



c/o Wheel-Trans, 580 Commissioners Street, Toronto, Ontario M4M 1A7

January 10, 2018

TTC Board Members
Toronto Transit Commission
1900 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario
M4S 1Z2

Dear Board Members:

The Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT) is forwarding the approved minutes of its November 30, 2017 General Monthly meeting to the January 18, 2018 Board Meeting for information (attached).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Debbie Gillespie
2017 ACAT Chair

Attachment

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of Meeting: Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit
Meeting No. 323

Meeting Date: Thursday, November 30, 2017

Location: 1900 Yonge Street
7th Floor Boardroom

Present: Debbie Gillespie, Chair
Angela Marley, Co-Vice Chair
Raymond Dell'Aera, Co-Vice Chair
Louise Bark
Mary Burton
Margaret Hageman
Joan Jordan
Lynn McCormick
Desrienne McIlwrick
Craig Nicol
Thomas Richardson
Lauri Sue Robertson
Valdo Tammark
Howard Wax

Pool Members: Anita Dressler
Igor Samardzic

Regrets: Jaspreet Dhaliwal
Jessica Geboers

TTC Representatives: Andy Byford, Chief Executive Officer
Matt Hagg, Senior Planner, System Accessibility
Aislin O'Hara, Project Lead - Wheel-Trans Customer Service
Lynn Middleton, Division Manager-Wheel-Trans
Charlene Sharpe, Business Analyst-Wheel-Trans
Donna Harris, Senior Communications Specialist
Louise Riggi, Project Co-ordinator, Wheel-Trans
Eve Wiggins, Head of Wheel-Trans

Copies: Andy Byford, Chief Executive Officer
Richard Leary, Deputy CEO / Chief Service Officer
Kirsten Watson, Chief Customer Officer
Susan Reed Tanaka, Chief Capital Officer
Tara Bal, Chief Financial Officer
Brad Ross, Executive Director – Corporate Communications
Mike Palmer, Chief Operating Officer
Eve Wiggins, Head of Wheel-Trans
Jacqueline Darwood, Head of Strategy & Service Planning
Cheryn Thoun, Head of Customer Communications
TTC Board Members

Items Discussed:

1. Call to Order / Attendance
2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Remarks from ACAT Chair
5. Review and Approval of October 26, 2017 Minutes
6. Business Arising Out of Minutes/Outstanding Items
7. Deputation: Nil
8. Subcommittee Reports and Updates
9. ACAT Subcommittee Meeting Highlights for the Next TTC Board Meeting
10. Wheel-Trans 10-Year Strategy Update
11. Report on Customer Liaison Panel
12. Report on TTC Board Meeting and Accessibility Matters
13. Report on ACAT Executive Quarterly Meeting with CEO and Chair
14. CEO Update
15. Review of Correspondence
16. Other / New Business
17. Next Meeting – December 21, 2017
18. Adjournment

1. Call to Order / Attendance

Debbie Gillespie, ACAT Chair, called the meeting to order and attendance was taken.

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Nil.

3. Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Howard Wax and seconded by Joan Jordan, the agenda was approved.

4. Remarks from ACAT Chair, Debbie Gillespie

Debbie Gillespie highlighted the accessibility improvements that occurred during Andy Byford's tenure as CEO of the TTC, namely,

- Accessible fare gates
- Low-floor streetcars
- The Pro Master buses for the Wheel-Trans fleet
- External Audio Route Announcements on surface vehicles
- Blue Priority Seating and the new subway trains providing space for mobility devices.

ACAT acknowledged the work of Mr. Byford and thanked him for his dedication and commitment to accessibility.

5. Review and Approval of October 26, 2017 Minutes

On a motion by Louise Bark and seconded by Thomas Richardson, the October 26, 2017 minutes were approved.

6. Business Arising Out of Minutes and Outstanding Items

- Item: Travel Assistance Card (TAC) – Staff to follow up and report back in March 2018.
- Item: Emergency Subway Closures – Shuttle Buses for Inaccessible Turn-back Stations - Update to be provided at the next Service Planning Subcommittee meeting.

7. Deputation

Nil.

8. Subcommittee Reports and Updates

Design Review Subcommittee (DRS) – Craig Nicol, Chair

A Joint DRS and SPS meeting was held on October 31, 2017.

This meeting was held to seek ACAT input for a report to City Council on the Waterfront Transit “Reset” – Phase 2 Study. The study is looking at 25 kilometres of the City’s Waterfront transit network and travel demand considerations to 2041.

The key areas of the study are the Union Station to Queens Quay connection, Humber Bay link, and the Bathurst-Fleet-Lakeshore-Queens Quay intersection. Options for the Union Station to Queens Quay connection range from continuing streetcar service on an expanded Union Station loop to re-purposing the streetcar tunnel for walking/funicular train service between Union Station and a stop at Queens Quay.

Subcommittee Recommendations/Comments:

Subcommittee members emphasized that accessibility features should be integrated into the project from the outset.

Accessibility considerations need to include persons of all abilities, access transfer hubs, Wheel-Trans connections, and pedestrian safe access to transit.

At Union Station, Subcommittee members favoured retaining a direct streetcar connection stating that use of a moving sidewalk would be unacceptable and that the funicular option, which lacked detail, would present an accessibility hurdle for persons with disabilities.

A DRS meeting was also held on November 24, 2017.

VISION Project Update

The VISION Project involves a new data gathering and information system for buses. In this meeting, DRS received a presentation on proposed new information displays to be mounted at the ceiling level in buses. The discussion was around the display size, placement, and type of information which could be displayed.

Subcommittee Recommendations/Comments:

Audible next stop announcements must be maintained / continued and if any extension of audio is contemplated, care must be taken to prevent misleading the rider. Transit information must be clear.

The larger screen could provide an additional benefit by including transit-related data and visual duplication of audible announcements such as service disruptions to aid persons with hearing loss.

DRS members were concerned that advertising may be contemplated and re-emphasized that transit information is the most important information and should not be compromised by ads.

Eglinton Crosstown Light Rail Transit (ECLRT) Kennedy Station Design

TTC staff reviewed the 90% ECLRT Kennedy Station design with the Subcommittee. The design shows redundant elevator access between street, concourse, and platform for the ECLRT portion of the station, dual connections to the existing TTC Kennedy Station concourse and an expanded facility connecting to the GO Stouffville line.

Subcommittee Recommendations/Comments:

It was recommended that all accessible parking spaces be uniformly sized for van use. This is a matter that will be further discussed with Engineering staff as it has wider implications across the entire TTC system.

Additional wayfinding tiles were suggested at the corridor from GO to the TTC concourse level east fare line.

It was recommended that where ECLRT stations interchange with existing subway stations, TTC upgrade the accessibility features for consistency throughout the combined station.

In general, DRS considered the design to be acceptable.

Other Business

DRS reviewed the email correspondence and video regarding bus ramp width and provided feedback to the ACAT Executive for response to the customer.

The next monthly DRS meeting is scheduled for December 6, 2017.

Questions and Comments from Committee Members

For the King Street Pilot – Detailed Stop Mock Up, will there still be door to door pick up/drop off designations? Members were informed that door to door service is still offered and that designated accessible loading zones are provided in the design.

Communication Subcommittee (CS) – Margaret Hageman, Chair

No Communication Subcommittee meetings were held since the last ACAT meeting.

Wheel-Trans Operations Subcommittee (WTOS) – Lynn McCormick, Chair

A WTOS meeting was held on November 2, 2017.

Pro Master Bus Update

David Tonon, Manager – Lakeshore Garage, reported on the continuing delivery of the Pro Master buses and Staff is investigating better storage solutions for walkers. He stated that the suspension on the Pro Master bus is better than on the previous buses but riders are complaining about the bumpy ride. This will be closely monitored.

Travel Training Initiative

Louise Riggi, Project Co-ordinator, Wheel-Trans, reviewed the Travel Training Initiative. The purpose of the initiative is to develop a guide to travelling safely and independently. Several agencies were consulted and staff discussed that the training needs to be individualized. A list of recommendations during the travel training exercise will be drafted and distributed to the appropriate TTC divisions for implementation.

Subcommittee Comments and Recommendations

Some Operators do not offload the buses at their designated stops i.e. at the subways. This will cause confusion for customers with visual loss disabilities who base their travel on getting off the bus at the designated bus bay. Staff responded that this will be looked into.

Staff needs to be cautious about the execution of the travel training so that people are not given a false sense of safety and an impression that they are completely travel-trained.

Community Bus

Subcommittee Comments and Recommendations

The 404 East York Community Bus did stop at the entrance to a seniors' residence. However, if passengers were not present at the stop, the bus would leave immediately, which did not provide passengers who were waiting in the lobby with enough time to come to the entrance.

The Community Buses do not have a Stop Request button. Staff will take this back for further discussion.

Wheel-Trans Day to Day Operations

Lodon Hassan provided an update on the new eligibility applications received as of October 31, 2017. There were 1,100 applications received, 1088 were accepted within the 3 categories and 65 were sent for functional assessment.

Phase 3 of the Family of Services training is completed.

The Reservation line statistics shows that even though there has been an increase in the number of Wheel-Trans customers, the ridership remains stable. The call abandonment rate has been consistent since 2014 at 27%. The goal is to reduce that number to 20%.

Aislin O'Hara reported that 201 Late Cancellation / No Show letters were mailed in October with 122 being warning letters. This is a reduction from the previous number of letters sent out in the past. Aislin reported that staff is considering how to better enforce the 60 days' suspension.

Subcommittee Comments and Recommendations

An observation was made that the response from Reservationists has been more respectful and pleasant since training began.

Joan Jordan stated that the wait times on Reservation lines are extremely long and causes customer inconvenience, anxiety, and stress which is not acceptable. It was further noted that some seniors have been reported to putting themselves at risk because there is fear of being disconnected and having to start the wait time over again. There is also anxiety from seniors about not getting a ride to an appointment due to the long wait times.

Eligibility Applications Overview

Sandy Curcio, Customer Ability Liaison, provided a sample of the eligibility application and the method used by staff to determine how an applicant is approved as conditional, unconditional, temporary or ineligible.

Some applicants who have been referred for Functional Assessment have reported that only balance tests were carried out, Staff responded that the Occupational Therapists have now been trained to elaborate on their testing and go beyond physical assessment.

New Business

A member raised a concern that the public needs to know about the TTC Scent Awareness policy and requested that the TTC publish it on the website, IVR system, and other TTC transit areas. Lodon Hassan responded that the policy has been uploaded on the TTC website and will be on the IVR system.

The next WTOS meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2017.

Service Planning Subcommittee (SPS) – Valdo Tammark, Chair

The Joint DRS and SPS meeting on October 31, 2017 was reported at the DRS update.

9. ACAT Subcommittee Meeting Highlights for the Next TTC Board Meeting

DRS:

- Waterfront Transit Reset report, DRS negative comment regarding removal of streetcar from Union loop
- Vision Project bus displays
- Eglinton Crosstown Kennedy station 90% review

WTOS:

- Pro Master bus delivery continues
- Reviewed the process used to determine Wheel-Trans customer eligibility based on information provided in the application

10. Wheel-Trans 10-Year Strategy Update

Louise Riggi, Project Co-ordinator – Wheel-Trans, provided an update on the following items.

Family of Services (FOS) Pilot

Week 5 of Phase 3 began on October 23, 2017. Phase 3 involves dropping off customers at designated bus stops along the 5 surface routes. Phase 4 will begin in January 2018 which will involve the pick-up of customers at stops.

Approximately 4,000 trips have been scheduled to subways since January 1, 2017. The total diverted trips including Community Bus is 43,000.

All conditional customers (7,000+) have received letters strongly encouraging them to schedule trips according to their condition. This should result in a significant increase in FOS trip requests. Booking of FOS trips is not mandatory at this time. If customers are not booking FOS trips, they will not be able to call the FOS line.

Access Hubs

Construction has begun for the Meadowvale Hub and it should be opening in January 2018. Currently, temporary and permanent options at the Humber College North Campus are being reviewed. Ten potential future sites have been identified and planning the next steps is currently being held with the City of Toronto and in some cases privately owned business.

Fleet Replacement

Louise Riggi reported that there are currently 8 Pro Master vehicles.

Community Bus

The Community Bus ridership is going up, with the two pilot routes moving forward with increased outreach planned in those communities.

Questions and Comments from Committee Members

A question was raised about the King Street Pilot and its effect on Wheel-Trans. Wheel-Trans has access and there are designated access points. The contracted services operators are trained.

Are there any delays on Wheel-Trans? Improvements in real time service scheduling and adjustments will be in place as new technology in dispatching is being rolled out.

Are there any Community Buses on other routes? The report is due in June 2018 which will make recommendations based on the pilot experience, including making recommendations on the community bus expansion.

11. Report on Customer Liaison Panel (CLP) – Tom Richardson, ACAT Representative

A CLP meeting was held on November 22, 2017.

Safiya Bulbulia has left the Panel for another position within the TTC. Yvonne Wang is assuming some of her duties until a replacement can be found.

The greater part of the meeting was spent discussing the Panel members' feedback on the structure of the proposed TTC Corporate Plan. A reference was made to the Family of Services (FOS). As many Panel members were not familiar with the concepts of FOS, Arthur Borkwood, Head of Customer Development, explained it to them. There were no other accessibility issues at this meeting.

The next CLP meeting is scheduled for December 6, 2017.

12. Report on TTC Board Meeting and Accessibility Matters

Raymond Dell'Aera reported that a TTC Board Meeting was held on November 13, 2017 at City Hall.

The September 28, 2017 ACAT minutes were received by the Board.

The Board received the staff report on the gap between subway trains and platforms. The report summarized the decision history and investigative work completed to date. It recommended three things: (1) endorsing an interim platform gap retrofit standard on an interim basis until the final study is complete, (2) authorizing staff to commence basic corrective work to address horizontal and vertical gaps at key platform edges in co-ordination with Wheel-Trans Family of Services priorities, and (3) directing staff to report back to the Board in 2019 on the findings of the study and a proposed gap retrofit program.

There were questions from the Board on this item. One Board member asked about the different standards used for platform edge gaps in the report. Staff explained the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards are noted because no comparable Canadian standard was identified. There are two ADA standards relating to platform gaps: one for new construction and one for retrofits, with the retrofit standard being the less stringent of the two. The TTC is proposing its own standard on an interim basis which is better than the ADA standard for retrofits, while being slightly less strict than that for new builds.

The first recommendation in the report was amended by the Board to emphasize that the standard being endorsed is an interim standard, to allow the TTC to begin work on key areas of need and then present its study to the Board in 2019 with the cost and scope of the entire project. All three recommendations were subsequently approved.

In a separate item, the Board also approved the procurement for Easier Access III Yorkdale Station.

A Special TTC Board Meeting was also held on November 28, 2017 at City Hall.

There were three items on the agenda: introducing a two-hour transfer policy, the 2018 TTC and Wheel-Trans Operating Budgets, and the 2018-2027 Capital Budget and Plan Presentation. All three items had multiple deputations from the public, many of which touched on accessibility.

The following is a summary of those comments:

- With the Family of Services coming, subways are still problematic; the TTC should look at subway platforms at busier stations. It will be safer for seniors and people with disabilities to use the subway with platform edge doors. The TTC should also consider a parallel bus service for Line 2.
- The number of seniors will increase drastically, and they need to keep active for health reasons. Many of them also use mobility devices. There are more "obstacles" on conventional buses, like mobility devices and strollers, and strategies to mitigate are needed. The TTC should ask for increased subsidy.
- Upgrade maintenance budgets for elevators and escalators. Prominently display large print. There should be a free TTC pass for people with disabilities. Enact the Fair Fare Coalition. Prioritize budget items relating to accessibility.

- Thank you to outgoing CEO Andy Byford for "thinking outside the box". He once took a ride on the conventional transit system using a wheelchair to learn about the challenges people with disabilities have using the system.
- Implementing the two-hour transfer sooner will help Wheel-Trans, as it will incentivize some people to use the conventional system.

A Board member asked staff a question about service improvements on phone trip bookings for Wheel-Trans. Staff responded that, in 2018, there will be more Wheel-Trans vehicles, Operators, and a new phone system, which will all positively impact the customer service experience and availability of rides.

The next TTC Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 11, 2017 at City Hall.

Comments and Questions from the Committee Members

Was the Wheel-Trans Budget passed and what was the amount? Eve Wiggins responded that the Board passed the budget and the figures will be released when City Council approves the 2018 City Budget.

13. Report on ACAT Executive Quarterly Meeting with CEO and Chair

The Quarterly meeting was held on November 23, 2017 attended by TTC Chair Josh Colle, via phone; CEO Andy Byford; Eve Wiggins, Head of Wheel-Trans; Kristin Lillyman, Policy Advisor, Office of the TTC Chair; and ACAT Executive members Debbie Gillespie, Chair; Angela Marley and Raymond Dell'Aera, Co-Vice Chairs. Vice Chair Alan Heisey sent regrets.

As Andy Byford has announced he is leaving the TTC in December 2017, Debbie Gillespie thanked him for his leadership in advancing accessibility and highlighted items completed during his tenure:

- Fully funded Easier Access III projects, except Islington and Warden Stations
- Accessible fare gates
- Automated route announcements
- Toronto Rocket subway trains
- Focus on customer experience
- ACAT Chair reporting at Board meetings
- Encourage accessibility learning and engagement by staff
- Opening of the six TYSSE stations on December 17, 2017

Andy Byford credited these to the work of TTC staff, TTC Chair and Board, and ACAT. His leadership is acknowledged.

TTC Corporate Plan – ACAT Consultation

Debbie reported the feedback given by the Service Planning Subcommittee members to TTC to consider in the development of the next Corporate Plan, to be released in early 2018.

- Noted that the previous five-year TTC Corporate Plan, released in 2013, had no consultation with ACAT in advance, nor was accessibility prominently included in that plan, and

commended the TTC for including accessibility and ACAT at the start of the planning process for the next five-year plan.

- Accessibility issues are better understood when there is contact or first-hand experience with someone who requires the accessibility features to use the transit system effectively. There should be awareness on accessibility that is broader in scope than disability.
- Encourage TTC employees to have first-hand experience with the system so that they can assess and provide feedback.
- When projects are to be implemented, involvement of ACAT at the beginning stage is crucial.
- Continue to focus on the integration of all services (Family of Services) rather than separate Wheel-Trans from conventional services.
- It is time to shift from considering accessible transit improvements focusing on mobility device users to serving customers of all abilities.
- Educate the public on using terms like “accessible” or “barrier-free” instead of “disabled”. Need to work on attitudinal barriers.
- The transit system needs to be predictable and consistent throughout the City, including seamless connections to GTHA transit services.
- Use technology to improve on how customers navigate through subway stations from entrances to subway platforms, concourse levels, and bus bays. For example using “beacon wayfinding”.
- Encourage an effective monitoring procedure of the accessibility features that have been developed and installed.
- Acknowledge that the AODA standards are the minimum requirement. TTC should be willing to do more than the stipulated minimum standards.

Andy Byford responded that they missed including accessibility in the first plan and, since then, view accessibility with the mindset that all are customers, that it is good business sense. Chair Josh Colle added that the Board will provide continuity of the accessibility gains as there has been a culture change where accessibility is now the expectation.

The Outstanding Items were reviewed.

- Subway Station Accessibility Checklist - Eve Wiggins reported the list of criteria that determine subway stations are accessible and will forward it to the Executive. There have been modifications to the list over time, resulting in a number of outstanding construction projects, some scheduled and some unfunded.
- Harmonization of Accessibility Features between Metrolinx LRT stations with existing TTC accessibility standards - Andy Byford reported he raised ACAT’s concerns with Metrolinx Management and Mary Prock, Head of Customer Services - Metrolinx, will be following up with ACAT.

Other Business: Please Offer Me A Seat Button

Chair Colle inquired about this initiative, whether it has come to ACAT. Debbie Gillespie responded that the idea was proposed by a CLP member. ACAT supported the concept and referred it to staff who are developing the project and have presented it to the ACAT Communications Subcommittee. Updates will be forthcoming in 2018.

The 2018 Quarterly Meeting dates were approved.

14. CEO Update

Andy Byford commented on his resignation announcement. He stated that it was a pleasure to work together with ACAT and that ACAT members are knowledgeable and a passionate group of people.

Andy Byford mentioned that there has been a lot of progress with the Board Members and governments. He stated that Rick Leary, Deputy CEO, is committed to working with ACAT with no loss of focus. He stated that the subway stations upgrade and 2025 target will be met.

Questions and Comments from Committee Members

ACAT members commended Andy on his commitment to accessible transit, that he was the first CEO to ride the transit system using a mobility device to gain first-hand experience with some of the challenges faced by people with disabilities. They thanked him for his dedication. Andy Byford stated that he was shocked by the reaction of members of the public to him during this experience; that it was very sobering. He commented that TTC Board Member Rick Byers also recently rode the system using vision loss simulation.

Debbie Gillespie thanked Andy Byford and stated that it was a pleasure to have worked with him.

15. Review of Correspondence

ACAT received an email correspondence from a customer whose mobility device is too wide to board buses using a ramp. TTC staff responded to the correspondence directly; however, the matter was also referred to DRS for review and to provide input for a response from the ACAT Executive. That response will be forthcoming.

16. Other / New Business

Lauri Sue Robertson advised the Committee that Councillor Gary Crawford, who is the City Budget Chief, is planning to attend the next ACAT meeting.

A member sought clarification where to find the TTC Five-Year Corporate Plan and was directed to the TTC website. The new Corporate Plan is being released early in 2018.

Louise Bark reported on the Metrolinx's joint annual accessibility meeting held in Whitby and co-hosted by Durham Regional Transit (DRT). New buses were on display, including one bus equipped with a new automated securement system.

ACAT members commented on difficulties registering for paratransit in other GTA jurisdictions and suggested that there should be a single province-wide registration system.

Craig Nicol noted that there will be seven new accessible subway stations by the end of the year, including Coxwell Station as part of the Easier Access project and the six new Line 1 extension stations.

Craig Nicol advised that the City is proposing new guidelines for sidewalk cafes that do not provide sufficient space at accessible bus stops. TTC should request an amendment to the

guidelines to protect accessibility at transit stops. This information has been passed on to TTC staff for review.

The self-guided tour of the TYSSE stations for ACAT and Pool Members is scheduled for December 13, 2017,

Mayor Tory will attend the Pro Master Bus unveiling ceremony; date to be confirmed.

17. Next Meeting

The next meeting of ACAT will be held on Thursday, December 21, 2017, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at 1900 Yonge Street, 7th Floor Boardroom.

18. Adjournment

On a motion by Howard Wax, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Linda St-Amant
Recording Secretary