



HAMPTON ROADS TRANSIT

Hampton Roads Transit Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

2nd Floor Board Room

3400 Victoria Blvd, Hampton, Va.

Hybrid Meeting, Virtual Attendees via Zoom

Wednesday, April 12, 2023

1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Work Session (Committee Members Only) – Noon to 1:00

Webinar Etiquette

- Use headsets to improve audio clarity
- Remember to use your telephone OR computer for audio – not both
- When joining the call by phone, press # without stating your name, especially if the meeting has already started.
- Refrain from placing the call “on hold”; instead “Mute” your device
- Mute your phone/computer mic until you are speaking, then state your name before you begin
- Be aware that in video-enabled meetings you are always visible to all participants
- The virtual meetings will be recorded by the Host

Please note that prior to the start of the official meeting, there will be a reading of the 2/8/2023 minutes for anyone needing to hear them from 12:15 PM – 12:30 PM.

- 1. Call to order – Welcome, introductions, and virtual guidelines**
- 2. Approval of February Minutes**
- 3. Public Comment**
- 4. Chairman’s Report – Mr. Troy Bowser**

5. Service Updates

- **Via Update**

6. Subcommittees' Reports

- **Service Quality – Ms. Janice Taylor**
- **Policy – Ms. Rene` Rogers**
- **Membership – Mr. Paul Atkinson Jr.**
Wanda Boykin, Chesapeake Consumer interested in joining.
- **Training – TBD**
- **Outreach – Ms. Janice Taylor**

7. Paratransit Operations & Certifications Reports

8. Old Business

- **Transit Service updates taking effect 05/14/2023.**

9. New Business

- **Free Fare Day (Earth Day): April 21, 2023**

The next Paratransit Advisory Committee Meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, June 14, at 1:00 PM. Our next meeting is currently scheduled for HRT's Second Floor Board Room at 509 East 18th Street, Norfolk, Va. and/or virtual format.

(Actual location and format are subject to change)

Adjournment



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Paratransit Advisory Committee

February 8, 2023

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order.

A quorum was attained and Committee Chair, Mr. Troy Bowser called the meeting to order at 1:34 pm.

Note: late start due to prior meeting in the Board Room

Introductions were made.

Committee Members in Attendance

Alicia Griffin, Vice-Chair, Newport News Consumer (Zoom)

Catherine Tyler-Northan, Newport News Provider (Zoom)

Deloris Haywood, Portsmouth Consumer (Zoom)

Denise Wilkins, Hampton Consumer (Zoom)

Jeff Raliski, HRTPO Ex-Officio (Zoom)

Joann Mancuso, Virginia Beach Provider (Zoom)

Keith Ferguson, Consumer, Hampton Extra member (Zoom)

Mary Mathena, Virginia Beach Consumer (Zoom)

Paul Atkinson, Jr., Chesapeake Provider (Zoom)

Renee Rodgers, Norfolk Consumer (Zoom)

Travis Webb, Norfolk Consumer (Zoom)

Troy Bowser, Chair, Virginia Beach Provider

HRT Staff in Attendance

Amy Braziel, Director of Contracted Services and Operational Analytics (Zoom)

April Edwards, Sr. Executive Assistant

Keith Johnson, Paratransit Services Contract Administrator

Linda Carroll, Bus Transportation Supervisor

Malika Blume, Director of Internal Audit (Zoom)

Tammara Askew, Administrative Support Technician

Others in Attendance

Annie Ascher (Zoom)

Charity Smith, VIA

Debbie Menadier (Zoom)

Denice Johnson, TRAC Chair

Edriene Johnson-Butcher (Zoom)

Ina Kreps, Portsmouth Consumer

Javier Rodriguez, VIA

Mary Pharris, VIA (Zoom)

Michael Ortiz, VIA



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Patricia Harvey
Tiffanie Belgrave (Zoom)
Janice Taylor, Virginia Beach Past Chair (Zoom)
Tricia Harvey, Insight enterprise

The February Paratransit Committee meeting package was distributed electronically to committee members in advance of the meeting. The meeting package consisted of:

- Agenda
- Committee Roster
- Minutes from the Previous Meeting
- Paratransit Advisory Committee Guidelines

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Troy Bowser requested a motion for the approval of the December 2022 meeting minutes with corrections. Ms. Alicia Griffin introduced the motion which was seconded by Ms. Catherine Taylor-Northan. Additional corrections were announced; Ms. Janice Taylor will submit corrections at a future date. The minutes, with corrections, were unanimously approved.

Public Comment

Ms. Edriene Johnson-Butcher informed the committee of an experience with a driver that was rude and confrontational; She requested that the driver/incident be investigated.

Action Item: Mr. Keith Johnson, after receiving an approximate time, stated that the trip will be investigated.

Action Item: Mr. Michael Ortiz stated that he will personally investigate that trip and have the necessary conversation with the driver.

Ms. Debbie Menadier, program manager for Free Foundation (Rehabbing equipment and endowment), explained her Foundation's process of distributing and accepting gently used mobility and bathroom equipment, i.e. wheelchairs, shower chairs, etc.

Action Item: Ms. Menadier will send Troy Bowser additional information as well as a PowerPoint presentation for the Free Foundation.

Action Item: Mr. Bowser has agreed to distribute the information to the committee members.

Chairman's Report-Mr. Troy Bowser



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Mr. Bowser stated that he Chaired the Paratransit Advisory Committee meeting on December 14, 2022, in Norfolk, VA. Mr. Bowser stated that Legislative News and updates, given by Ms. Noelle Pinkard, included federal and State funding, CIP's (Capital improvement Program) focus on transforming the paratransit fleet to electric, and operator shortages.

Mr. Bowser stated the there was discussion on supporting the accessible taxis program. Mr. Bowser stated that there will be a follow-up with Ms. Swystun regarding how the Paratransit Advisory Committee can support the effort.

Mr. Bowser stated that he is still receiving complaints about riders being left and/or picked up late. Mr. Bowser stated that there was a discussion about new procedures to solve this problem.

- Question 1: What is the new procedure?
- Question 2: How does it benefit the riders of paratransit?

Mr. Bowser presented an example of a complaint from a rider. After sharing his concerns, Mr. Bowser stated that this type of situation needs to be investigated. Mr. Bowser stated that there is a major breakdown in communication between the client and the service provider. Mr. Bowser stated that safety becomes an issue when the customer is stranded, and communication is not clear between both parties.

Mr. Bowser stated that he has received several complaints from clients that included threats of legal action. Mr. Bowser stated that these complaints include, but are not limited to, the amount of time dialysis patients are on the vehicle. Mr. Bowser stated that the amount of time is a result of scheduling.

- Question 1: Who does the scheduling?
- Question 2: Where is the scheduling department located?
- Question 3: What can be done for more efficient transportation?

Mr. Bowser stated that he has advised clients to call the HRT's complaint line, (757-222-6100), to address concerns. Mr. Bowser stated that he has provided this contact information.

Mr. Ortiz answered the scheduling questions submitted by Mr. Bowser. Mr. Ortiz explained that VIA doesn't have an external scheduling department. Mr. Ortiz stated that drivers provide their availability and time constraints. The system then looks at the need for the day, availability of the vehicles, and optimal routes to service client request.

Ms. Deloris Haywood expressed concern about the amount of time dialysis patients spend on the transit after a procedure.

Mr. Johnson stated that under FTA regulations, we are not allowed to prioritize trips. This includes dialysis, medical, and work trips. Mr. Johnson stated that every trip has the same priority because it is just as important to everyone who uses the service. Mr. Johnson stated that though we understand the fatigue that a dialysis patient may experience after a treatment, we just aren't allowed to prioritize trips. Mr. Johnson stated that we are not a specialized transportation provider, i.e. medical only, work only, etc.



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Mr. Bowser asked Mr. Ortiz how to respond to statements from clients who express a desire to file legal action against VIA.

Mr. Ortiz stated that if a client expresses a desire to take action outside of the processes provided through VIA and HRT, please provide him with the information. Mr. Ortiz stated that he will ensure that VIA's legal department is apprised.

Ms. Denice Johnson asked the following questions:

- Question 1: Do VIA drivers have mandatory overtime like HRT drivers? Do they have days when they must come to work?
- Question 2: How are passengers stranded when they are scheduled along fixed routes?

Mr. Ortiz requested a clarification of "stranded passenger". Mr. Ortiz stated that VIA hasn't had a stranded customer for a year and a half. A rider who hasn't been picked-up during their pick-up window is either considered a missed but transported rider if we pick them up, or a missed not transported rider if they find other transportation. Mr. Ortiz stated that our commitment to our riders is that a ride will arrive even if the ride is late.

Mr. Johnson added that, though the customer of the 2-hour late trip may have felt stranded, we are still working to get that customer transported. Mr. Johnson stated that HRT's internal policy is that we will never leave any customer stranded at a location that we initially took them to. Mr. Johnson added this is the policy, so long as the original return trip is scheduled inside of the service window, the rider will be picked up even if it is outside of the regular service hours. Mr. Johnson stated that the rider must call us and inform us of the situation. Mr. Johnson stated that the clock starts when we receive the call, even if the call is made 2 hours after the trip was scheduled.

Service Update

HRT service delivery review & updates

Mr. Johnson provided a service overview for the following topics:

Cities Served, Locations, Time of Service Availability, Origin to Destination, Passenger Assistance, Shared Ride Service, Reservations, Pick-up Window, and trip ride time.

(This information is available in the welcome packet that was sent to clients along with their ID.)

Using the service

- Clients who are pre-approved may bring along one Personal Care Attendant (PCA). PCA's do not pay a fare.
- Clients may also bring along one companion (who also pays a fare). Children accompanying a client ride for free. Additional riders on a trip must be scheduled at the time of booking and will be scheduled based on space availability.



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- All approved service animals are allowed. Known clients with service animals will only be transported in a van as the sedans may not offer sufficient space.
- A client must use a seatbelt in the front seat of a Sedan and are strongly encouraged to use a seatbelt anytime they are on a vehicle. However, HRT cannot force a client to wear a seatbelt since this is not a requirement on fixed route bus services.
- Rider Technology: Clients receive automated courtesy trip reminders via text/call the day before, 5 to 15 minutes prior to, and upon vehicle arrival. These courtesy reminders should not take the place of the set pickup window established when the trip was scheduled.
- Ride is early: Riders are not required to board the vehicle prior to their scheduled pickup window. Should the ride arrive early, the driver must wait 5 minutes in the rider's pickup window before moving on to the next customer.
- Ride is late: A trip is considered late 1 minute past the pickup window. Clients can choose to not take the trip without being charged with a late cancellation violation at that time.

Mr. Johnson reviewed the new paratransit service vehicles.

VIA Update

Ms. Mary Pharris is the new Director for VIA.

Mr. Ortiz reviewed Via Service numbers. Mr. Ortiz stated that in 2022, they completed 338,181 rides for a total of 4,175,750 miles. Additional information was reviewed such as number of completed trips, pick-up/drop-off on time performance, average trip duration and average trips per hour per vehicle.

Mr. Javier Rodriguez reviewed driver concerns.

Ms. Charity Smith mentioned that VIA is hosting a job fair for office staff members as well as drivers on February 16,2023.

Action Item: Ms. Smith will be sending Mr. Johnson a link for the registration for the job fair.

Action Item: Mr. Johnson will be distributing that information to the committee members.

Mr. Bowser stated that 90% on time drop-off/pick-up seems high for the number of complaints that I received. How is that number calculated?



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Mr. Ortiz stated that at the end of each day, calculation of on time performance percentage and drop-off time percentage are completed. The aforementioned 90% is calculated by the total daily percents divided by the number of days for the month. Mr. Ortiz stated that it's possible that you are only hearing about the tough days that were below 90% OTP.

Subcommittee Reports

Service Quality – Ms. Janice Taylor

Ms. Taylor began her report by opening the floor to concerns.

Ms. Rene' Rodgers stated several different concerns and a request. The first involved being dropped off at the wrong address. Ms. Rodgers requested an announcement of location upon arrival. Ms. Rodgers' next concern involved unnotified changes to the pick-up window. Ms. Rodgers states that at booking, she is given a pickup window. This window would change to an earlier time frame the very next day. Lastly, Ms. Rodgers' concern is related to the late notification of the last free ride day. Ms. Rogers states that given the requirement of booking a trip before 5:00 pm the day prior, clients were unable to take advantage of the free day due to the notification being sent late.

Action Item: Mr. Ortiz will investigate why the address to Target on Ms. Rodger's Friday trip was incorrect.

Mr. Ortiz requests that the client always voice concerns about a destination once they have arrived. Mr. Ortiz reiterated that the client doesn't have to rush to meet the driver if he/she/they arrive early.

Action Item: Mr. Ortiz will investigate why a pick-up window would change.

Ms. Smith stated that drivers are not able to mark a client as a no show before the window has started. Ms. Smith stated that the feature isn't available to the driver until after the pickup window has started.

Mr. Travis Webb stated that it is important to mention the roadway term, Rd., St., Blvd., Ave., etc., after the street name to make sure that you are dropped off at the correct location. Kempsville Rd. and Kempsville Ave., for example, are two separate places.

Mr. Webb has two questions:

- Question 1. Why aren't riders called/informed when they are sent a cab?
- Question 2. Why are drivers going on break when they are assigned to pick me up between 4:35 pm to 5:05 pm?

Action item: Mr. Ortiz will look into making sure that riders know that they are expecting a cab instead of a paratransit vehicle. That is something that can be brought up with the cab company.

Action item: Mr. Ortiz will review the number of times a driver is put on break when they are supposed to pick Mr. Webb up.



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Ms. Taylor stated that some of the drivers are being verbally abused by clients. Ms. Taylor asked about the rider policy.

Mr. Johnson mentioned that though disabilities are considered, a few paratransit clients have, in the past, been banned from all HRT services due to violation of the rider policy.

Ms. Taylor states that she would like her letter addressed.

Policy – Ms. Rene’ Rodgers

There was no report regarding policy.

Membership- – Mr. Paul Atkinson Jr.

Mr. Atkinson reported that Mr. Thomas Hewitt term expired in October 2022, Mr. Paul Atkinson Jr. and Ms. Patricia Brown term expires February 2023, and Ms. Catherine Tyler-Northan term expires in April 2023. Mr. Atkinson reported openings in the following cities:

- 2 Extra Member
- 2 Chesapeake, Consumer
- 1 Chesapeake, Provider
- 1 Hampton, Consumer
- 1 Norfolk, Consumer
- 1 Portsmouth, Provider
- 1 Virginia Beach, Provider
- 1 Hampton, Provider
- 1 HRT, Administrative Coordinator

Training – TBD

There was no new report regarding training.

Outreach – Ms. Janice Taylor

Ms. Taylor emailed Mr. Johnson about employment opportunities for distribution.

Ms. Taylor stated that though state bill 1330 that involved rent and utilities passed in the senate, it failed in the house.

Paratransit Operations & Certifications Report

Mr. Johnson reported on paratransit operations as enclosed in the meeting package.

Old Business

There was no report regarding Old Business.



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New Business

Mr. Johnson stated that a new fixed route board begins on May 14, 2023. Mr. Johnson stated that the 114 will be expanding service from 5 am to 1 am on weekdays, 6am to 12 am on weekends. Mr. Johnson stated that this date, May 14,2023 is also the first day of seasonal service in Virginia Beach. Paratransit services will be expanding along with fixed routes to these posted times and routes.

Mr. Bowser adjourned the meeting at 3:10 pm.

The next Paratransit Advisory meeting will be on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, at 1:00 pm at 3400 Victoria Blvd, Hampton, Second floor boardroom.

Submitted by Tammara Askew Contracted Services Administrative Support Technician

DRAFT



Hampton Roads Transit

PAC meeting

April 12th, 2023



Agenda for today's discussion



- **Intro**
- **Service Review - Michael Ortiz**
- **Addressing Concerns (Insight Enterprise Outreach) - Michael Ortiz**
- **Driver Training / Acquisition - Javier Rodriguez**

Overall Performance February + March

~58k

Trips completed in February and March

While February, year-over-year was a bit lower at just over 25K, March showed a huge spike to 33K rides!

88%/93%

Pickup/Dropoff On-Time-Performance

An increase in active drivers and the addition of new vehicles over the last month have led to improvement in pick-up OTP after set-backs in February and early March."

~ 25 mins

Average trip duration

This past two-month period saw consistent trip durations month-over-month

1.94

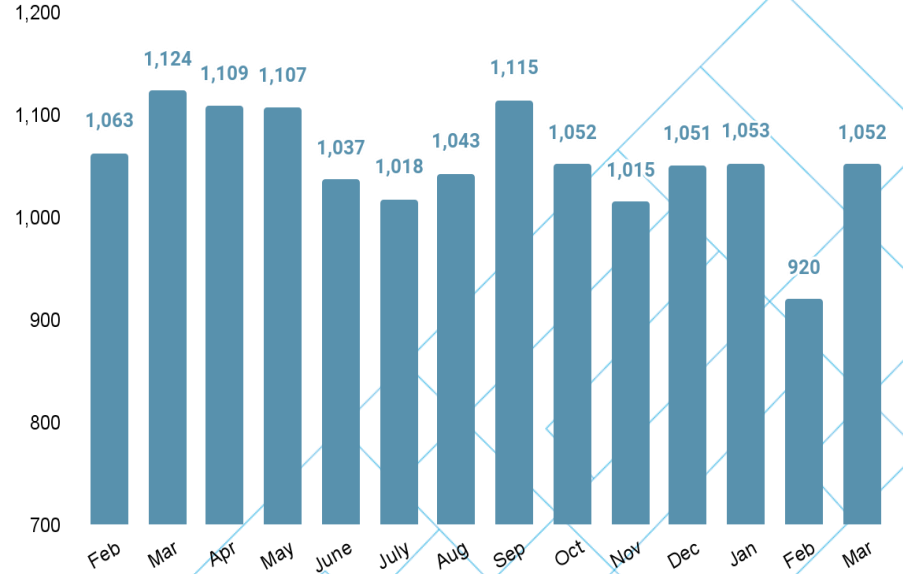
Avg. Trips per hour per vehicle

An increase in ridership led to higher efficiency and maximized the fleet, etc.

Sun is out (most days) and so our are riders!

- Spring is here! Ridership has increased as expected showing a huge jump from February to March and will continue an upward trend over the next few months!
- We've added 15 new drivers, 2 new dispatchers and more importantly 10 new vehicles with 10 more on the way!

Average completed rides per day



Area	Challenges	Actions taken
Rides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Late rides - Ad hoc confusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Added 20 new vans (10 current, 10 more on the way!) - Getting fleet PM'd and on the road - Locating additional shops for body work - Ad hocs are our safety measure to ensure all of our riders get home or their location safely. We are aiming for less with the addition of new vehicles and drivers
Pick-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early arrivals - Pick-up locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with internal teams to modify, improve and implement new tech for easier use for riders and drivers
Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Driver Behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify drivers and retrain on best practices - Expand training in customer service for new hires lead by GM and OM - Engage riders (as available) for training
No-Shows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proper Procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with our internal and support teams to ensure protocols are followed - HRT has been great about educating the riders on their responsibilities to this matter as well

New Hires! New Tires!

- 10 new drivers hired this year!
 - 9 additional driver candidates projected for next class beginning 4/18.
 - Driver hiring campaign focused on evening and weekend drivers able to transport WAV rides to increase availability of transportation between North and South sides.
 - Semi-annual refresher training scheduled for June. Training will focus on reinforcing ADA transportation policies, passenger security, and sensitivity training.
- 20 vehicles added!
 - Total fleet of 104 vehicles
 - This number will drop as we phase out older vehicles and move away from non-wheelchair capable vehicles
 - 20 stationed in Newport News, 84 in Norfolk



Thank you!



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Paratransit Certification Report 04/13/2022 February and March

2 Month Totals	February	Prior Year	March	Prior Year
Applications Processed - 199	85 (-42.6%)	148	114 (-32.9%)	170
New Certifications 159	70	67	89	78
Re-Certifications 34	13	76	21	87
Denials 8	4	5	4	5
Number of Eligible Clients	6,485 (+16.7%)	5,557	6,568 (+17.5%)	5,592
Number of Clients Using the Service	1,998 (+10.6%)	1,807	2,036 (+9.5%)	1,860
Number of eligible clients who did not recertify – 11	3	121	8	130
Sanction Notifications Sent	0	0	0	0
	Eligibility Appeals			
	Filed – 2 Amended – 1 COVID Temporary (1 year) – N/A Overturned by Panel – 1 Pending Upheld by Panel – None Heard			
4th Quarter Client Suspensions Served 216	4th Quarter (2022) Sanction Appeals (325 notices sent 02/01/2023)			1st Quarter (2023) Sanctions (Estimated)
102 – 7 day 51 – 14 day 23 – 21 day 39 – 30 day	Filed - 101 Amended – 100 Overturned by Panel – 1 Pending Upheld by Panel – None heard Waived Suspensions - 9			252



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Paratransit Call Center Performance Report 04/12/2023 February and March

	February	Prior Year	March	Prior Year
Total Incoming Calls	16,948 (+18.6%)	14,295	18,757 (+16.2%)	16,140
Calls Handled	14,297 (+16.1%)	12,316	15,989 (+14.1%)	13,741
Calls Abandoned (after 15 seconds)	475 (-3.65%)	493	516 (-4.44%)	540
% of Incoming Calls Successful	85.84%	87.6%	86.48%	86.7%
Average Speed to Answer Reservations (Goal 90 seconds)	47.74 seconds Daily average ranges were 17.1 to 165 seconds	34.91 seconds Daily average ranges were 14 to 130 seconds	50.78 seconds Daily average ranges were 14.4 to 132.2 seconds	47.50 seconds Daily average ranges were 19 to 105 seconds



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Paratransit Operations Performance Report 04/12/2023 February & March

	February	Prior Year	March	Prior Year
Pickup OTP (Goal 95%)	88.33%	90.6%	87.10%	91.6%
Drop-Off OTP (Goal 95%)	93.52%	94.9%	92.48%	96.0%
Trips Requested	34,145 (+16.07%)	29,417 (+27.8%)	39,457 (+14.8%)	34,360 (+27.0%)
Trips Performed	25,784 (+12.6%)	22,904 (+32.2%)	29,859 (+8.4%)	27,550 (+31.3%)
Trips Cancelled in Advance	6,122 (17.93%)	5,932 (20.2%)	7,166 (18.2%)	6,197 (18.0%)
Customer Trip Violations (NS/CD/LC)	1,852 (7.2%)	1,423 (5.9%)	2,021 (6.8%)	1,564 (5.4%)
Trips Cancelled For Cause	387 (1.5%)	148 (0.50%)	411 (1.38%)	164 (0.48%)
Average Customer Trip Travel Time	25.88 minutes	25.05 minutes	26.08 minutes	23.85 minutes
Peak # of Vehicles Scheduled	88 59 Fleet 1 Taxi 28 TNC	90 67 Fleet 3 Taxi 20 TNC	85 55 Fleet 1 Taxi 29 TNC	90 68 Fleet 3 Taxi 19 TNC
Number of Paratransit trips taken on Fixed Route	8,686 (+29.97%)	6,683 (+14.0%)	10,421 (+40.8%)	7,403 (-1.3%)