



PCAC

PERMANENT CITIZENS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MTA

Meeting Minutes of September 10, 2020

A virtual meeting of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC) was convened at 12:00 noon on September 10, 2020 by Zoom.

Member Attendance

Andrew Albert (Chair)	Present
Randolph Glucksman (Vice Chair)	Present
Gerard P. Bringmann (LIRRCC)	Present
Francena Amparo (MNRCC)	Absent
Sheila Carpenter (LIRRCC)	Absent
Richard Cataggio (MNRCC)	Absent
Francis T. Corcoran (MNRCC)	Absent
Orrin Getz (MNRCC)	Present
Stuart Goldstein (NYCTRC)	Present
Christopher Greif (NYCTRC)	Present
William Guild (NYCTRC)	Present
Marisol Halpern (NYCTRC)	Present
Sharon King Hoge (NYCTRC)	Present
Trudy L. Mason (NYCTRC)	Present
Scott R. Nicholls (NYCTRC)	Present
Raymond Pagano (LIRRCC)	Absent
Bryan Peranzo (LIRRCC)	Absent
Marilyn N. Poterson (LIRRCC)	Present
Edith M. Prentiss (NYCTRC)	Present
Larry Rubinstein (LIRRCC)	Present
Burton M. Strauss, Jr. (NYCTRC)	Present

Staff Attendance

Lisa Daglian (Executive Director)	Present
Ellyn Shannon (Associate Director)	Present
Bradley Brashears (Planning Manager)	Present
Sheila Binesh (Transportation Planner)	Present
Shaul Picker (Research Intern)	Absent
Gav Mazurek (Research Intern)	Present

Non-member Attendance

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Scott Goldstein	Transportation for America
Ron Troy	Concerned citizen
Karyl Berger Cafiero	Concerned citizen
Matt Shotkin	Concerned citizen
Matt Kamper	Concerned citizen
Jason Anthony	Concerned citizen
Andy Pollack	Concerned citizen
Andrew Kurzweil	Concerned citizen
Adrienne Kanter	Concerned citizen
Darwin Keung	Concerned citizen
Paul Burton	Bond Buyer

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Howie Long
Will Schwartz

MTA-GCR
MTA-GCR

PCAC Chair's Report:

A. Albert: These are very difficult times for the MTA and the city. We are awaiting a possible deal in Washington, which is not forthcoming. The MTA made clear at its last board meeting that if we don't get \$12 billion in a timely manner by the November board meeting, it will have to take drastic measures. These include laying off 8,400 people, a 40% cut in subway and bus service, a 50% cut on commuter rail lines, including eliminating several lines, such as West of Hudson.

Trains have been cleaner than they have ever been when I have been riding them, some homeless people have accepted services, new technologies to keep trains clean are being tested, such as improved real-time air filtering, anti-microbials and ultraviolet light. Today there was good news that mask wearing will be more enforced. I have been riding the subways and buses regularly, and while ridership is growing, mask compliance is slightly lower.

The MTA is doing a great job with electronic signage and announcements. With the Mercury program, there can be platform specific messages. The LIRR introduced an update to their TrainTime app so you can tell how crowded trains are on 100% of their fleet and look at historic data for a specific train. Chambers Street is now ADA-accessible. The LIRR is doing well on its way to meeting the PTC deadline at the end of the year.

Our speaker is from Transportation for America, an organization that is advocating for federal support. Only Washington can solve this problem.

Approval of agenda for September 10, 2020 meeting ***Approval of minutes for June 4, 2020 meeting***

LIRRCC Chair's Report: G. Bringmann

G. Bringmann: I wanted to acknowledge that since our last PCAC meeting, our chairman Mark Epstein passed away. He worked very hard, had a lot of great political connections, and will be very sorely missed.

Without federal funding there will be substantial fare increases, branches will get service every hour or two hours, and some of the smaller branches might be eliminated, like West Hempstead. We are pushing for federal relief, but have not received a great response.

The improvements to the TrainTime app, which were announced on Tuesday, will make it easier to socially distance. We are up to 25% of pre-pandemic ridership. The LIRR is running all trains as off-peak trains, and we asked that they better let riders know about it. In the last few days, they introduced a new screen saver on the ticket machines that alerts people to this.

We are working with Nassau and Suffolk counties to fill our empty slots. We are still negotiating with Nassau County, and Suffolk County sent its six names up to Albany for the two seats we need to fill. My name was submitted for the vacant MTA Board position, and we don't anticipate anything to be finalized until spring 2021.

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L. Rubinstein: The Governor's secretary knows about this and will try to nudge the approval committee. Unfortunately, they are currently involved in the COVID campaign and the current election campaign, so don't expect anything by the end of the year.

L. Daglian: The approval process includes 3-5 levels of review before someone gets to a background check.

L. Rubinstein: I will be with the Governor and his secretary tomorrow and will mention it, and it might be worth mentioning whether it would be worth streamlining this process.

MNRCC Chair's Report: R. Glucksman

R. Glucksman: We had a PTC working group meeting this morning. Both the LIRR and MNR remain on target to install PTC by the end of the year deadline. All 284.3 miles are in full PTC functional, and 94% of the LIRR has PTC—the only issue is Harold Interlocking.

Just 15 minutes before to the board meeting, an email came with the summary of the financial plan, and I saw that service West of Hudson would be eliminated. I immediately called the MTA Board member who represents Rockland, Frank Borelli, and asked him to call the county executive. All four Hudson Valley county executives came out with a unified front in opposition.

Election Held for PCAC 2nd Vice Chair: Marilyn Poterson, LIRRCC, nominee. Elected with unanimous approval.

Position: Proposal to Increase Gas Tax

A. Albert: I just got off the phone with the Chairman and mentioned that whatever happens with federal funding, we need to be able to rely on New York State, and a gas tax would help. This could help do away with or mitigate years of fare increases, allow for increased service, clean our air, and allocate a portion to upstate roads and bridges.

S. Binesh: \$980 million a year could be raised by tripling the gas tax.

L. Rubinstein: I have never seen so much traffic on Long Island as I have seen recently, as people are not using transit. We need to be realistic and understand we are not going to get federal funding. I would request that Lisa start writing a letter and circulate it among us so we can have input, so when a decision comes out, we have a letter to go out, expressing how, we, as the riders' advocates feel.

Introduction of Speaker: Scott Goldstein, Policy Director Transportation for America

C. Greif: Accessibility is part of the key as well. We have issue with putting elevators and ramps in stations. We need to continue with these efforts.

L. Daglian: Representative Vasquez is poised to introduce language or to introduce legislation that would provide additional grant money for accessibility projects.

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S. Goldstein: I have not heard any timing on this legislation. But to speak to Christopher's comment – we are lucky in Washington to have virtually every station with an elevator, but many systems do not have that. We are working hard to tell the different stories – working with business entities to tell the business case. We are also preparing to work with the Disability Rights Education Foundation to do more around access – we are also working with equity groups. All these points need to be made.

A. Albert: Have you done op-eds in major national papers?

S. Goldstein: We are in the middle of a major effort around that. We have a template for op-eds, and are working with faith groups in Iowa and Georgia to place ads, organizations that represent older Americans in Colorado and Maine. We are working with the NAACP to place an op-ed, we are working with a group of business leaders that represent business communities in both Carolinas. We would be more than happy to share any templates we have.

T. Mason: Has your organization taken any position on congestion pricing?

S. Goldstein: We do support it. When it comes to a broader reauthorization of transportation policy, we want it to be easier for localities to implement congestion pricing if they want to. New York is working through a process that in many ways is designed to stop congestion pricing. We have not been asked to take any action.

T. Mason: Who would have to ask you to voice your opinion?

S. Goldstein: I will see what we can do. We do work closely with NYCDOT. If there is any help they needed, we are always willing to provide it.

S. King-Hoge: Aren't we up against the well-endowed lobbyist of the oil industry and the auto industry, and is there a way to launch an offensive against them? Large-heavy trucks largely use the highways and are they taxed sufficiently?

S. Goldstein: You are up against well-funded members of the status-quo and we are working hard with Congress to ignore the status-quo and push for reform. We do a lot of coalition building – "Chambers for Transit", which is a collection of Chambers of Commerce coming together to support transit.

Old Business: None

New Business:

C. Greif: Fines for not wearing masks of \$50 dollars – who will be enforcing this? Will warnings be given?

A. Albert: Was a press release provided for this?

L. Daglian: There has not been a press release so far.

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T. Mason: The NY Post has an article about it – I can send it along. A press conference was given by the governor.

A. Albert: This is Christopher Greif's 10-year anniversary with the PCAC – a certificate is forthcoming.

Adjourned

This meeting was conducted via Zoom Conference Call: [Zoom Video](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Daglian
Executive Director