

**Access Advisory Committee**  
**Wednesday, July 1st, 2020**  
**Virtual**  
**5:30 p.m. – 6:35 p.m.**

**Call to Order:**

*Chair Chris Prentice, Access Advisory Committee*

Chairman Hunt called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

**Introductions:**

Committee members present were Paul Hunt, Andrew Bernet, Otmar Fohener, John McNabb, Chris Prentice, Estrella Barrera, Audrea Diaz, Glenda Born, and Mike Gorse.

Capital Metro staff and contractors present were: Martin Kareithi, Suzie Edrington, Chris Westbrook, Yannis Banks, Darryl Jamail, Jo Anne Ortiz, Andrew Murphy, James Bush, and Sam Sargent,

**Citizens' Communication**

*Members of the public*

Chris Westbrook – Talked about the tragic passing of John Luna at MTM North Base from Covid-19. He was diagnosed with covid 2 weeks ago. We had been in contact with him almost every day. John meant a lot to the CapMetro family. He exemplified what it meant to be a professional operator. The one thing he wanted us to tell everyone is to remember to take this seriously. He was a 2x 1<sup>st</sup> place winner in the minivan competition & went on to represent CapMetro & MTM at the national Bus Roadeo. His best attribute was his genuine kindness that he showed for everybody, not just coworkers but his passengers & anyone he had ran into. Chris P – Has he been driving for MetroAccess for longer than that. His name seems familiar, like he has been around for a long time. Chris – He came over from the LeFleur time period as well. Not sure if he took a break in between there or not. He was known by a lot of people. His passengers loved him. He will be missed. Chris P – On behalf of Access committee, gives his condolences to his family, loved ones & coworkers.

**ADA 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

*Martin Kareithi, Program Manager Accessible Service*

July 26, 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Americans with Disabilities act passed by George H.W. Bush. Will celebrate with some video as well as graphic stuff to commemorate. We will also be passing out buttons since it coincides with the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CapMetro as well. Advisory members, staff, our board & community members will get a button. Decals are being produced that will go on the buses & placed on placards as well. Not just on fixed route but MetroAccess fleet as well. We want to highlight some stories on what it was like before ADA as well as what it is like now since the passing of ADA. Chris P – When will you have the videos & stuff come out? Martin – We are looking at towards the end of the month. We have some schedules we have to

work out. Chris P- Are y'all coordinating with the Governor's committee? Martin – I will give them a shout and see if there is something they're doing that we can join.

### **New Vehicle & Wheelchair Securement Update**

*Andre Murphy, Manager Maintenance, Standards and Projects*

Working with Q'Straint since 2008 with development of two new products. First one is called Q-Pod. It is a forward facing 3 belt securement system. Currently on we have them on 25 buses already. Two of the 12 new electric buses have them on it also. We have purchased a training model to help operators get familiar with it. This new system takes out the guess work of where wheelchairs need to be. The 2<sup>nd</sup> system is called the Quantum. We have had a few demonstrations with this device. It is a rear facing wheelchair securement system. The wheelchair backs up to a big backrest & a robotic arm comes down & gently hugs chair from both sides. There are no hooks, belts etc. It secure & it takes as little as 25 seconds to secure it in place. The driver & the person in the wheelchair has a button to release the chair so the person in the chair can have more independence. We have asked Q'Straint to come on site & train the operators so they can get as much training as possible. Martin praises the work the vehicle maintenance staff have been doing during this pandemic.

### **All Hands Update**

*Sam Sargent, Deputy Chief of Staff*

During the pandemic we have had admin staff help in an operations support role. We also hired 40 temp employees to help with cleaning. We also did a lot of operator appreciation. We had people making masks at home, got a lot of mask donations, well over 1000 clothe & 50,000 surgical that were donated. We also had people do temperature scan duties. Anyone who came to our facilities had to have a temp check. We have started a new program called MetroMusic. They are once a week at stops throughout the city. We are not advertising before hand of time for a multitude of reasons but in particular to not create a large crowd at the stops. We saw this as a way to say thank you to our customers. MetroAccess has been doing a fantastic job doing meal delivery. We were able to partner with Central Texas Foodbank, Good Apple and Farmshare ATX. We are nearly at 500,000 meals delivered. We are now in good shape when it comes to PPE. We had to do a lot of legwork to get the amount we have now. Our stockpile is now developed for the crisis and we have a minimum 3-month supply in the future. Nearly 10,000 hours of staff or temp service have gone into this program.

### **Wi-fi project**

*James Bush Program Manager Pickup*

The vehicles and operators used for this program are provided by MTM South Base. They are out from 2 pm to 8 pm. There 10 locations that 13 vehicles serve throughout the CapMetro service area including Del Valle. We have branding on the vehicles to let people know we are the wi-fi project and how to get access to it. The vehicles do not have to run for the wi-fi to work. East Austin Prep added us to their website to let people know that we will be out there.

During the week we have had high usage of the service from the bandwidth data. Chris – Nobody has messed with the vehicles have they? James – No sir, the operators are out there with the vehicles. Our MetroAccess operators are great dealing with our customers and providing customer service.

### **Project Connect Update**

*Yannis Banks, Community Engagement*

Informed them that there will be more joint upcoming meetings between our board & city council that will discuss funding for Project Connect. The discussions will be around how much in funding do we need to go forward with in November, will it be the full plan or just parts.

Glenda – So will it be on the November ballot? Yannis – It could be. That’s what City Council will be deciding. Will they hold off on it, will it be the whole thing, will it be only a part? Paul – Are the route alignments set yet & we know what they are going to do? Yannis – The system plan is set but we don’t have any turns yet.

Paul – Wants to have a presentation to the American Council of the Blind in terms that they can understand, not PowerPoints or maps. Martin has agreed to set it up.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes will be approved at next meeting

Chris – Is there a way for people to call in? CapMetro needs to look for a way for people to dial in to the Access meeting. Yannis will work with the IT department to see what can be set up similar to how the board does it.

Audrea Diaz – I have concerns in regards to the pandemic for people to do MetroAccess eligibility again. How will that take place during the pandemic? Suzie – Right now we are doing it thru a paper process, but we are getting a backlog right now & are looking at other ways to do it. Glenda - We need to talk about it at the next meeting. Chris P – Are people who expired now able to keep riding until you open back up? Suzie – Yes. Audrea – You mentioned it will be a paper process, can it be done virtually as well? Suzie – We haven’t worked that out yet, we will dig deeper.