

**Access Advisory Committee**  
**Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
**Virtual**  
**5:30 p.m. – 6:35 p.m.**

**Call to Order:**

*Chair Chris Prentice, Access Advisory Committee*

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

**Introductions:**

Committee members present were Paul Hunt, Andrew Bernet, Estella Barrera, John McNabb, Chris Prentice, Audrea Diaz, Glenda Borne, and Mike Gorse.

Capital Metro staff and contractors present were: Martin Kareithi, Chris Westbrook, Jo Anne Ortiz, Ricardo Boulware, Chad Ballentine, Raul Vela, Donna Simmons, Julie Lampkin, Sara Sandford, Jonathan Tanzer, Asif Esbani,

**Citizens' Communication**

*Members of the public*

Paul Hunt – The IVR isn't recognizing our logins. St. David's North has 3 entrances. The South is open and need to allow people to stop there. The reservation clerks are taking people there as a drop off. It's the Children's emergency entrance. Sara – As of yesterday the IVR had a fix and was working. Glenda said it was working today.

Audrea – When will be able to cancel rides online or will this just be a regular thing during the pandemic not to do online things. Julie – We do have online things closed for now, but we will meet as a team to figure out when we will open it back up. Audrea – For MetroAccess online it says that the buses are running a limited schedule and they stop at 10:30 even though buses are running later.

**Project Connect Update**

*Chad Ballentine, VP, Demand Response Capital Metro*

Chad – A year of engineering of light rail and will take a total of about 9 years. Metrorapid would be up pretty fast. All the info is on projectconnect.com. We plan on rolling out 3 Pickup Zones pretty quickly if Project Connect passes. They would be the winter 2021 – North Dessau, North Oak Hill & South Menchaca zone. These are 3 of many more zones to come. The North Dessau zone, we look at a lot of data when we overlay. It has a large minority & MetroAccess population. It is about 3.8 square miles. The initial map is conceptual to help give an idea of where it would be. We would do community outreach & work with Access if PC passes to help shape the zone. Glenda – Are you including Braker & Dessau are in the zone? Chad – It doesn't look like it. We are also trying to make sure we aren't cannibalizing any fixed route we have now, but this is just conceptualizing and not final. If Project Connect passes, we will reevaluate the zone. Glenda – If it covers where I am, I would use it & encourage others to use it. North

Oak Hill would be south of the “Y”. This area has a high minority population as well as 7% poverty rate in this zone. This area has been hard for fixed route due to the road network & lack of sidewalks. It also connects to the Park & Ride in the area. Glenda – That one is pretty far south isn’t it? Chad – Yes, it is. South Menchaca – This connects to our services on Slaughter Ln. this is also a very disconnected area of town. This area has greenbelts as well as another difficult road network. One additional area we are looking at is the Southeast area of town (Del Valle, Hwy 130, 71, etc.). With development being so spread out it makes it hard for Pickup, also it is chopped up so it’s in & out of our service area so we would have to work with Travis County on it. It is a high minority area and with Tesla, HEB and others looking to come there we are keeping it on our radar. It won’t be ready in early 2021 but it’s something we are studying. Chris – What is the contingency plans of Project Connect fails? Chad – The plan is if it doesn’t pass, we won’t have any of the finances to do any of the expansions that we have. If it doesn’t pass, we will be an as is system and have to work with what we have.

### **Eligibility Update**

*Sara Sanford Manager, Paratransit Eligibility and Customer Service*

Sara gave a high-level history of the eligibility process. We do a 4-year eligibility process, the industry standard is 1-3 years. We are little longer than most of our peers, but we feel like we have something we can stand behind for our recertifications. Eligibility isn’t based on disability alone, based on current functional abilities. In person process suspend in mid-March 2020 to reduce risk to potentially vulnerable clients. Staff still comes in to do mailing, but the majority of eligibility is through a paper process. To clear some misinformation, we have been looking up to 120 days to automatically extensions during this covid pandemic. There hasn’t been any backlog of applications. We process everything typically between 1-2 days of receiving information. Our biggest challenge is how do we move forward. We are monitoring stage levels to see when we can safely return to in person operations. Our facility has been renovated. We opened new doors & better ventilation. We will have to adjust scheduling when we return, look at longer periods, maybe some weekends when we return. We are looking at new technologies that are out there & looking at more paperless process to help streamline our process. A lot of our peers in the industry have been referred to us to see how we are doing things. Estrella – Any sense on any kind of backlog that you may anticipate? Sara – Currently our applications have been cut to less than half. We will make sure that people will be extended thru whatever phase we need to get thru. Glenda – For your recertification how long are you certified for? Sara – For folks who have been thru once or twice we are spreading them out farther, so we won’t have a lot of people coming all at once. In 2018 we worked to identify certain people who situation will never change so they will automatically recertify. That’s about 1300 people. Glenda – We aren’t doing appeals right now, when someone applies it’s a temporary emergency certification if it looks like they will be eligible? Sara – Correct, we are doing any denials but if someone’s info is looking incomplete, we do ask them for more information.

### **Fare Capping Update**

*Jonathan Tanzer, Technology Systems Program Manager/ Asif Esbhani, Financial Systems Program Manager*

Jonathan - Fare capping pilot looking to launch later this fall. For cash to mobile retail, customers will be able to load cash into a virtual wallet on the CapMetro app via retailers (grocery stores, corner stores, drugstores). We will be starting with over 250 retailers in the Austin area. People will be able to search for nearby locations using the app. Asif – For the Equity Fare Capping Program is a pilot program and we will be announcing the launch date in a few weeks. Low income customers will be able to get the benefits of a 31-day pass without the upfront cost. We are working with One Voice, Urban League, Austin NAACP to find people who would be eligible for the pilot program. We will have up to 200 people that will be eligible for a period up to 6 months. Glenda – The wallet is the purchasing of various services, the 2<sup>nd</sup> is a pilot? I'm confused about the 2. Jonathan – Correct. Glenda – Is the wallet program for any CapMetro user or also a pilot? Asif – It is for any CapMetro app user. Chris – You can add cash to your mobile wallet with a credit card correct? Asif – Correct. Jonathan – Web portal is being built to make sure that it is ADA compliant. Asif will be back in December or January to give updates on the Fare Capping program. Glenda – The portal that you mentioned, is that again for purchasing and is it the app or computer? Jonathan – We have a current marketplace site where people go to order paper passes. We will have an updated website that will replace the marketplace. They could use the app or the marketplace. Glenda – Will it be very similar to how it works? Jonathan – It will be a very similar experience.

### **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Council**

*Donna Simmons, EVP Administration/Diversity & Inclusion Officer*

We would like to ask who you would like your representative on the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Council. When we talk diversity, we are talking about who is at the table. Equity is more about doing things to remove barriers to get people at the table & remaining at the table. Inclusion is around making sure everyone feels welcomed & belonging once at the table. We will have an internal steering committee that will have representation from all CapMetro & frontline departments. We will also have reps from ATU as well as our Contractors. We will also have representatives from our Access & CSAC committees and a community advisory group that is being developed. We will also have some employee resource groups apart of the Council. The council will look internally & externally for various elements. Internally our goal is to have a workforce that is broadly reflective of the community. On the community side our goal is to make sure there is equitable service and amenity distribution. We would like a member of the council to be from Access Committee. We are looking for someone who has a commitment to equity, environmental justice, diversity and inclusion. The time commitment would be 1 meeting every quarter that would last approximately 2 hours. Audrea – When will the meetings start? Donna – They would start in mid to late November. Audrea – Once we are on the council are we required to attend all of the meetings? Donna – That would be the preference. Audrea – How long are you looking to do this? Donna – We are looking for a commitment of at least a year to help get it started & then we will look to see how the council wants to set the bylaws. Audrea has interest in serving on the committee. Chris – Wants to see who has a level of interest on being on the committee. Send an email to Chris and Yannis if interested. Glenda – Usually if you have work committees like this and you have quarterly

meetings, what kind of work are you looking for from members during the interim? Donna – The purpose of the advisory group would be similar to Access, we are developing a program to provide you input. Any elements of a program that CapMetro hasn't planned for. Approve the charter of the council and role they will play. I would say there wouldn't be too much work in between meetings. Chris asked that the selection of a person be added to the November Agenda.

### **Access Pass Request**

*Yannis Banks, Community Engagement Coordinator*

Asking for a 7 day notification to let us know to get passes out to you. Add Chris and Audrea to automatically renewed digital pass at the end of the month. Add Glenda to paper pass.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Change Chairmen name from Hunt to Prentice

Paul – Approve September minutes. Estrella – Second passed unanimously.

### **For November Agenda**

**Pick a member to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Council**

Dessau Pickup Zone discussion