



Miami-Dade County

**Commission on Disability Issues (CODI)
Minutes**

*Stephen P. Clark Center (SPCC)
111 N.W. 1st Street, Miami, Florida 33128
18th Floor, Conference Room 18-4*

	Date:	Wednesday, May 22, 2013	
	Time:	1:30– 4:00 p.m. est.	
	Call to Order Time:	1:55 p.m. est.	
	Meeting Adjourned:	4:01 p.m. est.	
I.	<u>Opening and Attendance:</u> Attendance recorded. Call to Order. Copies of documents were distributed		
	District 1 Commissioner Jordan	John Miller 1 st Vice Chair	Vacant
	District 2 Commissioner Monestime	Jackson David Access Committee Chair	Excused Absence
	District 3 Commissioner Edmonson	Jose Granda	Present
	District 4 Commissioner Heyman	Earl Oaks Employment Committee Chair	Absent
	District 5 Commissioner Barreiro	Jose (Ernie) Martinez CODI Chairman	Present
	District 6 Commissioner Sosa	Pedro Rodriguez Housing Committee Co-Chair	Excused Absence
	District 7 Commissioner Suarez	Harry Horgan Outreach/Education Chair	Present
	District 8 Commissioner Bell	Jesus Garcia CODI Secretary and Transportation Committee Chair	Present
	District 9 Commissioner Moss	Ronald Fulton 2 nd Vice Chair	Absent
	District 10 Commissioner Souto	Dr. Sam Kohlenberg Membership Committee Chair	Vacant
	District 11 Commissioner Zapata	Denise Valkema	Absent
	District 12 Commissioner Diaz	Marilyn Larrieu Housing Committee Co-Chair	Excused Absence
	District 13 Commission Bovo	Alan Rigerman	Present
	Miami-Dade County Staff Present	Dianne Steinberg ISD, Administrative & Business Services Division Recording Secretary	Present
		Heidi Johnson-Wright ISD, ADA Coordinator	Present
		Ysela Llort, Director, Miami-Dade Transit (MDT)	Present
		MDT Para Transit – Bill Velez, Miami-Dade	Present

		Para Transit Chief
II.	Approval of Agenda	CODI Chairman Ernie Martinez made a motion to approve the 5/22/13 agenda. Motion to approve was made by Jesus Garcia and was seconded by Alan Rigerman. Motion passed unanimously.
III.	Approval of CODI Minutes	Chairman Martinez made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 27, 2013 and April 24, 2013 CODI meetings. Motion to approve was made by Jesus Garcia and seconded by Harry Horgan. Motion passed unanimously.
IV.	Opening Comments	<p>STS Service Provider - Transportation America (TA)</p> <p>Paul Yavis of the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) advised CODI that he attended the recent STS Riders Meeting. He held up the last STS Riders meeting minutes, which were approximately five lines in all. He advised that there have been no recordings and minimal transcribed minutes for the STS Riders meetings for the last year. He stated that the minutes did not document negative comments from riders about STS service and contained incorrect percentages for reduction of complaints regarding the new STS service provider. He stated that the minutes transcribed seemed skewed towards a positive spin.</p> <p>Bill Velez, Chief of Para-Transit Operations, explained that MDT previously used a small recording device at the meetings but the recorder had recently broken. Mr. Velez directed staff to buy a new recorder for use at upcoming meetings. Chairman Martinez requested that Mr. Velez have staff that attended the meeting provide a more complete written summary of the meeting. Mr. Velez agreed.</p> <p>Harry Horgan raised the issue of the reliability of the statistics of a 44% reduction in complaints and 65% increase of the average speed of calls answered. Bill Velez clarified that in April 2013 -- the first month of the contract -- MDT closely scrutinized the complaints. By 5/7/13, MDT had data for the month of April 2013. Complaints for April included routing, delayed trips and late pickups. He said that the first week was very difficult. During the second week, there was a negligible improvement. The third and fourth weeks showed more improvement. MDT does not have the data on May at this time. Mr. Velez said that improvement is continuous and will eventually stabilize closer to the expected complaint ration of 5%.</p> <p>Richard Downer said that his concern is late pickups. He described a day when he had a 8:30 am pickup for which the driver arrived at 9:36 am. He had concerns about the driver refusing to listen to him about the best placed to park and his need for the driver to properly tie down his wheelchair. He stated that driver training needs to be addressed.</p> <p>Nick Mazzora, Transportation America (TA)</p>

Mr. Mazzora stated that TA supports recording meetings which encourages transparency and helps the vendors become more knowledgeable. He said that they spot check their drivers to ensure compliance. Mr. Mazzora stated that drivers are put through rigorous training for safety, sensitivity, and securement before they are issued a vehicle. When necessary drivers are required to attend counseling and retraining. They expect drivers to listen to riders regarding the areas around their work and home area. He noted that TA will be addressing the instances of tardiness with drivers.

Mr. Mazzaro advised that comparing a previous provider with a new provider at the beginning of the new contract is not the best approach. Tracking the current provider week to week is a better indicator of progress.

TA also has issues with Hack License Permitting. All drivers under contract must be licensed and permitted through PTRD. Regrettably, there were not enough courses being offered. However, effective 6/1/13 PTRD will be offering additional courses for certification.

In reference to the equipment, Mr. Mazzora clarified that this contract has new technology which could not be ordered until the new contract was formally awarded in November 2012. MDT required a 7/15/13 phase-in process to allow for installation and to ensure its functionality. The MDT Information Technology (IT) Division has made great efforts to ensure functionality of the equipment as it is very sophisticated equipment never before utilized in the state of Florida.

He stated that TA does not use the transition as an excuse. The statistics TA has tracked for abandoned and late calls and on-time performance are showing steady and dramatic improvement from week to week and they continue to track these metrics.

Jesus Garcia stated that there was a major improvement in service from April through May 2013. There are more vehicles out there than ever before and as the summer break approaches and traffic and trips are reduced, he is hopeful that this time can be used to work through the problems and wrap up before the busier season in the autumn.

Zev Nadich, Transportation America Project Manager, said they have been tracking some of the key indicators. They initially looked at the first complete week of service from Saturday through Sunday. TA compared it to last week and the statistics are as follows: Complaints have decreased by 50%, the amount of calls received at the Call Center has decreased by 26%, the speed of calls answered at the Call Center has reduced by 67%, the abandonment rate of calls at the Call Center is reduced by 77% and the percent of late calls from customers is reduced by 30%.

He stated that this improvement also takes into account TA maintaining a

		<p>high trip volume of approximately 34,000 STS trips a week. He noted that there is a weekly improvement. Additionally he said that Trapeze, the software vendor TA is utilizing, will be on site the first week in June to review and adjust all the parameters in the system to accommodate for directional issues related to the speed of system per day, seasonal changes, etc. The service should continue to improve over time.</p> <p>Jesus Garcia said that compared to the 12 to 15 paratransit service provider transitions he has witnessed over the years around the country, this particular one has been relatively easy. He explained that all transitions are very difficult to carry out in a system as complicated as this one.</p>
	<p>Opening Comments</p>	<p>Yamila Roberts, an STS rider and resident of Hialeah, commented on the fact that TA schedules her pickup 2-3 hours ahead of time for a 15 minute trip because they have also scheduled pickups of individuals in Miami Beach. She said when someone calls to complain the phone rings and rings and then it disconnects. She said that a representative advised her to call Miami-Dade County to make a complaint. Following issuing the complaint, STS picked her up on time for a week but currently she is being picked up late and the process often makes her arrival at class late.</p> <p>Alan Rigerman raised the issue of MDC retail operation restrooms that are out of order, sometimes for weeks at a time. He said that the Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD) responded to a call recently made from a retail operation he visited with this issue. He suggested that CODI should contact MDC Code Enforcement regarding the need for these types of business to have restrooms available to the general public, at all times. Julio Martinez, ADA Coordinator for Public Works, advised Mr. Rigerman that the Dollar Store concern should be addressed directly to MDC Building Department.</p> <p>Another topic Mr. Rigerman raised related to his recent arrival at MIA where at which time he was met by Skycap and transported in a golfcart and taken to an airport office. He was placed in a wheelchair and after some delay, taken outside to Supershuttle. This was as an alternative to being transported directly to Supershuttle, as he was in Houston airport. Mr. Rigerman recommended that individuals that are limited walking disabled should be taken from Skycap directly to Suppershuttle in a golfcart.</p> <p>Heidi Johnson-Wright, ISD, ADA Coordinator recommended that Mr. Rigerman attend the upcoming MIA Airport Access Committee meeting. She advised that the service of taking an individual from one location to another by wheelchair at MIA or any airport is typically provided by the airline, not the airport. She noted that the airlines often have representatives at the CODI Access Meetings.</p>
<p>V.</p>	<p>Information Items</p>	<p>CODI Outreach Committee</p> <p>Harry Horgan updated the Board regarding the ADA event planned for</p>

		<p>7/26/13 celebrating of the 23rd anniversary of the signing of the Act. Mr. Horgan said that CODI and the Office of Mayor Carlos Gimenez are inviting everyone to celebrate this important event. The celebration will be hosted by the Shake-a-Leg Organization from 10 a.m. 12 p.m. with a presentation at 11:00 a.m. followed by a keynote address by Mayor Gimenez.</p> <p>Mr. Horgan said they are developing an invitation list and will be sending out a Save-the-Date announcement. Invitations will be sent out to the various political leaders at the local, state, and federal level, as well as to the local disability community. Sign language interpreters will be provided.</p>
<p>VI.</p>	<p>Committee Meetings</p>	<p>Transportation Committee - Jesus Garcia, Chairman</p> <p>Ysela Llorca, Director, Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) addressed CODI regarding concerns about STS service. She said that MDT will be assessing liquidated damages against the vendor if the equipment is not installed as required. That is a condition in the Notice to Proceed. Without the technology, MDT had a difficult number of years being able to verify that STS trips took place. This is an accountability issue.</p> <p>Ms. Llorca thanked Mr. Garcia for his assistance with the RFP and his patience in dealing with this transition period for this very important contract, which is a lifeline for many users. Ms. Llorca acknowledged that it has been challenging and appreciates the role Mr. Garcia played and the issues he has brought to the attention of MDT. She stated that the situation has improved and collectively MDT and CODI will work together.</p> <p>Mr. Garcia stated that as a rider, it is very frustrating being required to ride in STS vehicles much longer than necessary. He added that there are many issues to address. However, he noted that it has been extraordinarily smooth transition, a credit to the individuals who have contributed to it. He said that Miami-Dade County is one of the few transit systems in the Country that runs 24/7. He mentioned that questions brought forward from the community are related to liquidated damages in terms of complaints regarding late rides, or riding in a vehicle longer than necessary.</p> <p>Ms. Llorca explained that MDT investigates every complaint brought forward. However, Contract No. 800 determines the criteria for liquidated damages and the responsibilities granted under the contract will continue to be carried out.</p> <p>Mr. Garcia raised the issue of trying to access the website recently to cancel a trip and he was denied access to the website. Chairman Martinez said that he was also denied access to the website. Ms. Llorca said that MDT will look into this issue.</p> <p>Mr. Garcia confirmed that the things MDT is doing regarding Metro Rail are very good. He noted that the new Airport addition is a bit confusing for riders, if you don't know or understand the announcements. He noted that</p>

on some vehicles the announcements are clear and on others you cannot hear the messages. This matter is especially important now because an individual can finish their trip in a location they had not intended.

Ms. Llort advised that MDT has been working with the train drivers to enunciate clearly. Due to the fact that the trains now alternate between different destinations, it is helpful if the drivers make the statement as soon as a rider gets on the train to establish the line, thereby allowing riders the ability to exit off the train at the next station if necessary. Ms. Llort explained that MDT is working to improve this issue. This is due to the fact that these trains are 30 years old and this will be resolved when the new trains arrive in a couple of years.

Mr. Garcia asked if MDT is connected to the new Tri-Rail plan for broadening the system even more. Ms. Llort stated that MDT is tied into the Tri-Rail system at the MIC. She said that MDT tries to coordinate with Tri-Rail during special events.

Damian Gregory told CODI about an incident last month while using the Metro Rail Train line. The spacer between the train and the platform was uneven and caused his wheelchair to flip forward. He fell over and all of his papers for the meeting were lost. Various individuals he has spoken to have experienced similar issues. Additionally, for the last three months the train has been late or unreliable for an individual scheduled for dialysis that takes Para Transit at 5:30 a.m. This has happened consistently. Ms. Llort advised that once MDT has the details of this case, they can track the train.

When MDT opened the Airport Station it provided not only a new train station but also a 12.5 % increase in ridership. There are between 2,500 to 3,000 people a day travelling to MIA. The wait time is now five minutes as MDT is running trains twice as frequently. She said that the ongoing challenge for MDT is keeping the train station elevators working, although MDT has decreased the down time.

Ron Fulton said that the way complaints are handled by MDT needs improvement as the people investigating the complaints are also the providers. Ms. York advised that when an individual sends a complaint to MDT and route to Bill Velez and he is responsible for the investigation to verify from the vendor. The complaint comes back to MDT.

Mr. Velez explained that he does not always take the response submitted by the vendor. MDT may ask for an additional investigation. Mr. Mazzora also added that Mr. Garcia and Mr. Martinez and customers in the field communicate with TA on issues that can directly affect the entire program. He added that liquidated damage do help but that it does not benefit TA to have complaints.

Richard Donner described two incidents during which the vehicle was so

		<p>loaded that people with cognitive disabilities had to get out of the van while wheelchair users boarded. Mr. Mazzora said that drivers are required to be courteous to all STS riders. He assured CODI that TA will respond to the complaint.</p> <p>Mr. Mazzora advised that starting 4/1/13, Contract 800 requires all vehicle purchased to be pre-approved by MDT. He added that there is a five year window on vehicles. The list of new vehicle purchases is submitted to MDT and an audit is performed.</p>
		<p>Access Committee – Jose Granda, Chairman</p> <p>Miami-Dade Police Department and Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation</p> <p>Jose Granda said that the Access Committee held two meetings attended by MDPD and MDCR Department, focusing on issues affecting the deaf community. Mr. Granda said that the Access Committee Meeting with MDPD went very well. The Access Committee expressed concern regarding MDCR’s handling of deaf arrestees that are placed in correctional institutions. MDCR brought samples of point boards and pictograms used, which were not appropriate for communicating with deaf people. Mr. Granda advised that he was scheduled to tour TGK to determine how to improve access for deaf inmates.</p>
		<p>Hurricane Preparedness</p> <p>Mr. Granda expressed concern regarding hurricane season preparedness and the disabled community. Bill Velez said that MDT is currently having meetings with the service provider regarding emergency mobilizations.</p> <p>Heidi Johnson-Wright suggested Mr. Martinez invite DEM to an upcoming CODI meeting. Mr. Martinez said that DEM should initially be invited to an Access Committee meeting in June.</p>
	<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>Meeting ended 4:01 pm Next meeting June 26, 2013</p>