

Local Advisory Council

Meeting Date/Time: Tuesday, August 18, 2009, 4:00pm

Location: Padnos Transportation Center, 171 Lincoln Avenue, Holland MI

Members Present:	x	Elizabeth Ferry	x	Lisa Scherer
	x	Ron Martin	x	Gert Vos
	x	Leigh Ann Bartels	x	Tony Harmer
	x	Eric Heiberg		Carol Rickey

Guests: **None**

Meeting Agenda:

- Open discussion/immediate issues.

Prior to the meeting, a few members discussed the excellent customer service they've experienced at a local mobility mgt. supply company. The company randomly calls customers simply to see how they're doing and if their products and service are suiting them well. This may be a good idea for MAX to consider in the future, having staff **randomly call MAX riders** for a very brief "Hi" and service checkup – a "feel good" service to riders/customers that they may really appreciate.

It was mentioned that the **call waiting messages** on the MAX customer service phone system are out-of-date, mentioning Tulip Time and the Zeeland route starting up. Will be forwarded to Marketing.

Tony mentioned having some **issues scheduling special runs to Zeeland** for Greenbriar group outings. Seems he's repeatedly told by operators/scheduler that it can't be done, but once he goes higher up the command structure, he's able to get them scheduled. Tony is frustrated with the process and extra time it takes each time he calls for a special run to Zeeland. Can it be streamlined so operators/schedulers know to do this without the director having to tell them each time? Will be forwarded to Management.

Members were very pleased with the way MAX was able to handle the **transfer center entrance reconstruction project**. They were very pleased with the way the 7th St. temporary transfer center was setup and carried out during the four weeks of closure.

The members wanted it noted that the **drivers continue to do an excellent job** helping customers with their day-to-day transit needs, especially with all the construction going on this summer. Eric mentioned as well that arrival times have been right on schedule for the longest time.

Cars have been parking in front of the bus stop sign at **Macatawa Bank on Maple & Michigan**, despite instances where disabled users are waiting at that stop to board the bus. LAC members wondered if curbs could be painted red at bus stops to prevent cars from parking alongside bus stop signs. Charlie relayed that due to financial restrictions, curb painting is not a good option, but rather to handle one-on-one the "problem" bus stops to be addressed as the concern arrives. Charlie will check with the city streets dept. about posting a no parking sign or

insignia at the Macatawa Bank bus stop sign pole, or if need be, relocating the bus stop to a more suitable area.

- Stroller/Shopping Buggy Policy.

Passengers riding the Macatawa Area Express are permitted to board buses without having to fold strollers and/or shopping buggies only if space permits at the time of boarding. Passengers with strollers and/or shopping buggies can utilize the ADA securement areas during the trip, although children are not allowed to remain in the stroller and must be held by a parent or caregiver throughout the duration of the trip.

Should a passenger using a mobility aid board the bus, they will be given priority to use this space in accordance with ADA regulations. Passengers with strollers and/or shopping buggies in the ADA securement areas will be required to move such items to another location on the bus, removing any items from the stroller and/or shopping buggies—the equivalent of two (2) bags of groceries—and folding and/or stowing all items between the seats, away from the aisles. For this reason, **all strollers and shopping buggies used on MAX buses must be capable of folding.**

In event the ADA securement areas are occupied at boarding, passengers with strollers and/or shopping buggies have the option of waiting for the next scheduled route bus or to continue boarding the bus, folding their strollers and/or shopping buggies for safe storage. Whenever possible, passengers with strollers and/or shopping buggies are encouraged not to ride during weekday peak hours (2-5pm).

LAC would like to see this uniformly carried out. Some drivers still confused with the new formal policy.

- MAX Fiscal Year 2009 ends September 30.
 - Total Ridership Estimate: 320,000 passengers.
 - Overall ridership est. up 9% from 293,798 in FY 2008.
- New Arboc low floor buses put into service.
 - Wider, automatic lifts to be installed during September 2009.

Concerning the new Arboc buses, the LAC expressed concern only over the **steepness of the ramps**. The current (temporary) manual ramps are steep for users with wheelchairs especially while boarding, and require those with mobility scooters to board in reverse.

UPDATE: After the meeting, Charlie reviewed the blueprint for the new automatic ramps (to be installed in September). A physical measurement of the current Arboc manual ramp from the door came in at 48 inches, however, the new automatic ramps measure 62 inches from the door according to the blueprint. The additional 14 inches of length on the automatic ramps should help relieve the degree of the incline.

- Passengers shelters installed, final benches installed as of July 2009.
- Annual MAX passenger survey (Marketing) set for September 1st-11th.

LAC glad to hear a survey may be given out on Reserve-A-MAX as well. Many riders do not use fixed routes, but should still have opportunity for comment.

- LAC meeting schedule.

The LAC agreed it would be of benefit to schedule some additional meetings throughout the year, to help keep MAX and rider representatives “in the loop” and for MAX to continue its formal contact with passenger representatives. Charlie to add some extra meeting dates, beginning after the Oct. 6th meeting. LAC schedule to change from 6 to 9 meetings per year.

- Conclusion of Meeting.
- Next meeting, Tuesday, October 6, 2009, 4:00pm.