MARTA MAC MEETING

03/14/2023

11:00 a.m.

>> We'll do the attendance. I'll take the attendance manually myself, so we want to go ahead with the agenda until he calls me. So we're going to go all the way down to subcommittee updates. Right now, the customer focus committee met last month on the 28th, and we discussed the mobility online application. And can we record, Courtney, the meeting.
>> Already in progress.
>> Thank you. So we discussed that, and I know Roosevelt Stripling and his team are going to be going over that again today at the meeting. The no‑show and accessibility committee did not meet. The eligibility committee met on February the 9th, and we had two appeals, and we upheld them both. The diversity inclusion office does not have any updates unless Paula has any remarks.
>> No, I have no remarks. Thank you, Denise.
>> Okay. Thank you, Paula. We're going to go right down to the MARTA updates, and we're going to start with Keith Chambers.
>> Good morning, everyone. Start off with the project, we're at Midtown number 4 which serves the Federal Reserve building which really doesn't impact the customers. Dunwoody, elevator three in the parking garage, and Medical Center number 1 on the northbound platform which will be back in service on or before May 12th. The work around for this would be continued to Dunwoody Center platform and return on the southbound side to access the concourse. We are also starting on Sandy Springs number 6, which is in the parking garage. And number 7 is next to it, so there's no impact there. This elevator is another one that went out of service with a bad drive which has been obsolete for several years, and the most efficient way to fix this was to move it up in the elevator rehab project schedule which makes it easier that we already have the plan to replace otherwise it would be a lengthy process to make this happen. We've had to do this on several elevators having obsolete parts or software. We have also replaced over a dozen escalators for the same reason. So lots of lessons in the equipment because some of these like the escalators some of them go back to '79, and the elevators some go back to the 80s. You think over time some of those these parts become obsolete, so it's nice to have this project in place where we're replacing all of the elevators at once and we're able to move the projects ahead in the schedule with such a good rapport with the project team. There's a lot of coordination with it now so it really makes it easier. The rehab project is finishing its 6th year ahead of schedule for completion at the beginning of 2025. We're over 80% complete. And the remaining elevators that also include headquarters and Armor Yard, which do not affect our customers. And I believe there's only one elevator left that is going to require some mobility support and that's North Springs number 1, but with the moving up number 6 in the parking garage, we pushed that back, so I'll have a better idea of when we're going to do that elevator at our next meeting. That's really the main updates that I have right now. I know we've got a lot of other things going on, but as far as the‑‑this meeting and how it affects our customers, that's pretty much what I got right now.
>> Anybody have any questions for Mr. Chambers? If no questions, thank you, Mr. Chambers.
>> Thank you very much. I appreciate the time in these meetings. We've seen a lot over the last few years getting to this point, so I'm looking forward to finishing this project so we can have all brand new elevators for everybody.
>> (Inaudible) Dewberry for bus operations is up next.
>> Good morning, everyone. I just have a couple of updates on bus transportation. The main thing that we're working on right now is a pilot that will have turn by turn directions in the buses for the operators. We feel like this will do a tremendous job helping our workforce get acclimated to the routes not being turned around and lost. Another thing, we're working with the HR department. They already have job fairs, but there's an intentional project to ensure that we give people a realistic expectation, a realistic preview of what it is to be an operator. They're going to do innovative things. We're going to have a tour. We're going to have a presentation from people that are currently in other roles that started out as operators to hopefully inspire people to become operators. We're also working and what we're hoping to do with the hiring event is try to restore the service as much as we can up to 100%. The goal with this upcoming mark up in April is 35%. That's all I have on bus transportation. Are there any questions?
>> This is Bob Lossie MAC member. I did have a question, curiosity really. I seen bus drivers on a new route and they are trying to drive the bus and pay attention to the activities on the bus and reading a map and looking for bus stops they've never seen before. Would it be possible to have a person who could be a copilot on bus for a new driver, a driver new to the route?
>> Actually, we have something like that in the work sort of. It's a big brother program where we're reaching out to persons that are retired that will ride with the operators to get them familiar. Now, I'm with fixed route and I heard you mention maps which mobility operators have maps which you'll see the fixed operators have sometimes turn‑by‑turn directions, we discourage that, and that's why we're so excited about the turn by turn into the buses, and that pilot, if any of you ride the buses, you'll start to see that as early as this month because we're going to have a training portion and hopefully we'll be full fledge by April.
>> And when you said it's the big brother program, is it 24 volunteer thing or an employee?
>> They'll be paid. They're previous employees that have retired with the company. They won't have any training role, they'll be simply there to inspire the operators, help them read their running board, and ride along with them on the routes.
>> Excellent. Thank you.
>> No problem. Thank you.
>> I must apologize. Hello?
>> Good morning, Robert.
>> Good morning. I must apologize everyone. I've been trying to get in but had some difficulty trying to get in, but I want to thank you all for carrying the meeting. I could hear the meeting but you couldn't hear me. So I apologize for that, and thank you Ms. Brown for taking over. The next person on the agenda that was bus operations, and the next person is customer service. Am I correct on that, Ms. Brown?
>> That's correct. Ed Bishop is going to give the report this morning.

>> Good morning, Chairman Smith and members of the Board. My name is Ed Bishop. I am supervisor of MARTA customer service center, and I'll report on the ADA links for report of December 2022. The authority for December received 517 complaints, the exact same number as the previous month which is very unusual they have exact, but they did. 213 of those 517 complaints were ADA linked, which is actually down 35 from the previous month of November, we had 248. And that percentage of total ADA link complaints for December was 41.2% which is also down 6.8% from the previous month. So good month in December. Again, ADA link complaints, 141, were found to be valid or verified once investigates, that's about 66.2% of those. Break down by department. So of those 213 ADA link complaints, as always the majority of those are going to be with mobility, there was 206 of those. Mobility was down 27 complaints from the previous month of November, I had 233. The second highest group would be mobility reservations had 3 in December, bus operations had a couple, and vertical transportation also had a couple that makes up our 213. The top complaint for December as always is always our late pick‑up complaints. We had 78 of those in December, actually down 20 in the previous month. Second highest complaint was no‑shows with 36. It was down 10 from the previous month. And the third highest complaint received in December was late drop off. There were 29 of those, and that was down five from the previous month. To round out the top complaint, long wait time, that was something we saw a spike in December, that went up to 11. There was one in November so I think issues there in ETA with long wait times on the phone. Vehicle stopping location, there were 9 of those, 11 the previous month. And excessive time on van, 7. And to round out the top complaints, no‑slow response, request assistance, there were 6. Top non‑mobility complaints, incorrect reservation information was the number one with 2 of those, and elevators, there were 2 of those as well, and 2 didn't offer assistance, and then change cancel pick up, no notice with 1. And then on the good news side, accommodations received the authority received 41. Accommodations for the month of December and mobility actually received 27 of those 41 which is 65.9%, so they definitely carried the majority of the accommodations received by the authority, so that was up 10.4% from the previous month. Good month for accommodations for mobility. And that concludes my report, and I'll entertain any questions if anyone has any.
>> Committee members do you have questions of Mr. Bishop?
>> This is Bob. It's kind of a thought, first of all, I'm just amazed with what you do, it's incredible. I would say they are the drivers are like islands out in the middle of the sea they have to count on their own ability to be able to deal with a lot. When you give these numbers like the second and third of complaints and they seem to be in the double digits, how many thousands of riders are you serving per month to get 27 complaints?
>> Mr. Bishop?
>> I guess I didn't understand the question.
>> Well, you know, I understand you want to keep low numbers on complaints, that's your goal, but they seem to be pretty low considering volume of people you have to deal with.
>> Absolutely. And that is correct with the thousands of trips being made to only have 213 ADA link complaints for the entire month is a pretty low number and with 141 of those being validated or verified. You are absolutely correct.
>> And another thing if I can just say, I know that I'm here for ADA representation, but again, I'm just amazed at the great things you do. I ride the number 110 down Peachtree Road a lot because it's my neighborhood, and I go to the train station on the 110. In front of Piedmont hospital, somebody got on the bus, a woman, and she was probably in her 60s, and she told the driver they told me I can show you this paper and you would let me ride the bus. And it was‑‑she had been a patient at Piedmont hospital. She had heart issues from the sounds of it, but she had very severe mental challenges, and the driver tried to explain to her how she could get home by going from the train station to the next bus, and then when we got to the station, she actually took her down to the gate to get her into the train and just went so far above and beyond. So it's just remarkable the challenges that you do have and I think that you do a good job.
>> Much appreciated. That's a great story, and there are definitely some great employees out there and it can be a tough little world to serve in, many of them do an outstanding job. That's an important story. I appreciate you staring that.
>> One other thing if I can, another hard thing they have to deal with is when they pull up to a MARTA bus stop that has a bench and a shelter so many times the people are just using it like it's a parked bench and they have to make the judgment do they not see or honking their horn, a number of things to make sure they don't miss pick up.
>> The operators are definitely trained regardless if it's one of those shelters like you said that seems to be used as a barrier where people are just congregating and are not looking to ride the bus, they are still supposed to search the stop, make sure there is no one there wanting to board. It's very important not to pass folks up.
>> Are there any other members that have questions for Mr. Bishop at this time?
>> I don't see any hands.
>> Pardon me?
>> I didn't see any hands.
>> Okay. No hands. Thank you, Mr. Bishop. Now we going to have the MARTA mobility report. Who's doing that Denise. You know?
>> Roosevelt is on the list first to talk about eligibility.
>> Good. They didn't have his name down. Okay. Mr. Strickland?
>> Good morning, Mr. Chair.
>> Good morning.
>> Am I able to share my screen, Courtney or Denise? That's not a biggie if I can't.
>> He can go ahead and share it Courtney. We don't have anybody who requested the captionist.
>> Roosevelt, did you hear?
>> Yes, sir, I'm attempting. It's not‑‑
>> Okay. I'll just go for it.
>> He may have stepped away Roosevelt.
>> No problem at all, just the slides just order. Oh, it says you are the presenter. It give it to me now. All right. I am... okay. Can you see it now?
>> It's coming. We can see it now.
>> Okay. Great.
>> I can see it.
>> All right. Great. Thank you. All right. Well, good morning, Mr. Chair, members of the MAC committee. Again, my name is Roosevelt Stripling, and I am the mobility program manager. As previously referenced in the customer focus subcommittee report, the mobility team, including our third party contractor Transdev, did meet with members of the subcommittee on February 28th to preview our newest feature to the certification process. The premier objective is to improve the overall customer experience. Before I start my presentation, allow me to make one disclaimer and that is this release will be version number one, and we hope to add some additional features and release version number two within the next 12 months. Displayed is a summary on how the online application process will work. The new recertifying customer can click on a link from MARTA's website, the customer will be asked if they would like to receive an email with a secured link to a third party site to begin the online application process. The customer will click on the secure link from the email and will be taken to a secure site to begin the process of completing the part A or the self‑reporting portion of the application. Once complete, they simply press submit, and the application is sent to a secure storage site. They will receive an email or text notification that their part A has been submitted, and they will receive an opportunity to complete a part B for professional verification. Once part A and part B have been received by the MARTA staff, the customer will be notified the submittal has been received and approved for the next stage of the certification process which is the in‑person assessment. And thus, the process begins. This next slide displays a sample of the initial auto notification message that is sent to acknowledge receipt of a part A application. At the bottom there is a link that take the customer to a secure site to begin and initiate the request for professional verification. This next slide displays a copy of the screen that gives the customer the option of downloading and printing the part B and forwarding directly to the health care provider themselves, or the customer can input the provider's name and email address and the system will send the provider a notification on the customer's behalf to complete the part B portion. But note here the health care provider will also have the option of downloading a paper copy or completing and submitting the process online. And this slide is intended to summarize the back end process that was previously discussed. Once all parts of the application have been received online, notifications are not only sent to the customer but also sent to the MARTA staff, it let's them know they have something in their queue and they can begin processing that. MARTA, once they've certified everything is complete and correct, they'll reach out to the customer and schedule them for their in‑person assessment. And this particular slide here just kind of shares with you give you the opportunity to see that all steps have been taken or all steps have been taken to ensure that accessibility features are in place and have been incorporated. For those who are not familiar, the web content accessibility guidelines, this is set up technical requirements for web‑based content like websites and web‑based applications, to assure accessible users of every ability, including people with disabilities, who utilize assistive technology can utilize this. The contrast and fonts test requirements, this is to make sure the color and font size meets ADA standards, and the area labels or the accessible rich application landmarks, these are attributes that create defined sections within a web page that allows assistive technology to be able to navigate. So all of these others have been steps have been taken place. Next is the opportunity to make sure that this is secure, not only the transmission of information but the storage of that information meets all the necessary requirements. Last week members of the Transdev applications team and MARTA staff mobility staff met with members of MARTA's IT and cyber security. For the most part, MARTA's IT and technical folks didn't have questions outside of what was provided. They were comfortable that it met certain security standards, and the Transdev team has this week to provide MARTA with the actual documentation so that MARTA cyber security folks can actually review and verify that various things have been put in place to make sure that again, the transmission and the storage of this data has‑‑is secure and that we meet all requirements and not violating any particular HIPPA violations. Next step, what's next. As the court once said that all best linked plans of (inaudible) men often go astray which simply means that no matter how well you think you planned for different things, something is liable to top up. That being the case, we will be putting together a beta test user group and so I'm soliciting volunteers from the MAC committee to volunteer to be part of the test group. And if you guy's have any recommendations for other participants, I'll ask you forward your name as well as any other information to Denise for me by the end of today because we are looking at either tomorrow at 12 or Thursday the 16th at 1 o'clock to have a beta test workshop. And essentially the applications team will take the beta test users through a similar workshop and provide similar information what I'm providing today but go into much more detail into all of various screens and what's intended. This will give you an opportunity to provide input into the accessibility input into the usability and friendliness of the application itself. And then following the work shop, you'll have a few days to just kind of play around with it and submit application. They give you I guess a dummy healthcare provider information that you can submit that and see how that goes as well and for individuals who use assistive technology to be able to see how well the technology is allowing you to move through the application itself. So again, seeking beta test users. Please volunteer providing your name and contact information to Denise by the end of today and your availability for either Wednesday the 15th at 12 p.m. for an hour or Thursday the 16th at 1 p.m. for an hour. Next item. Again, as I mentioned before, we did meet with MARTA's It, and the application developers need to get information into MARTA's IT for them to review and sign off no later than the 24th, and following IT's review and sign off and MARTA mobility staff review and sign off, Friday March 31st. The intent is to go live and have a soft launch on Monday April the 3rd. And I say soft launch because we are working with MARTA's department to develop a marketing campaign to not only communicate this application process but also some other things that (inaudible) is working on. So that's it for the online application process. Are there any questions, comments or concerns?
>> This is Bob Lossie. Just to let you know, I am thrilled to be able to take part in the beta test group because I'm in the process of renewing right now and hit many walls, so I'm happy to be coming along, and I can share with you the things I've had troubles with.
>> And there is one question also, with this new program starting, will there be a way to as you're going through the application to like put if you need assistance that somebody can do it online with you?
>> That's a good question, Mr. Lossie. We have not discussed a chat or an assistance piece, but I will make a note of that and bring it to the developers attention. Perhaps it may not be something they can put together quickly turn around for April 3rd, but again, as I mentioned before, in the next release, it might be something we can do because we not only want to at it in but you also want to test the feature to make sure that it works. So I'll bring it to their attention.
>> Not only am I representing people in wheelchairs, I am also representing people who are psychologically challenged, so.
>> Yes, sir.
>> Are there any questions for Mr. Strickland? Mr. Strickland I have one, and I know we are talking about technology but there will still be available in the traditional way you sent out applications to those who are not technology savvy at this time?
>> Most definitely sir.
>> They still would have that available, is that correct?
>> Most definitely, sir. Most definitely.
>> I just want to know because it's a lot of elderly people, I mean seniors, let me correct myself, out there that use the system and when it comes to the application process, they will want to know if that method of the application process is still available, so I have something to report to them. But I know you're specifically talking about the technology part of the applications to get that tested and all the bugs out of the way before you bring it forth. So I want to thank you for that.
>> My pleasure.
>> I don't think there's any other hands, is there Denise?
>> no, no other hands.
>> Okay. And if you would, you are going into the other part of the mobility portion? Mr. Strickland?
>> That would be Ms. Davis.
>> Oh, Ms. Davis. Okay. Okay.
>> Good morning.
>> Okay. Thank you, Mr. Strickland. Good morning, Ms. Davis.
>> Good morning.
>> I'm sorry to interrupt, Ms. Davis. I see somebody said they put a‑‑I did put a question in the chat. Somebody put a question. I can't see it right now. You see it?
>> I'll read it for you.
>> Okay. Thank you.
>> It says sorry if you already said this, what is the name of the system/technology vendor that operates it?
>> I did not mention it, the‑‑this is coming through MARTA's third party contractor Transdev who provides our eligibility certification and their subcontractor to who develop the actual software is called Jack Rabbit. That's the software developer, and they're a subcontractor of Transdev.
>> I see no other questions or follow‑up right now Robert.
>> Okay. Thank you, Mr. Strickland. Appreciate it. Now, Ms. Davis.
>> Good morning, everyone. Hope everybody is doing well. Again, my name is Kalesha Davis, I'm interim director for MARTA mobility, and I have a few updates for mobility services. Our key performance indicators, at the last committee meeting back in January if you guys remembered, I mentioned what we call the holiday dip where ridership typically diminishes a little bit because we're going through that holiday season. Well, the holiday season ended, and we are back to what we consider regular ridership. We bumped back up to an average of 45,500 trips and 55,000 passengers per month over the last two months. Particularly in January, we had 45,919 trips transporting 55,519 passengers. February was a couple days short, we provided 45,261 trips; however, we had more passengers in February than January with 75,047 passengers. We saw these high ridership numbers just before the holiday season last year so that means we're back on that trajectory to hit a steady 50,000 trips monthly and we're looking to hit that very very soon. Month to month however, there has been an increase without on‑time performance which is always good. Any time we see that number go up, it's good. Unfortunately, we are still under target. The progress we did see we went from roughly 83% to right at 86%, so we increased 3% and we are steadily working to get that number at minimum to the target. And we're continuing to work collaborately with our contract service providers - Transdev, First Transit, and A‑National - to employ new initiatives to improve service delivery efficiencies which will ultimately have a positive impact on on‑time performance and customer satisfaction. One of those initiatives we're employing is something that we mentioned several months ago and that's expansion of our fleet to include 15 BraunAbility Chrysler voyager mini vans. That's a lot to say right there. The mini vans they all FTA specifications, and they are all equipped with ADA complaint ramps, door entrance lighting, floor tracks for wheelchair securement, and bench seating that accommodate up to three seated passengers. We are scheduled to present before the MARTA board of directors this month to move forward with that mini van procurement. And I know as we mentioned it early on, Mr. Smith you mentioned perhaps having the opportunity to explore those mini vans before they go into service, we still plan to do that so we do have you and the rest of the committee in mind in that regard.
>> Okay. Thank you.
>> Another initiative that we are under taking is through our contractual partnership with Transdev ‑‑ I'm sorry, First Transit. Let me pause and say you may or may not have heard it, Transdev recently acquired First Transit, so now globally, it's all Transdev; however, for the time being, we will continue to operate as if they are two separate companies. If I make a mistake and say Transdev, 9 times out of 10, I am talking about the separate company from First Trans and Transdev. We so with employing through our partnership with first transit the deployment of users. If I'm not mistaken our deputy chief Mr. Herold Humphrey mentioned that in the last meeting in January. Uzurv is a Uber-style adaptive transportation company, and they will assist with the increased trip load. They'll cover a bunch of ‑‑ a few of those trips we struggle to get with particularly our a.m. and p.m. peaks. Their start date is scheduled for tomorrow, and we actually have a meeting with them later today to kind of tie up some loose ends. Their hours of service will be 5:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. They will provide curb‑to‑curb service as well as door to door service as requested the same way our regular mobility of operators do. They will be single ride ambulatory trips only, no groups and no wheelchairs, and what that will do that will allow us to better allocate our lift equipped vans to service the number of wheelchair and/or lift bound passengers that we have as well as better serving those group trips that perhaps are all at one facility or in the same general area going to be same facility or the same general area. So this incorporation of user it will provide us more band width to better serve our constituency. And the last initiative we have is something that our Transdev centralized dispatch group recently deployed and that's the language assistance line. This will enhance dispatch ETA to assist customers who may not have English as their first language. So basically we're receiving an in bound from a customer or placing outbound to customers who are non‑English speaking, ETA dispatch will have the ability to conference in an interpreter to translate conversations into well over 200 different languages, the same assistive tool our reservation team currently employs as well as customer service and police services as well. So those are the initiatives we either implemented or are implementing lately to deal with the booming ridership and to deliver our constituency better service. Any questions?
>> Okay. Any questions from committee members to Ms. Davis?
>> This is Bob Lossie. I love that you're expanding your fleet, expanding the heights of vehicles that you're using, and I was just wondering do you ever have a paint that you have to turn riders away that are requesting reservation? Are you overbooked‑‑not overbooked but not able to take everybody our schedule is booked up?
>> No, sir, we do not deny reservations, we do not deny service. Under no circumstances do we do that, and that's part of why we're expanding so we can accommodate. Calendar of January of 2022 to basically the first week in January 2023, we saw a 37% increase in ridership. Of course, that's the post‑pandemic activity returning back. You have other people joining the service, so we're growing in leaps and bounds, so our demand is growing in leaps and bounds, so we definitely have to make sure that our supply meets the demand, and this is one of the undertakings for doing that. So no, we do not deny trips.
>> Are there any other questions from committee members?
>> I don't see anybody in the chat or raising their hand or anything.
>> Okay. I have a couple of questions to Ms. Davis. Ms. Davis, I know you're rolling out the new initiative about utilizing the partnership with Uber, I think. Is it Uber or Lyft or both?
>> It's Uzurv. It's a Uber‑style service.
>> Okay. They are a ride sharing company?
>> Yes. They can be considered ride share, yes.
>> Okay. How would that work? Well, you tell us how would that work.
>> Basically you would call and book your reservation with MARTA the same way you currently. Once it is booked‑‑so basically, from the trip creation period where you call into our reservations team to book the trip up to the scheduling period, everything remains the same. What happens the day before service, first transit will look at their allotment of trips and basically see which ones there's a chance we may be extremely late for or perhaps they're currently at that moment on schedule and they will transfer those trips over to Uzurv to facilitate. Uzurv will vet that list to which ones they can accept and perform with no problem and they will communicate that to first transit. It's a fine web of coordination between Uzurv, first transit, Transdev and MARTA.
>> So Uzurv‑‑okay. Go ahead.
>> Once those trips have been solidified between first transit and Uzurv then the trips will execute as they normally do. The vehicle will show up. The standard procedure typically‑‑the typical procedures they still exist, so it's just additional vehicles out to help service our customers.
>> Okay. Will these vehicles be vans or cars or?
>> They will be privately owned vehicles, cars or some may be mini vans or vans. They are privately owned, however they will be identifiable with signage that will say MARTA and Uzurv.

>> Will the operators of these vehicles be educated to the point of what ADA requires operators to be like for instance when it comes to assistance, assisting one from the door to the vehicle or vice versa from where they pick them up from to the vehicle they do‑‑they will have all those standards?
>> Yes, sir. As I‑‑
>> What I'm trying to say will operators when it comes to knowing how to assist various‑‑and I know you mentioned that these vehicles will be used for ambulatory individuals and sometimes those individuals will have PCA's and sometimes they will have a dog or something like that with them and depending on the type of vehicle that's being dispatched to their location, will they still know how to deal with individuals with disabilities since that's what it's going to be used for?
>> Yes, sir. So First Transit, they have insured that basically all of those standard guidelines are met. And also, when they receive the trips the day before, they will be able to go through and scrutinize that list of trips to see if perhaps this trip has more passengers than their service can accommodate or and if they cannot accommodate the list of trips given, they will return those trips back to MARTA or back to First Transit for First Transit and the rest of the MARTA group to facilitate.
>> Okay. This will be done ahead of time in other words, before the trip take place the next day? I assume all this processing will be done before the next day's trip began because you have to kind of know in advance what vans are going to be dispatched to what location as well as users them knowing what trips they can make or trips that they cannot make. I'm just saying because this is a process and I know it takes time to allocate trips to users as opposed to what people normally do when they call in and book trips.
>> Yes, sir. So trips will be‑‑the list of trips will be provided the night before and again, Uzurv will scrutinize that and send it back as soon as possible no later than two hours before that scheduled trip. Those two hours will allow First Transit, the Transdev group, MARTA to make sure that those trips that are given back are adequately placed on another vehicle for service. So essentially, if Uzurv is unable to facilitate the trip, they are required to notify internally‑‑they are required to notify us or through our partnership to let us know in enough time for us to provide other accommodations for that trip.
>> And you say that this service starts tomorrow?
>> Yes, sir.
>> Okay. Just wanted to be clear so if anybody ask‑‑
>> I have a question.
>> Somebody was seeking the floor?
>> It was Denise. I had a question. How have patrons been notified this service is coming on board? Did something go out to all the mobility patrons to expect this?
>> To my knowledge, nothing has been pushed out. I will check internally to confirm that, but I don't have an answer for that question.
>> And another thing Ms. Davis, when the vehicle shows up, natural‑‑I assume they will still have the back up signals or how would the customer be contacted that the van is there‑‑I mean, that the ride is there?
>> Give me one second, I do have the answer to that question, I'm flipping through my pages.
>> Okay. Take your time.
>> So basically, it does say‑‑it doesn't indicate exactly how, but it does indicate that the drivers will make themselves known to the rider upon arrival. It doesn't specify how. However, in accordance with our riders guide, customers should still be ready to board as if it were (inaudible). So but yeah, that indicates that they will make themselves known upon arrival.
>> Okay. That's good. The reason why I asked that question is because I know and perhaps you had some‑‑well, maybe some issues or some concerns about the IVR calls that comes in and this is one thing I had said that I would discuss after talking to a number of blind individuals that utilize the service as well as others, when they receive‑‑when they make their reservations, the reservations give them the time after hearing from the patron what time they need to be at a specific location. Then the reservationist gives them that time, let's say for an instance they say they have to be at a place at 8:30 a.m., well, the reservationist will give them a time maybe about 7‑‑depending on the location, 7:15 or something that you be ready or your van will arrive at that particular time, and I know it's just an estimated time. Then you get an IVR call and the call give you a different time saying that instead of 7:15 maybe 7:45. Do you find that very confusing‑‑well, not confusing but which time do you believe because sometimes the van do show up at the specified time that the reservationist gave the customer or sometimes it will arrive a lot later than the IVR call, and I know it gives the option of calling back and calling in to check on the IVR time that was given when they received the IVR call it will let you know what time your van will be arriving. Sometimes it will arrive earlier, sometimes it will arrive late. Do you find that and that is an issue with a lot of the customers because when they call me and say well, our van is late, and that's what the‑‑that's what we're trying to do trying to minimize the number of late pick‑ups and/or either cancellations at the door a person said well, I cannot wait that long and then they make other arrangements, but they will be tagged with a no‑show. Do you find sometimes that that's an issue with the IVR calls and the reservationist giving a time of van arrival?
>> So yes, sir. I do understand how that could be very confusing.
>> Okay. I just wanted to make sure that I got that question out because I've been asked many times to bring it up. Bring it up at the next meeting and I say well, I'll bring it up. When I get enough people who have experienced that because I don't want to say well, it's me and so forth and so on, I want to speak for the people whom I represent. So I was told to‑‑I was asked to bring that up and have that on the table for discussion. I said well, we'll see what the difference between reservationist giving you a time and then you receiving an IVR call and it's giving you a time.
>> So the time‑‑and thank you for your question. The time that the reservationist quotes you when you book your trip, that is your time. That is the time for the customer to be ready and that is the time or the start of the 30 minute window where we are supposed to arrive, pick up. Unfortunately, we don't always get there within those 30 minutes. So again, I absolutely understand what you're asking, what you're stating, and the confusion associated with the ready time, the 30 minute window, the IVR, ETA. It's a lot of different times and the actual time the bus shows up. It's a lot of different times and none of them are rarely the times the reservationist and the customer agreed to. So the IVR, it's pulling information from the computerized system based on the global positioning of the bus meaning where the bus is and what the system sees as its potential time to arrive to pick up.
>> Okay.
>> So unfortunately, the system can't see traffic, it can't see detours. It can't see anything that the bus is actually encountering or experiencing, all it sees is where the bus is, where it has to go and what time it's supposed to be there and what time it's going to get there. So that's where a lot of the confusion may come from with the IVR because if the IVR says the bus is 5 minutes away and then the bus get detoured and IVR call back and say the bus is now 20 minutes away, it's like how did you go from 5 to 20.
>> right.
>> Again, I agree, it is confusing. What we're doing is basically we're trying to survey all of the factors and there are so many factors like nobody can write them all, but we're trying to survey all of the factors to clean those up so that we can minimize the confusion.
>> Okay. And I must congratulate you all for instituting the Uber because we've had that once before, not Uber, but it was within MARTA was utilizing a lot of the vehicles that they had purchased and that was working and one of the things that since they were doing in‑house it seemed to work for a lot of reasons other than getting‑‑I mean, getting people to their destination on time because there are a lot of issues with overhangs and van can't get there and get up to the location where the passenger is and so forth and so on. So maybe this instituting this will help in the on‑time performance and it will help when the‑‑that's why I was asking the questions about how would the patron know that that person is out there, will they have back‑up signals, will they come to the door, or will there be a call issued to the customer if the driver is not getting out of his or her vehicle and coming there knocking on the day saying that I am MARTA or will they be uniformed so that people who can see will know that that that is a user employee instead of‑‑since they will be using their personal vehicles but it will be ‑‑ as you said, it will be have a MARTA logo on it or it will have the company's name on it so that the person who can see will recognize that. But for people who can't see that is ambulatory like myself, I won't know. So unless that person call me and say well, hey, your ride is here. So that's why I was asking the question.
>> Understood. And thanks for that question. So again, the driver will make themselves known to the rider upon arrival. So that is a part of the agreement that they have with First Transit, and it's a part of their rating procedure.
>> okay. I look forward to checking it out myself to see how it works.
>> No problem. And for what it's worth, the first however long it takes, we will be monitoring this very, very closely to conquertize the good parts and improve the not so‑‑I don't want to say anything bad but to improve the not so good part so it may be some tinkering and tankering going on during initial implementation so if you do by chance have the priviledge to ride in a Uzurv vehicle and you have feedback, please share that with your committee members, as well as Ms. Brown, she'll feed it to us and we'll see which way we need to go to address those issues.
>> Okay. And one other question before you go, Ms. Davis. Will the operator have the card reading system set up in their vehicle?
>> I'm sorry.
>> the trip?
>> That will be‑‑
>> Okay, let me repeat the question. Will the user operator have the card reading equipment, the MARTA mobility card is what I'm speaking about, or if they don't have money on their card, they have cash money to give to the operator. Are they equipped or have they been educated to that degree about how to accept payment for the ride?
>> Yes. Yes. So I don't have the language directly in front of me so I can't read it verbatim; however, they are prepared to collect fare be it cash or breeze, and they're also implementing, it's called an API, please don't ask me what API is because I don't. It's some sort of technological piece that integrates with our fare collection system to make that process even more seamless so that's in the work as well. As of tomorrow, fare will be collected as is standard on the buses.
>> Okay. So since the user they will be using their own personal cars. Then my next question was‑‑well, anyway, you know, to make it uniform just like your vans are already uniformed, the user will be using, you know, their personal vehicles so it will be‑all kinds of colors, shapes and sizes and I just assume, so the only thing that will be constant is that the operator will know how to deal with people with disabilities, he or she will have that training up front other than saying okay, what kind of vehicle is it, is it a four door, two door, so forth and so on. So anyway, that was my question. That was some of the questioning that I had for the user system that you all are employing and hopefully that will increase the number of people needing to get where they need to go. I'm sorry, kind of tongue tied this morning. But nevertheless, to get where they need to go. So I'm looking forward to hearing the results of the service.
>> Thank you.
>> Okay. Ms. Davis, I don't think we have any other hands up. Do we, Denise?
>> I don't have a hand up, but I have a question.
>> Okay. Mr. Lossie, go ahead.
>> First of all, how do you spell Uzurv?
>> It's U‑z‑u‑r‑v, Uzurv.
>> Okay.
>> And Robert asked my payment question, that's great to know. And when this user vehicle is given the orders to go pick somebody up, will the MARTA rider know to be on the look out for Uzurv versus the MARTA mobility van?
>> Ms. Davis, did you hear the question? Hello?
>> I'm sorry. My mute got stuck. Can you repeat the question, Mr. Lossie?
>> So when the decision to use Uzurv is made by MARTA, will the rider be told to be on the look out for the Uzurv bus rather than the MARTA mobility bus?
>> At the point of reservation no, at the point of reservation basically no one will no if that trip will go to Uzurv, it's well after the reservation period.
>> Somebody sitting inside waiting on their ride to show up, how will they know to be on the look out for Uzurv versus a great big old mobility van?
>> So again, for the riders guide, customers should be ready to board once their ready time begins so in that regard, that's where the operator or the operator will make themselves known upon arrival so the customer is aware the Uzurv vehicle is there to transport.
>> And somebody‑‑is the user only taking advantage of by MARTA when you are completely booked or can a rider even request the Uzurv instead of the big MARTA van?
>> I'm going to say no to that because at current, you can't request a particular operator or mini van or an L van so we can't make those preferential request at the writ of creating a disparity amongst our ridership.
>> Got it. Thank you.
>> Okay. Well, since there are no other questions to come up before you Ms. Davis, I appreciate your presentation, and thank you. Denise, when is‑‑we don't have anybody else to come before the committee at this time, so what is the next date of our MAC meeting?
>> The next staff meeting is May the 9th, and I want to remind all of you on the call if you want to participate in the mobility beta testing to let me know. I'll make sure the members who are not here to contact them after the meeting.
>> So you need that information today Denise?
>> Yes.
>> Okay.
>> Thank you.
>> Since there's no other business to come before this committee, it stands adjourned. Thank you all.
>> Thank you.
>> Thank you.
>> Bye everyone.