

**Metra ADA Advisory Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**November 13, 2018, 2:00 PM**

547 W Jackson Blvd  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Training Room  
Chicago, IL 60661

Attendance: Committee Members

S. Dalton	D. A. Rubino, Metra
L. Gerlach	K. Schultz, Metra
S. Hastalis	F. Mascarenhas, Metra
S. E. Rangle	J. Ferneborg, Metra
J. Mueller	K. Salkas, RTA
S. Figved	G. Armstrong
D. Bogus	H. Armstrong
K. Erickson (via telephone)	J. Powell
P. Byrne (via telephone)	D. Shaw
	M. Sullivan
	K. Hall, Sign Language Interpreter
	R. Payne, Sign Language Interpreter
	P. Cosentino, CART Reporter

Jim Ferneborg called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm. He explained that due to the absence of both Chairman Forte as well as Vice Chairman Panko Reis, he would act as Chairman for this particular meeting. He asked all participants to identify themselves as well as to state their affiliations.

The first order of business was the approval of the August 7, 2018 meeting. Mr. Ferneborg stated that he had sent out electronic copies to all Committee members. There were also hard copies if anyone wished to refer to them. Mr. Ferneborg asked for a motion to approve. L. Gerlach brought the motion and S. Hastalis seconded. The minutes of the August 7, 2018 meeting were approved.

The next item on the agenda was the stations report from David Rubino, Metra's Director of Station Services. He began by telling the Committee that the skylight project at Chicago Union Station (CUS) has been completed. The effort to replace the skylight in the Great Hall took nearly a year and some 22 million dollars. Now that it is finished, the construction barriers that made it a challenge to navigate around are gone and the Great Hall is a much brighter space. He also reported that he had recently made a trip to New York Penn Station to observe and study the new Passenger Information Display System (PIDS) that is destined to be installed at CUS. The current PIDS is a Metra creation and maintained by us. The new system will be owned, installed and maintained by Amtrak. Mr. Rubino told the assembled that he was extremely impressed by how comprehensive and flexible the system at Penn Station was and how it performed. Com.net, who installed the system will be doing the same at CUS. The third item that Mr. Rubino reported on was the cessation of the three-year marketing agreement that Metra had entered into with Uber. He acknowledged the misgivings that were brought up by Committee members about Metra's partnership with a company who had severe shortcomings in providing accessible vehicles once outside the Chicago city limits. He reported that the decision to not renew the agreement was mutual. S. Hastalis brought up the issue of the lack of access for blind customers when using the credit card machines at the ticket windows. These are flat screen devices

where selections have to be made and it takes the assistance of a ticket agent to complete a transaction. This becomes awkward at a place like CUS or OTC where the agent has to come out of the ticket office and come around to the customer side of the windows. D. Bogus wanted to know whether it were possible to use an option to darken the screen at the cash machines at CUS so that the person behind you could not see your transaction. Both Mr. Rubino and Mr. Ferneborg acknowledged that these were issues that needed to be researched. They told the Committee that they would explore these with Metra's IT Department. Susan Elizabeth Rangle inquired as to whether there were any plans to improve the experience of deaf/hard of hearing customers when transacting business at ticket windows. Mr. Rubino responded that there is a continuing effort to educate ticket staff in the proper way of interacting with deaf/hard of hearing customers. He also indicated that when we met with David Nelson, Amtrak's top ADA Officer back in August, he was impressed with his dedication to access. David Nelson is a deaf person. He set up a special meeting in August that included technical staff from Washington, the management of CUS, our management and representatives from the local blind community to explore the best outcomes for the new PIDS. We can rest assured that he will take the same care when handling technology that can benefit deaf passengers who use CUS. This may also include new technologies at the ticket office.

The Committee next heard from Francis Mascarenhas of Metra's Mechanical Department. He began his report by talking about the weight tolerance for ADA lifts. The weight tolerance on existing ADA lifts is 600 lbs. When new railcars are purchased that tolerance will increase to 800 lbs. He then reported to the Committee that the Mechanical Department is working on specs for a new RFP for the purchase of 200+ accessible railcars. The goal would be 25 cab cars and the rest trailer cars. The target for this RFP would be the first quarter of 2019. We are also negotiating with Nippon Sharyo for the delivery of seven (7) accessible railcars. There have been delays due to technical difficulties and we are expected to receive shipment in early 2020. The other major project is the renovation of 302 ADA cars that came to Metra between 2003 and 2006. To date, at our 49<sup>th</sup> Street shop, we have completed 56 of these cars and the target is to complete 40 per year. These cars are totally rebuilt with new trucks, electrical systems, lifts, windows and lighting. They are also outfitted with sensitive edges on all side loading doors, Passenger Emergency Intercom Systems, electrical outlets and LED scrolling signs for deaf/hard of hearing passengers. What followed next was a wide ranging discussion relating to the possibilities surrounding new car purchases. Varieties of car designs, such as bi-level and gallery cars were discussed.

Along with ADA modifications, Susan Elizabeth Rangle asked whether the Committee could see diagrams of new car models. Mr. Mascarenhas told her that when plans were in review (later in 2019), he could provide this to the Committee. John Mueller wanted to know how Metra would handle staffing as more ADA cars were added, and would designated ADA cars continue to be the rule.

The next order of business was a report from Kenneth Schultz of Metra's Engineering Department. His report is designed to cover Metra station construction activity and how this activity may or may not affect accessibility.

- At the Ravenswood Station on the UPN, there is an on-going project to replace the east platform and the warming house. There is a temporary platform and stairway on the east side of the station that will remain there until the station is completed in 2020. There have been significant delays due to bridge repair and the moving of tracks. When complete, this station will be fully accessible.

- At the Hazel Crest Station on the MED, there is a project to rehab both entrances and add an elevator at the north end. This project is 60% complete. When complete, it will be fully accessible. During construction, this station will remain inaccessible.
- At the LaSalle Street Station on the RID, there has been an on-going project to replace existing plaza tiles with new granite pavers. This will include steel reinforcement and general finishing. This project is very near completion. Throughout the project, the station has remained accessible.
- At the Healy Station on the MDN, there has been a complete reconstruction of platforms, ramps and shelter. This project is substantially complete and there are ramps on both sides. This station is accessible.
- The UP has a large project to put in a third main that is affecting both Maywood and Melrose Park on the UPW. Both stations are in the midst of reconstruction along with temporary platforms. When complete (slated for 2019), both of these stations will go from partially to fully accessible.
- At the Prairie Crossing Station on the MDN, there is a project to build a new warming shelter, coordinating with the platform and parking. This station will remain accessible during construction.
- At Winfield on the UPW, we have rebuilt platforms, new brick pavers on the north side and new ramp access to street and parking. This project is substantially complete. Throughout the project, this station has remained accessible.
- At the Cary Station on the UPNW, there is a village initiated project to build a new shelter on the inbound platform along with some platform work. There is a new ramp access. This station has remained accessible throughout construction.
- At the Cumberland Station on the UPNW, there is a project to rebuild the warming shelter and create ADA access from that shelter to the parking lot and to the Pace bus stop. When complete in 2019, this station will be fully accessible. At present, this station remains inaccessible.
- There are a number of projects that involve platform renovation. This includes accessible slopes and ADA access as well as new tactile strips. The following stations are in the midst of this platform renovation:
  - North Glenview, MDN
  - Washington Street-Grayslake, NCS
  - Lake Forest, MDN
  - Vernon Hills, NCS
  - Mokena-Hickory Creek, RID
  - Route 59, BNSF
- At 95<sup>th</sup> Street on the RID Main Line, we have put in a Visual Information Sign (VIS).
- At the West Pullman Station on the MED, we will be putting in a ramp to make that station fully accessible. This ramp/stair will be pre-fabricated and put into the platform.

S. Figved brought up a problem at the Barrington Station. He told the assembled that at Lake Cook Road and Cook Street, there is a rather large section where the pavement is cracking and coming apart. As well, there is some damage to the iron around the rails. He said that this was due to a house that was being moved down Lake-Cook toward Barrington Hills. This situation has been bad for a couple of months. Mr. Schultz said that he would bring it to the attention of the group that makes these kinds of repairs. Mr. Ferneborg asked D. Shaw to tell the Committee about concerns that she has about lighting at stations. The station in question was the 87<sup>th</sup> Street Station (Woodruff) on the MED. There

is a rather steep stairway coming off the platform and it is extremely dark and unsafe. Mr. Schultz said that he would look into this.

K. Erickson asked about the Libertyville Station. Mr. Schultz reported that this was a village initiated project to rebuild the Libertyville Depot. The project should be complete by the fall of 2019. Mr. Rubino added that the ticket agent is operating out of a trailer and that it looks like a complete rebuild of that station house. Mr. Ferneborg added that he spoke with Community Relations about access. He was told that on the northwest side of the station there is clear pedestrian access to the platform. Susan Elizabeth Rangle brought up a concern that she had regarding the Western Avenue Station on the Milwaukee District. She was concerned about access for deaf/hard of hearing passengers at a location where multiple lines and many trains converge and pass through. (It is important here to note that the MDN, MDW and NCS lines pass through this station.) The main concern was that with so many trains coming through the station on multiple tracks, how would a rider, who is deaf, be able to determine which track and train to access. By using his smart phone to go into Metra's video library, Mr. Rubino was able to pull up visuals of the Western Avenue Station. He was able to show visual signage that indicated which trains would arrive at which tracks. He showed one of these displays within the station and another outside the station. He also showed the VIS (visual display sign) on the platform. Susan Elizabeth Rangle raised the issue about situations where there might be a service disruption and trains were delayed and not adhering to the normal schedule. Mr. Rubino told her that he would speak with the GPS area to research the efficiency of the system when such situations arose.

At this point, Mr. Ferneborg brought up the topic of special presentations for the upcoming year. He gave a summary of some of the presentations that had been given to the Committee in the past. These have included the GPS System, the Metra Mobile App, the BNSF District and Safety and Emergency Evacuation. He asked the Committee to think about what things might interest them and to get back to him so that he could do some planning. He reminded the Committee that Metra staff (at whatever level) have always been and always will be more than happy to lend their expertise at our meetings.

The next order of business was the fixing of meeting dates for calendar 2019. The dates proposed were as follows:

- Tuesday, February 5, 2019
- Tuesday, May 7, 2019
- Tuesday, August 6, 2019
- Tuesday, November 5, 2019

Mr. Ferneborg asked for a motion to approve the meeting dates. J. Mueller brought the motion and L. Gerlach seconded. The dates were approved. Mr. Ferneborg told the assembled that he would submit these dates to be posted on Metra's website.

The next item on the agenda was the election of officers for 2019. Mr. Ferneborg informed the assembled that there were three Committee members who were terming out. They are Chairman Jim Forte, Vice Chairman Judy Panko Reis and Krista Erickson. On behalf of Metra and the Committee, he thanked them for their service. The mechanics of the election were as follows. Committee members who were on the telephone had already sent in their ballots via email. This was also true for Committee members who simply could not be present at this meeting. These ballots (in an envelope) were handed to David Rubino who had volunteered to do the vote tally. Mr. Rubino distributed paper ballots to the Committee members who were present (and assisted those who needed help). Here were the names on the ballot.

- Chairman: J. Mueller, S. Dalton
- Vice Chairman: L. Gerlach

The result of the election was as follows:

2019 Committee Officers

- Chairman – Susan Dalton
- Vice Chairman – Leah Gerlach

Mr. Ferneborg told the Committee that according to the by-laws, an officer would serve for a two-year term. Ms. Dalton was in the first year of her second term. Because a member could only serve two (2) two-year terms, she had one year left to serve. This means that Ms. Dalton would serve as Chairman for one year before she termed off the Committee. Mr. Ferneborg explained that the Committee would be electing a new Chairman at the November 5, 2019 meeting. On behalf of Metra, he offered congratulations to the new Committee officers.

The meeting had reached that point where public comments were heard.

- J. Powell wanted to voice his concern regarding individuals in mobility devices that have been left on trains. He also suggested that Metra educate the public as to where they can find signage (same as at Western Avenue).
- H. Armstrong also voiced her concern about passengers in mobility devices being left on trains. She also indicated that she uses the Transit App to get her on the correct train.
- G. Armstrong also voiced his concerns about stations where numerous trains from multiple lines stop and depart.
- D. Shaw indicated that when transferring from a CTA bus to her train on the MED, she frequently misses that train. It would be helpful if there were some visual signage to let her know about arriving trains.

Mr. Ferneborg asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. J. Mueller brought the motion and S. Figved seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 pm.