

**Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC)
Minutes
January 18, 2017**

**In Attendance: Sandra Probert; Bob Schoenfeld (via teleconference);
Therése Brzezinski; Hari Dhoundijal; Kelly McClean; Gina Barbara,
Mike Godino, Jack Khzouz (NICE), Tesheena Spencer (NICE), Lowell
Wolfe (NC Transportation Planner)**

Absent: Cathy Bell and Ed Molloy

- Meeting called to order by Chair at 10:15 a.m.
- Minutes from September 2016 meeting accepted.
- It was noted that there was no quorum for the October meeting.

TAAC Membership Issues:

- There was discussion regarding the difficulty of reaching the quorum of seven people as required by the by-laws when there are currently only 10 members within TAAC.
- A motion was made to amend the wording of the by-laws to state that 50% of active membership will constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting business within a meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.
- Gina asked Lowell to inquire with the County Executive's office regarding the status of the 2-3 resumes that have been submitted for membership consideration.

Old Business discussed:

Report: Jack Khzous – NICE

- There will be a public hearing of the Nassau County Bus Transit Committee in Mid February. Date yet TBD – Jack will alert TAAC when it is announced. NICE will be required to provide the budget at the meeting.
 - There is currently a \$12 million deficit which could lead to deep cuts in service in April. NICE is working with state and local groups/lobbyists to try to find additional funding.
 - Jack recommended contacting State government assembly/senate to appeal for additional funding. Any written correspondence should cc local legislators.

- It is unclear if or how Able-Ride may be affected by funding/service cuts. Once the budget is passed, the County will have to decide on a policy how to proceed with any changes to Able-Ride.
- Jack will keep TAAC informed via email regarding any new information.
- All of the articulated vehicles have been delivered. They should be in service by April. There are still decisions to be made regarding the most innovative way to utilize the vehicles. They are unable to launch from certain points (i.e., Hempstead station) because they can't back up. The routes are being examined for appropriate usage.
- Jack briefly discussed the 10-year plan prepared by NICE (180 page bound report) regarding how they are planning for the future.

Tesheena Spencer - Able Ride

- Statistics for the months of November and December were presented.
- It was noted that they are still short one reservationist, but two new reservationists were hired. This allowed for the drop in overall wait time between November and December.
- There are more vehicles in service now, so the On Time Performance rate is expected to rise.
- Beginning February 1, 2017, Able-Ride will start enforcing their late cancelation/no-show policy as outlined in the Rider's Guide. If customers wish to dispute any given violations of the policy, they must submit a written letter to Able-Ride. The reservationists are currently giving reminders about the policy to callers.
- In response to a question regarding positioning of the seat belts on Able-Ride vehicles: the shoulder straps can't be moved, but there are cushions on order to make them more comfortable.
- New floor mats have been ordered for service dogs.
- The maximum number of wheelchairs allowed on the Ford Transit vehicles at one time is three.
- The Ford Crown Victorias are being cycled out, and Able-Ride is considering new sedan vehicles for ambulatory passengers. A

Buick LaCrosse was brought to the meeting for TAAC members to sit in and give feedback on comfort, etc.

New Business Discussion:

- **Therese brought up and re-capped Jack's mention of contacting State assembly/senate. What do we want to do as a group?**
 - **Kelly asked if we should send a letter with talking points.**
 - **Lowell suggested the letter should be addressed to the County Executive with cc's going to State reps. He also recommended including NYMTC in any correspondence.**
 - **Gina agreed to contact Sen. John Brooks whom she said is pulling together groups and coalitions. She will send his contact info to TAAC.**
 - **Mike will reach out to Pat Mitchell of the Suffolk Independent Living Organization for a draft of their talking points on this topic.**
 - **Kelly suggested mentioning the plan proposed for funding by Leg. Laua Curran at the Dec NC Bus Transit Committee public hearing. She spoke regarding the contingency fund overage and recommended it be used toward the deficit.**
 - **It was agreed that a letter from TAAC request a "fair" amount of funding should be allocated to Nassau County.**
- **Hari asked Tesheena if there was any progress toward being able to make reservations online. She said that was not an option currently, but they are meeting with a provider regarding text alerts or outbound calls when your ride is 10 minutes away.**
- **Mike asked Tesheena if a letter could be provided for customers' bosses or supervisors by Able-Ride when their ride is late. Tesheena said she will provide a letter if requested.**

Public comment

- **Sue McKenna, of Mobilizing Nassau, suggested contacting Marilyn Tucci of SILO for a copy of their talking points. She also asked that speaking points for calling State reps be provided to the public.**
- **Next TAAC Meeting confirmed for February 21, 2017.**
- **Minutes submitted by:
Kelly McClean**