackie Forbes took roll call.

2. Reading and Approval of the October 2021 and January 2022

Minutes

- Meeting minutes were approved.
- Adam Kerman stated that his name was misspelled, and asked it be corrected in the meeting minutes.

3. Public Comment Requests

- Garland Armstrong made a request to make public comment.

4. Standing Reports

- **Chairperson**
 - Jackie Forbes provided a report.
 - Jackie Forbes is a participant in one of the working groups for the strategic plan.

- **Government Affairs**
 - Jeremy LeMarche, RTA, gave a report on recent funding.
 - President Biden signed into law the FY22 federal budget on March 15th.
 - The new annual spending bill paved the way for the FTA to release the federal formula apportionment tables for each of the 30 programs contained in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
 - The new apportionments represent an increase in federal formula funding for the larger Chicago urbanized area of about 40% over FY 2021 levels.
 - As we have done in past years, the RTA will need to sub-apportion some of the funding to other parts of the larger urbanized areas (this includes Northwest Indiana and Southeast Wisconsin) as well as to the Service Boards. RTA hopes to bring that item back their Board next month.
 - In Springfield, the Illinois General Assembly adjourned its Spring legislative session on April 9th by approving a budget for FY 2023, which begins July 1st.
 - The operational transit funding contained in the state budget is consistent with the previous fiscal year and importantly contains no state funding formula cuts. As a reminder, the state provides a 30% formula match to the total amount of revenue

the RTA sales tax brings in on an annual basis. Prior to 2021, this funding had been cut for several years, resulting in over \$100 million in lost transit funding over that time period.

- In addition to passing the annual budget, the General Assembly passed a large tax relief bill. You may have followed some of the coverage regarding a provision in that bill that included a delay in the implementation of an increase to the statewide motor fuel tax.
- This delay should have resulted in approximately \$12 million less in capital transit revenue for fiscal year 2023, however—the legislation included funding to replace the lost transit revenue so the delay should have no impact on transit funding overall.
- The state reimburses a portion of the Ride Free program but does not cover all of it.

5. Regional Strategic Plan Update

- Peter Kersten reported the following:
 - Currently, they are working on Regional Strategic plan and 10-year financial and capitol plan.
 - Plan Vision: “Safe, reliable, accessible public transportation that connections to people to opportunity, advances, equity, and combats climate change.”
 - Three principles: equity, stewardship, and committed to change
 - Outcomes:
 - Our transit system will be:

- Safe, accessible, reliable, and useful for riders
 - In a state of good repair
 - Financially stable
 - Our region will be:
 - Connected
 - Winning the fight against climate change
 - Thriving
- Working groups:
 - Stakeholder groups:
 - Transit service
 - Infrastructure investment
 - Financial responsibility
 - Technical groups
 - 10-year financial plan
 - Priority projects
- They will continue to give updates to the board as they continue to work on this through the summer.
- Adam Kerman would like to raise an issue of how public transit influences housing development. The south side of Chicago has seen massive reduction in population even though there is a good rail. He stated the best thing we can do is to say that housing should be built where people are within walking distance of transit. He realizes that housing is not in RTA's purview and there is not an equivalent of RTA for housing but the two go together. The Red Line South cannot lead to housing development because the area is very swampy. The focus should be on developing around Metra and areas that generally could benefit from population increase and housing. This would help to meet goals of the plan.

- Families
 - NE Illinois
 - The environment
 - For equity
 - Phase One: Transit is essential – ads have been placed on billboards and through transit. This phase will be two months. The timing of future phases is still to be determined.
 - Tina read the one-page ad.
 - Ads are displayed throughout the region on billboards (Dan Ryan, Tri-State, Stevenson, I-57, Bishop Ford, Eisenhower), at bus shelters and on select rail lines (UP-North and Metra Electric). The billboards will be seen by an estimate of nine million drivers over 4 weeks. There are digital ads displayed on social media and news channels. Language selection will be based on the primary language spoken by riders in that location.
 - Future phases of this campaign will present the challenges to the system and build support for solutions and strategic initiatives stemming from the regional transit strategic plan.
- **Federal Relief Funding Amounts and Spend-Down Briefing – Doug Anderson, RTA**
 - Doug Anderson provided a break down for CARES Act, CRRSAA and ARP Act. The share percentages are CTA (62%), Metra (30%), Pace (6%), ADA (1%), and RTA (1%). Doug noted that ADA Paratransit remains fully funded.
 - Service boards can draw the funds in any order they need to. As a regional, we have drawn \$1.21B of \$3.54B. Relief funding will get the region through 2025.

- Wendie Garlich asked if there is a time limit to spend the funding. Doug stated the ARP Act funding expires first.
- **2021 Mobility Services Programs Performance Statistics, Mark Koljack, RTA**
 - Mark Koljack provided the following statistics:
 - The lowest number of ADA Paratransit eligible customers was in 2021.
 - In 2021, there was an increase in ADA Paratransit applications. It reached pre-pandemic numbers.
 - There have not been significant changes in the Ride Free and Reduced Fare applications.
 - In mid-2021, the RTA started to see customers in-person at Chicago's City Hall.
 - Travel Information Center (TIC) - there has been a 75% decrease in call volume since 2017. RTA conducted research to see if there was still a need for TIC. It was determined that TIC is needed.
 - Travel Training – this program has remained closed during the pandemic. There are 179 people on the waitlist.
 - Mobility Outreach – the team developed a virtual presentation which resulted in a 27% increase in presentations in 2021.
 - Adam Kerman suggested the Travel Information Center to be refocus to an emergency communication. He does not find it useful because they look at the same database the public has access to.
 - Michele Lee asked if there is a virtual option for Travel Training. Michael VanDekreke stated they are working on a hybrid option that they hope to

launch in a couple of months, but there will be a waitlist.

- Jemal Powell agreed with Adam Kerman. He believes TIC information has improved but still can improve routing options and changes. Michael VanDekreke stated TIC agents are encouraging riders to sign up for service board alerts for route changes and alerts.

○ **Pace Citizen Advisory Board, Adam Kerman**

- Melinda Metzger is the new Pace Executive Director.
- Adam mentioned the last mile efforts – he has concerns about the I90 corridor.
- Trapeze was updated.
- There was a presentation about equity issues. The presenter mentioned that most of Pace’s higher management is female and diverse.

○ **Pace Suburban ADA Advisory Committee, Jemal Powell**

- Last meeting, they discussed budget updates, DuPage Access Program through Uber, and elections for chair.

○ **Metra ADA Advisory Committee Meeting, Jim Ferneborg**

- The Metra Board approved \$300M towards new ticket vending machines at all boarding stations. This will be phased over the next couple of years and removing ticket agents (job reassignment). The vending machines will be fully accessible.
- Metra has signed a contract to build new multi-level rail cars.
- Building two new stations: Peterson Ridge and 78th and Lowell

- Rebuilding stations which will be fully accessible:
Grayland and 147th Street & Sibley
- **CTA ADA Advisory Committee, Joe Albritton**
 - Joe met the new CTA ADA Manager, Irma Gomez.
 - CTA provided an update on their security measures.
 - A new project the CTA is working on is bus stop braille markers. These are small signs on the bus stop pole. It will only read bus stop. The bus route number will not be on the marker. There will be consistency of the location on the pole.
 - Joe congratulated Michele Lee on joining the Transportation Committee.

6. Public Comments

- Garland Armstrong thanked RTA on the airport signage. He is excited about having an accessible station at 147th Street & Sibley. He wants to know if Metra is talking to Elmhurst about being prepared for freight trains. He congratulated Michele Lee. He is joining a committee in Des Moines.

7. Next Meeting

- Next meeting is July 25, 2022, at 10 am.

8. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 11:17 AM.

Minutes submitted by Sarah Blair, RTA Lead Mobility Outreach Coordinator

