

**Metro-North Railroad Commuter Council  
Chair's Report — Randy Glucksman  
PCAC Meeting  
September 4, 2014**

I want to reiterate my sentiments about Jim Blair and his tenure on the MNRCC. Jim has been a valued member of the MNRCC and a good friend to me during my time on the Council, and his departure will be a real loss to the MNRCC. We're fortunate that we had the benefit of his wise counsel and perspective for so many years and hope that we can carry on in his footsteps.

As a West of Hudson rider, I was pleased to see the announcement of an additional Port Jervis Line midday train, which will close a three-hour service gap on the line. Without regular, reliable service it will be difficult to grow Metro-North ridership west of the Hudson River. The new Port Jervis train is a part of \$20 million in additional service proposed for the MTA system. Unfortunately, the West of Hudson service will not be added until December 2015, so Port Jervis line riders will have to wait for even this small improvement.

In addition to this added service, starting November 1, 2014 the MTA will reduce annual parking fees at West of Hudson stations from \$235 to \$20 and daily parking fees from \$2.75 to \$1.25 in an effort to encourage more commuters to use the train. Particularly after the remnants of Hurricane Irene disrupted the Port Jervis line in 2011, a number of Metro-North West of Hudson riders changed their means of travel to commuter buses, which offer free parking and are often less expensive than the train. This reduction in parking costs was announced as a one-year pilot program, but often MTA pilot programs are extended far past their original end dates.

When we met with Metro-North President Joseph Giulietti, he discussed some of the difficulties of filling out his engineering staff. In early August, it was announced that Al Santini has been appointed Chief Engineer of the Metro-North Railroad. Mr. Santini comes from directing engineering on Metro-North's signal system and has 40 years of experience working with railroad signaling. In addition, it was announced that Tim McCarthy, who has been Metro-North's Senior Director of Capital Programs for several years, is being promoted to Vice President, Capital Programs.

We recently heard from former MNRCC Chair and current New York State Assembly Member David Buchwald, who is interested in ensuring that Metro-North is treated fairly in the development of the MTA Capital Program. He said that the Assembly Committee on Corporations, Authorities, and Commissions will be holding hearings on capital needs for the MTA's commuter railroads in mid-September. We expect to be invited to testify at this hearing, and in the business portion of the meeting we can discuss issues that we would like to raise.

As will be discussed later in the meeting, I participated in a roundtable meeting in White Plains of business, civic, governmental, and academic experts to discuss topics related to establishing the value of the MTA system and building support for continued investment in the our commuter railroads, buses, and subways. This roundtable is a part of the collaborative effort that the PCAC is involved in with the Urban Land Institute-NY, New York University's Schack Institute for Real Estate, the Regional Plan Association and the consulting firm HR&A. Later in this meeting we will hear more about this effort and how it can help to build support for the next MTA Capital Program.

On June 30, I attended a ceremony renaming Grand Central Terminal's restored main entry vestibule at 42nd Street and Park Avenue in honor of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, who led the campaign to save Grand Central from destruction in the 1970s. The space was cleaned, repaired and restored and a plaque honoring Mrs. Onassis and two video displays telling the story of her life and the preservation of the Terminal have been added at this entrance. If you have a few minutes, you might enjoy seeing the fine work that has been done on the vestibule, located through Vanderbilt Hall, adjacent to Pershing Square.

On June 19 Metro-North distributed its West of Hudson Customer Satisfaction Surveys and I asked for a quantity of surveys, which I distributed on my train. As you know, for many years we've worked with Metro-North on these surveys, reviewing the draft documents for East and West of Hudson versions of the survey, and our Chair's signature appears on every survey under a note asking riders to give their input. This year I was more personally involved in urging riders to let Metro-North know about the quality of their commute.

On Monday, July 7, Metro-North put into effect a set of adjustments to its New Haven and Harlem Line service. These adjustments are a result of Metro-North's efforts to monitor performance, conduct passenger counts and respond to issues raised by riders following the implementation of its May 11 schedule change. Among the changes made were the restoration of connections between trains that had been disrupted by the earlier schedule change and the addition of stops on trains having space to relieve overcrowding on other trains. There are also a number of minor timing adjustments to accommodate these changes