

ELDERLY AND DISABLED TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EDTAC)

Committee Meeting Minutes
Via Teams & Teleconference
Wednesday, November 13, 2024
1:00 - 3:00 pm

The Elderly and Disable Transit Advisory Committee (EDTAC) met Wednesday, November 13, 2024, at 1:00 pm via Teams and Teleconference.

In attendance:

EDTAC Members:

Blake Roberts, Chair
Laura Waterland
James Shiber
Kathleen McCool

Guest:

Katie Yoder
Carol King-Ries
Lewis Rolph

Members Absent:

Catrina Gosine

DTC Representatives:

John Sisson, Chief Executive Officer
Lynette Shannon, Reservation Supervisor
Margaret Webb, Paratransit Director
Paul Kulesza, Fixed Route Director
Shannon Lugo, Civil Rights Specialist
Lorachel Baldwin, Civil Rights Specialist
Lori Yeager, Paratransit Support Manager
Tremica Cherry-Wall, Planner
Patrico Owens, Eligibility Supervisor
Paul Kulesza, Fixed Route Director
Albert Loyola, Deputy Chief Customer Experience Officer
Courtney DeVane, Deputy Chief Operating Officer

Call to Order

Blake Roberts, Chair called meeting to order. July 10, 2024, meeting minutes were approved by the committee.

Round Table Introductions

Introductions by committee members and DTC's staff.

Concerns Regarding Paratransit:

Kathleen McCool expressed concerns regarding the securement of DTC Paratransit buses when operators leave the vehicle. In response, Margaret Webb clarified that DTC operators are required to maintain sight of the bus while picking up and dropping off passengers. DTC is currently revising its policies and will be reviewing Paratransit procedures to ensure they are safe.

Laura Waterland inquired about DTC training regarding Service Animals, stating that an operator asked a customer more detailed questions about Service Animals than required. Shannon Lugo noted that DTC has just completed the second round of training and requested additional details regarding the situation so DTC could investigate the incident

Prospective Member(s) Q&A and Vote to Join EDTAC:

EDTAC voted yes for Lewis Rolph to become an EDTAC member.

DTC Updates:**Paratransit On-Time Performance:**

Margaret Webb, Paratransit Director Paratransit (Data sent via email)

July 2024 – statewide trip count 68,334

NCC: 38,610 - 67% on-time;

KC :13,991 - 82% on-time;

SC :15,733 - 77% on-time

August 2024 – statewide trip count 68,328

NCC:39,179 - 66% on-time;

KC - 13,241 - 83% on-time;

SC :15,908 - 78% on-time

September 2024 – statewide trip count 69,780

NCC:39,686 - 59% on-time;

KC:14,860 - 76% on-time;

SC:15,334 - 77% on-time

October 2024 – statewide trip count 80,433

NCC:45,506 - 61% on-time;

KC:17,096 - 77% on-time;

SC:17,831 - 78% on-time

Fixed Route On Time Performance:

Paul Kulesza, Fixed Route Director

July 2024

NCC: 66%

KC: 79%

SC: 62%

August 2024

NCC: 65%

KC: 78%

SC: 60%

September 2024

NCC: 62%

KC: 77%

SC: 64%

October 2024

NCC: 61%

KC: 78%

SC: 65%

The on-time performance for New Castle County has not improved recently. Kent County's performance is stable, staying in the low to mid-80s, with fluctuations due to less traffic and fewer detours.

In New Castle County, we have been working with the Union on a comprehensive study, which is currently underway. A recent pick was held a couple of weeks ago, and new runs will begin on Monday, January 17th. This will be a short-term schedule, as the comprehensive study will continue through February 2025. Another schedule update is expected by February 23rd or 25th to improve routes. Between now and the beginning of January, various teams from operations, scheduling, and planning will be actively riding buses for 7-8 hours per day, collecting detailed data such as wheelchair usage, passenger counts, and fare types. This data will be used to identify improvements, improvements are expected by February 2025.

Updates from DTC:

Courtney DeVane shared that DTC is acquiring new MCI buses for the

Fixed Route Fleet. These new buses will offer improved accessibility for passengers who utilize wheelchairs by eliminating the need for ramps, allowing wheelchair users to sit on a lower level of the bus. Courtney presented images of the bus and sought EDTAC's input on the bus layout. Concerns were raised that the designated wheelchair seating area could create a perception of segregation, as passengers who utilize wheelchairs would be seated in a separate section of the bus. EDTAC recommended seeking input from a larger group to address this concern.

Lori Yeager shared that DTC currently approves elderly only passengers starting at age 65 but would like to raise the age limit to 70. Noting that the FTA has set the elderly age at 85 for eligibility. Carol King-Ries recommended raising the age to 75 instead of 70.

Albert Loyola extended an invitation to DART's Paratransit 50-year celebration event on December 2nd at 10:00 AM in Dover.

Albert Loyola shared that the DART Connect app will be discontinued. Customers wishing to book trips for DART Connect will now use a new app, the "DART Transit" app.

Adjourn