Miami-Dade County

COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUES (CODI)

Transportation & Aviation Committee Meeting Minutes

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

	Date:	June 9, 2015	
	Time:	1:00 p.m. – 3 p.m. est.	
	Call to Order Time:	1:10 a.m. est.	
	Meeting Adjourned:	2:49 p.m. est.	
I.	**Opening and Attendance:** Attendance recorded. Call to Order. Copies of documents were distributed. (Asterisk next to name indicates core committee member.)		
	District 1 **Commissioner Jordan**	**Damian Gregory*** 1st Vice Chairman	Participated via speaker phone
	District 2 **Commissioner Monestime**	**Jackson David**	
	District 3 **Commissioner Edmonson**	**Jose Granda** Access Committee Chair	
	District 4 **Commissioner Heyman**	**Jesus Garcia*** Transportation Committee Chair & 2nd Vice Chair	Present
	District 5 **Commissioner Barreiro**	**Ernie Martinez*** CODI Chairman	Present
	District 6 **Commissioner Sosa**	**Ora Prilleltensky***	Present
	District 7 **Commissioner Suarez**	**Harry Horgan** Outreach Committee Chair	
	District 8 **Commissioner Cava**	**Elizabeth Merkling***	Present
	District 9 **Commissioner Moss**	**Ronald Fulton*** CODI Secretary	Present
	District 10 **Commissioner Souto**	**Russell Otway**	
	District 11 **Commissioner Zapata**	**Pending Appointment**	
	District 12 **Commissioner Diaz**	**Maria Mercedes Villar**	
	District 13 **Commissioner Bovo**	**Alan Rigerman**	

	Miami-Dade County Staff Present	**Heidi Johnson-Wright** ISD, ADA Coordinator **Skarlex Alorda** ISD, ADA CODI Support & Recording Secretary **Bill Velez, MDT,** Paratransit Operations **Julio Martinez, PWWM, PW Functions** ADA Coordinator – Sidewalk Compliance **Jason Smith, Legislative Director District 8 Commissioner Levine Cava** **Rick Fernandez, Aviation,** Supervisor of Landside Operations & ADA Coordinator	
	Transportation America:	**Zev Naiditch,** General Manager	
	Members of the Public	**Paul Edwards,** Former CODI Member **Michael Wiseman** **Joseph Gonzalez, MMS,** Safety & Compliance Officer **Juan Carlos Gil**	

II.	**Open Comments**	
III.	**Approval of Agenda & Minutes**	Chairman Jesus Garcia amended the draft agenda, placing the Miami-Dade Busway item first and the STS item second. Chairman Garcia then requested a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Martinez made the motion which Ms. Prilleltensky seconded. Motion passed. Chairman Garcia requested a motion to approve the March 17, 2015 minutes. Mr. Martinez made the motion and Ms. Prilleltensky seconded. Motion passed.
IV.	**Information Items**	**South Miami-Dade Busway** Jason Smith, Legislative Director for Commissioner Levine Cava, provided an update on the South Miami-Dade Busway issue. The busway is a lane for fixed route transit service from Dadeland South Metrorail Station to SW 344th Street. Commissioner Levine Cava has bought a resolution to the BCC that would allow STS vehicles to use the busway. The resolution is in a pending status due to the Transit director resigning. Chimene Graham, Miami-Dade Transit, Special Projects Administrator and Mr. Smith will provide status updates to CODI and the ADA Office, as they become available. In addition Mr. Smith

suggested that CODI express its views to Mayor Gimenez regarding the proposal that taxis also be allowed to use the busway.

Mr. Martinez said he supports STS vehicles on the Busway but not taxis. Mr. Martinez said CODI is very unhappy with the taxi companies because they are not serving the disabled community. A discussion ensued.

Ms. Merkling arrived late due to her bus having a defective ramp. Chairman Garcia said there have been issues with bus service for years, such as busses not stopping when they see a rider with a white cane or a guide dog.

Damian Gregory asked Mr. Smith if any of the south end STS providers are involved in this process. Mr. Smith replied that the Mayor has to perform a visibility study, then he will be reaching out to the STS providers. Issues include vehicle compatibility, synchronization of lights, driver training and federal government approval. Mr. Smith said the Mayor's report will be issued in 60 days. CODI should speak up about any concerns it has. A discussion ensued.

Mickey Wiseman said the taxi service providers cabs do not deserve the opportunity to use the busway. Taxis do not respect or comply with the ADA. STS drivers, however, are trained to assist the disabled community.

STS and Rider Safety

Chairman Garcia said STS rider safety is a critical issue. Multiple safety complaints have been bought to his attention numerous times. Because some riders are disruptive and physically abusive to passengers and to drivers, they should be restricted to rider in the company of a personal care attendant. Chairman Garcia said he proudly advocates for the diverse needs of people with disabilities but will not accept situations that jeopardize the safety of others.

Mr. Wiseman he has witnessed safety problems going unresolved, including riders urinating in vehicles, excrement in vehicles, riders using profanity and elderly riders being physically abused by other riders. Even after such incidents, the perpetrators continue to use the service. Disciplinary action needs to be taken, including suspending riders from the service. He has begun to fear for his own safety. Mr. Wiseman is concerned that complaints are not being investigated.

Chairman Garcia asked Mr. Naiditch what happens when an individual calls to report a serious complaint. Mr. Naiditch described in details how that situation is addressed. Chairman Garcia advised Mr. Wiseman to contact Lynnette Chiverton about the incidents he has witnessed. Mr. Chiverton was not aware of such complaints. A discussion ensued.

Chairman Garcia stated that Transit has the authority to take action regarding these complaints. Bill Velez said he was unaware of the incident regarding the human excrement in an STS Vehicle. Mr. Velez said there is a procedure on how to handle such types of incidents. He said that drivers are suspended if they create safety issues. Approximately

		30-40 drivers per year are suspended. If a driver has multiple offenses, he is banned from the system for two years. Ms. Merkling said she has witnessed STS drivers who have very bad manners and are disrespectful of passengers. Ms. Merkling said once she fell backwards in the van because ae driver did not fasten her belt. Cameras are in vehicles to protect both drivers and riders. Ms. Merkling and Mr. Edwards said riders needing to file complaints are put on hold, sometimes over an hour. Chairman Garcia said complaints can be filed online. **Vizcaya Old Museum Follow Up (Julio Martinez)** Julio Martinez, Public Works ADA Coordinator, discussed with Ms. Prilleltensky her complaint regarding ROW access between the old Miami Science Museum and the closest Metrorail station. It is being investigated. Please keep in mind, however, that the science museum is closing soon as the new one nears completion. **Uber's Business Model and the Disabled Community** Ricardo Fernandez, Aviation, ADA Coordinator stated that in Miami, Uber drivers are required to download an application, obtain insurance and provide their own vehicle. If the driver has a wheelchair-accessible vehicle, he can pick up wheelchair users. Chairman Garcia said that the business model for Uber is the best thing that has happened to Miami. Uber's prices are half that of the taxi companies. Mr. Edwards said that CODI has a responsibility to tell the whole story about what is really happening with the taxi industry.
V.	**Next Committee Meeting:**	TBA