

**MINUTES
HYBRID MEETING OF THE
GENERAL MANAGER'S ACCESS COMMITTEE (GMAC)
NOVEMBER 12, 2024**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL and Introduction of Members and Guests

GMAC members present:

Erika Bruhns, Chair	Chonita Chew
Warren Cushman	Shawn Fong, Vice Chair
Melissa Getz	Andrea Johnson
Sandra Johnson (1:11)	Daveed Mandell
James Robson	Barbara Williams

GMAC members absent:

Kiran Agarwal (excused)	Monique Chapman (excused)
Roland Wong	

Staff:

Tammy Kylo, Administrative Coordinator
Kim Ridgeway, Senior Program Specialist
Mallory Nestor-Brush, Accessible Services Manager
Robert del Rosario, Director of Service Development and Planning
Michael Eshleman, Planning Manager
David Berman, Senior Transportation Planner/Realign Project Manager
Ahsan Baig, Chief Technology Officer
Nichele Laynes, Director of Marketing/Communications/Customer Services
Debora Garcia, Customer Service Manager
Michael Paine, IT Supervisor, Software Engineering
Joya Rogers, IT Project Manager
Marvin DeLeon, Training and Education Assistant Manager
Dan Talbott, Program Specialist, Customer Service
Chris Durant, Assistant Director of Maintenance
Claudia Burgos, Director of Legislative Affairs and Community Relations

Guests: Diane Shaw, Vice President, Board of Directors

3. ORDER OF AGENDA

The order of agenda was approved.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

4.A. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Robson/Fong approved the October 8, 2024, GMAC meeting minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES – 8: Bruhns, Chew, Cushman, Fong, Getz, Mandell, Robson, Williams

ABSTENTIONS – 2: A. Johnson, S. Johnson
 ABSENT – 3: Agarwal, Chapman, Wong

5. REGULAR UPDATES

5.A. Service Planning Update.

Robert del Rosario, Director of Service Development and Planning, reported that the December sign-ups will include some transbay improvement due to overcrowding, there's also a regional effort to look at improved interagency connections. There will also be reliability improvements on lines 56 and 72, improving Saturday and Sunday reliability on Tempo, and School Service adjustments.

Jim Robson asked about the effect funding has on Realign if there is no money from the Federal Government. Robert replied that Realign is cost neutral.

Public Comment – Michai Freeman stated she has not heard anything about service cuts on AC Transit, and paratransit coverage is equally as important and should not be reduced. Robert replied that if funding increases, we can even increase services if the demand is within the parameters that we have set for Paratransit.

Warren Cushman voiced concern regarding the funding for AC Transit and encouraged the community to get involved with local and regional discussions. Warren also asked about fare evasion on the Tempo line. Robert replied that it is extremely high and Staff is looking at some different options.

5.B. Operator Training Update.

Marvin DeLeon, Training and Education Assistant Manager, reported that the Training and Education Department (TED) is now an accredited program and has established a partnership with Chabot/Las Positas College where students can take maintenance training at the Training and Education Center (TEC) and obtain 3 units towards college courses.

New Bus Operator (NBO) classes start approximately every month, and every class holds about 22 NBOs. NBOs go through 11 weeks of classroom, field and hands-on training, which includes customer service and accessibility training. Year-to-date, 156 new bus operators have graduated.

Veteran Bus Operator annual refresher training is held 2 times a week, 8 times a month, or 96 times a year. Veteran Bus Operators must take this annual training in order to maintain their license and credentials. Highlights of annual training include road sharing with bicycles, identifying human trafficking, and of course, accessibility and securement training.

There is also a Transportation Mentor program where a Veteran Bus Operator is assigned to an NBO as a mentor. The support the mentor gives to the NBO has been great in promoting the success of newer operators.

Marvin concluded by encouraging Committee members to volunteer for the GMAC/Veteran Bus Operator Meet Ups and thanked Kim Ridgeway for her continued efforts in coordinating the events. Marvin also thanked Jim Robson and Melissa Getz in particular for the number of times they've volunteered and thanked Melissa, again, for the mobility equipment she donated to the TEC.

Jim Robson thanked Marvin and the Training Department for the wonderful job that they do, the way they keep current with the needs for the disabled community, and how the good work is reflected in AC Transit's performance in national competitions and rodeos. Jim concluded by strongly encouraging other Committee Members to volunteer for the GMAC/Veteran Bus Operator meet ups, as it's a rewarding experience for all involved.

Warren Cushman asked if the training included any mental health programs for employees, so that from a crisis intervention point of view, we can avoid the need for law enforcement, which oftentimes makes the situation more difficult. Marvin responded that the District has an Employee Assistance Program. Dir. Shaw also mentioned that operators go through de-escalation training as NBOs and during annual refresher training.

5.C. AC Transit Website Accessibility Update.

Joya Rogers, IT Project Manager, gave an update on website and mobile app accessibility, stating that the Department of Justice (DOJ) recently established a final rule that sets the standard for how online content needs to be available, with a compliance deadline of April 2026. Staff has already been tracking what needs to be done, and the goal is to deliver an exceptional transit experience by surpassing the DOJ's standards to ensure not only accessibility, but an intuitive and user-friendly solution for all riders.

The AC Transit website is ADA compliant as of April 2024 and is audited annually. An external partner reviews and audits the website for any changes that may need to be made; those changes are remediated and then released to the public. In terms of next steps and ongoing efforts, Staff is going beyond the DOJ standard and is also evaluating training options for internal development and partner teams, to ensure new features adhere to current and future standards.

The existing mobile app was audited and remediated in 2001 and does not require further audits. However, a new mobile app will be launching soon, and it will also adhere to and the latest accessibility standards. The 3rd party partner reviews operating system updates to ensure compliance with the latest standards and when the new version is ready, it will be formally audited and presented to the GMAC before it's released to the public. Staff has a planned beta testing period before public review but would love to have the experiences tested by the GMAC. Joya concluded by stating that she and the team will work with Kim Ridgeway to get testing details to the GMAC when the time comes.

Warren Cushman asked if any local blind organizations, have been selected to help test the mobile app and website accessibility. He also stated he would like to be a part of the testing group. Michael Paine, IT Supervisor, Software Engineering, responded that several organizations, including those who work with blind individuals, are on the list. And when the testing period is ready, Staff will reach out to interested individuals, including those on this Committee.

5.D. Customer Service Quarterly Report.

Debora Garcia, Customer Services Manager, gave an update of the key performance indicators (KPIs) for the period of July – September 2024. Debora reported that there was a 5% increase in call volume. The 20 second service levels averaged a 75% answer rate, and the 3 min service levels averaged a

97% answer rate. Travel information continues to be the main reason for contact. Trip planning calls averaged 273 per month, commendations and feedback averaged 361 calls per month, and fare questions averaged 144 per month. 589 RTC Card applications were processed this quarter, which is an 8% increase from the previous quarter, with 35% of these applications being replacement applications.

5.E. Review of Quarterly ADA Complaints.

Tammy Kylo, Administrative Coordinator, gave an update on the Quarterly Complaints Report, which compared 1st Quarter FY24 to 1st Quarter FY25. Tammy highlighted the Commendations, Conduct and Discourtesy, and Pass up categories.

Andrea Johnson asked for clarification on what Hazardous Operation means. Dan Talbott, Program Specialist, Customer Service, responded that it could be a few things, including driving with high beams on, speeding, or straddling lanes.

Shawn Fong commented that she also brought up at last month's meeting the 2 pass ups on September 10th and 11th on line 57. She emphasized the importance of reminding the drivers to not move to the left lane when approaching Chatham because they will pass up people at the bus stop. Shawn also mentioned another pass up on November 5th during her travel training session when the 215 passed an entire group of seniors.

Robert del Rosario commented that on the line 57, when the driver makes the stop on Chatham, they must immediately go over 2 lanes and make a left onto Park, which has been difficult. This is not an excuse for skipping the stop. However, Staff is looking at moving the bus stop back one block, which would give the operator the space needed to stop at the stop and then get into the left turn lane.

5.F. Review Ramp Road Call Report.

Tammy Kylo, Administrative Coordinator, gave an overview of the Ramp Road Call report, which covered October 1 – 31, 2024. There was a total of nine (9) road calls, all of which passed the pre-trip and all of which were chargeable.

Erika Bruhns asked if most of the buses this month on the report were the older buses. Chris Durant said that is correct: the 1300 is the oldest fleet we have and will be retired soon.

6. STANDING REPORTS

6.A. Chair's Report

None.

6.B. Board Liaison Report

Vice President Shaw reported that the District is continuing to have conversations on the regional funding measure. Shaw also emphasized the importance of the public putting in customer service tickets so that issues with operators can be addressed. Supervision knows what's happening on the road when customers report via phone calls, emails and the online form.

Erika asked about the results of the election for the AC Transit Board. Dir. Shaw responded that Director Walsh ran unopposed and will continue as the Director of Ward 1, which is where Director

Beckles was serving. Chris Peebles also ran unopposed. For the new Ward 6, which covers Newark and Hayward, Curtis Silwa was elected and will be sworn in on December 6th.

6.C. Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) PAPCO Report

Kim Ridgeway, Senior Program Specialist, reported that at the October 28th Paratransit Advisory and Planning Committee (PAPCO) meeting, the Committee voted to move the approval of the Implementation Guidelines and Performance Measures for the Special Transportation for Seniors and People with Disabilities Program for FY 2025-26 to their January 2025 meeting. The Committee also received an update on Paratransit Direct Local Distribution (DLD) Program Reserves where Staff confirmed that all jurisdictions are in compliance with the timely use of funds for the reporting period and that ADA paratransit programs do not generally maintain Measure BB reserves, as these programs exhaust all pass-through funds and must use operating funds to cover additional costs.

The next PAPCO meeting is January 27, 2025, at 1:30 PM and this is a hybrid meeting, though PAPCO members are required to meet in person at the Alameda CTC offices at 1111 Broadway. More info can be found at alamedactc.org.

6.D. East Bay Paratransit Access Committee (EBPAC) Report

Mallory Nestor-Brush, Accessible Services Manager, reported that the East Bay Paratransit Access Committee (EBPAC) received the Broker's Report which looked at the KPIs from July – September 2024. The Committee also received the Driver of the Month report, which they requested be posted to the website as there are new and veteran bus operators that are recognized. Finally, the Committee received a report on the results from the annual Customer Satisfaction Survey; and for the 1st time in 2 decades, drivers, call center/reservationists, as well as overall satisfaction, received financial incentives for meeting or exceeding established thresholds. It was a very positive survey.

6.E. GMAC/Veteran Bus Operator Meet Up Report

Kim Ridgeway, Senior Program Specialist, reported that there was no October meet up due to lack of volunteers. The next meet up is scheduled for Thursday, November 21st from 10 am – 12 pm at the Training and Education Center in Hayward. Kim sent an email requesting volunteers and asked the Committee to reply via email if they are available for the November session.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

8. MEMBER/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jim Robson asked how this Committee can participate in funding discussions, in particular the Ballot measures that would fund regional transportation.

Mallory Nestor Brush responded that the regional measure is going to the MTC Commission again on December 9th, and Staff can bring an update to the GMAC at a future meeting. Mallory also thanked the Committee for their service and efforts and how they represent their communities and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & NEXT MEETING DATE

The next GMAC Meeting will be held Tuesday, December 10, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. This will be a hybrid meeting.

Future Agenda Items:

- Discussion on travel training/orientation and mobility [Requested by Warren Cushman on February 13, 2024]

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Tammy Kylo

Secretary to the Committee