



# Meeting Minutes of

## July 9, 2020

---

A meeting of the Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council (LIRRCC) was convened at 4:30 pm on Thursday, July 9, 2020 via Zoom.

### Member Attendance

Gerard P. Bringmann (Chair)	Present
Sheila Carpenter	Present
Bryan Peranzo	Present
Marilyn Poterson	Present
Larry Rubinstein (Vice Chair)	Present

### Staff Attendance

Lisa Daglian (Executive Director)	Present
Ellyn Shannon (Associate Director)	Absent
Bradley Brashears (Planning Manager)	Absent
Sheila Binesh (Transportation Planner)	Present
Deborah Morrison (Administrative Assistant)	Absent
Shaul Picker (Research Intern)	Present

### Non-member Attendance

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Hector Garcia	LIRR
Philip Eng	LIRR
Christopher Greif	NYCTRC
Matt Kamper	Concerned citizen
Andrew Pollack	Concerned citizen
Charlton D'Souza	Concerned citizen
Karen Hamilton	Concerned citizen
Jason Anthony	Concerned Citizen

**Approval of Agenda for July 9, 2020 meeting.  
Approval of Minutes for May 14, 2020 meeting.**

**Chair's PCAC Staff Report**

- Recap of the special meeting last Tuesday (6/30/2020); this was a reorganization meeting, in which Gerry was elected chair and Larry was elected vice chair.
- Marilyn is going to be the Council's candidate to be second vice chair of the PCAC, and Gerry's name was offered to be submitted to Albany to fill the LIRRCC's MTA Board vacancy.

**Hector Garcia, LIRR External Affairs: LIRR COVID-19 responses**

*COVID-19 Update*

H. Garcia: We are continuing our aggressive sanitation of the train fleet. We are up to 90% of normal service, 20% of normal weekday ridership, and 30% of normal ridership on weekends.

P. Eng: I have seen really strong compliance. When I have seen people on platforms without a mask, they generally put them on as they enter the train.

L. Rubinstein: Are you able to keep up this level of cleaning as ridership ticks up?

P. Eng: Yes. The disinfecting we are doing now is not affected by ridership.

*East River Tunnel Repairs*

G. Bringmann: We know Amtrak does not want to do the work until after ESA is done, and want to be sure they have the money and game plan ready as soon as it is online, as fewer trains would go into Penn. We don't want Metro-North to rush in and want work to be done before they come in.

P. Eng: We are on the same page, and continue to meet with Amtrak. ESA is on schedule.

S. Picker: The track layout at Mineola as part of Third Track would require Oyster Bay-bound trains to cross all three tracks and stop on the Manhattan-bound track, eliminating all capacity gains from the project. What service patterns are planned, working with the track layout?

P. Eng: Meetings have been held with communities along the line in the last six months on the issue. Some want service kept as is, to make it a shuttle, or electrify it. As part of the FY20-24 capital program, a study will evaluate improvements to non-electrified territory and set priorities.

*Brooklyn Shuttle/Platform F*

H. Garcia: The platform is not needed now with low ridership.

P. Eng: We have not committed to a shuttle, and are exploring the ability to maintain single-seat rides, and to expand service with shuttle service.

C. Greif: I hope we can study the future of the Montauk Branch as ridership to Speonk has increased rapidly, and a second track from Patchogue to Speonk should be added.

## LIRRCC MINUTES

### 3

H. Garcia: Looking at the Montauk Branch is part of the study, which looks at non-electrified territory and single-track territory to prioritize the next place to investment. The documents for the study are written, but it is not out due to the hold on the capital program.

P. Eng: The only thing out there is the study for Port Jefferson, which is reviewing double tracking and electrification.

M. Kamper: How is work progressing at Elmont, and what will the service pattern be?

H. Garcia: Work just started. A section of the eastbound platform will open in October 2021. Two trains will run from Jamaica to Belmont Park. Hempstead trains will stop at Elmont, with more trains during events. A reactivated wye will allow trains from Belmont Park to head east.

#### *On Board cash collection*

P. Eng: We are not accepting cash, except at TVMs, but are reviewing this now.

G. Bringmann: We ask that you restore cash at the earliest opportunity.

#### *On Board cameras (policy review)*

G. Bringmann: Hector sent an email earlier today, and I will share it with the council members. It addresses most of the concerns people have.

L. Daglian: Some agencies are using cameras to look at mask compliance. Are you using it to look at problem stations or times?

H. Garcia: We have been using it for crowding, and it allows us to add service more quickly.

L. Daglian: About the app, the diesels don't have the same level of technology.

P. Eng: They are going to have it soon, hopefully this summer.

C. D'Souza: How is the refund process being dealt with for people with TransitCheck?

G. Bringmann: We are trying to help people who have pre-tax money taken through WageWorks and want it back. We should work to get a one-time exemption. There is legislation in Washington for money taken out for cafeteria plans. That is not an LIRR issue.

L. Rubinstein: Most of the riders are upset about the \$10 refund fee. Maybe that is something you should consider waiving for a period of time.

L. Daglian: We wrote a letter on that two months ago. Have there been further discussions at the MTA level?

H. Garcia: If someone writes to us, we can see what can be done on an individual basis. However, we cannot change the policy.

C. D'Souza: There is a homeless issue at Queens Village.

G. Bringmann: Let's put the issue on next month's agenda.

## LIRRCC MINUTES

4

L. Daglian: We will also circulate the MTAIG report

G. Bringmann: Things we will be looking to get answers on for next month include progress on the Penn Station renovations, the M9 delivery date, and an update on PTC.

P. Eng: PTC is on schedule, and is in service on 76% of our tracks. The Harold workaround with Amtrak is being progressed.

L. Daglian: I wanted to provide an update on real estate from our February meeting. Inspections conducted over the past month found no operational issues with operators in terms of adherence to their agreements at Floral Park, Hicksville, Babylon and Sayville.

### **Old Business**

L. Rubinstein: As we get new members and names to send up, the Governor's office is aware, and I spoke to the Governor about it yesterday. Once we do our side of the coin, hopefully the Governor or his secretary can push things through so we don't have to wait for a year.

L. Daglian: I reached out to former applicants, and 99% still expressed interest in being considered. I reached out to the Suffolk County Executive's chief of staff to cross-reference names, and am trying to reach out to Helena Williams in Nassau. For the LIRRCC, there have to be three names for each vacancy, and with the removal of Ray Pagano, there are 3 in Nassau, 2 in Suffolk, in addition to 1 each in Brooklyn and Queens. There will not be any movement in Queens until there is a Borough President.

### **New Business**

None

### **Adjourned**

#### **Action Items:**

- Send out MTA IG Homeless report to Council.
- Progress on the Penn Station renovations and the M9 delivery date update at next meeting.

#### **Meeting recording**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Daglian  
Executive Director