

A virtual meeting of the New York City Transit Riders Council (NYCTRC) was convened at 12:00 pm on Thursday, June 24, 2021 via Zoom.

### Member Attendance

Andrew Albert (Chair)	Present
Burton M. Strauss Jr. (Vice Chair)	Present
Stuart Goldstein	Present
Christopher D. Greif	Present
William K. Guild	Absent
Marisol Halpern	Present
Sharon King Hoge	Present
Trudy L. Mason	Present
Scott R. Nicholls	Absent

### Staff Attendance

Lisa Daglian (Executive Director)	Present
Bradley Brashears (Planning Manager)	Absent
Shaul Picker (Research Intern)	Present

### Non-Member Attendance

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Andrew Pollack	Concerned citizen
Ron Troy	Concerned citizen
Andrew Kurzweil	Concerned citizen
Howie Levine	Concerned citizen
Clayton Guse	Concerned citizen
Finnley Staub	Concerned citizen
Sarah Meyer	MTA
Cate Contino	New York City Transit

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### **Approval of Agenda for June 24, 2021 meeting.**

### **Approval of Minutes for May 27, 2021 meeting.**

#### **Old Business**

C. Greif: Yesterday, N, R, and W trains stopped on the express track at 57<sup>th</sup> Street due to a switch problem at 34<sup>th</sup> Street. Why can't the N use this switch and run express from 57<sup>th</sup>?

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L. Daglian: There was a 100 Days, 100 Nights report recommendation about delays at 34<sup>th</sup>.

A. Albert: Sharon, I forwarded your observations about the Lex line in regard to police in groups and not following fare evaders, and they are going to deal with that.

T. Mason: When both an SBS and a regular bus come to a stop at the same time, many drivers of the bus that comes to the stop second immediately pull out. This wasn't happening after it was brought up at our big bus meeting. Can we have another bus meeting soon?

L. Daglian: I was surprised to hear at the Board meeting that cash transactions would not resume at station booths. I frankly thought they had resumed since they resumed on the LIRR and MNR. My concern is that it was presented as a throw away comment at the Board Meeting in response to an unrelated question, instead of having conversations with riders.

A. Albert: I don't want to get rid of those employees. I want them to be eyes and ears on the platforms, and answer questions, directions, help people having trouble with the machines.

C. Greif: As of June 21, vans and buses are accepting cash. They are working on credit cards.

S. Goldstein: There will be an overlap between the period in which both MetroCard and OMNY cards will be in effect. Will there be any credit to allow people to transfer their balances?

#### **Action item: See if it will be possible to transfer MetroCard balances to OMNY**

*Presentation: Sarah Meyer, Chief Customer Officer, MTA*

S. Goldstein: Shouldn't the new posters focus on the integration of the three systems, and be encouraging people to take multiple modes?

S. Meyer: We have been trying to do that where we can. For social media, saying take the train and the bus is too long. If you look at the New York is Open campaign, most of these ads for railroad destinations ran in the subway – not something we had previously done on our digital screens.

T. Mason: Have you thought about having signs that say take the train to your friend's house or to a doctor's appointment – the simplest things people use transit for.

S. Goldstein: You can ask the city-funded cultural institutions to put up fliers and posters.

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S. Picker: Many older service change posters had maps showing the affected routes. We've heard the hiring freeze meant you could not hire someone to do the maps anymore. With the relaxation of the hiring freeze, will it be possible to get these maps back?

S. Meyer: There was one graphic artist position posted three weeks ago. Interviews will start soon, meaning we should have someone by late summer/early fall to help with map creation.

S. Picker: It would be great if you could leverage screens on trains to let people get real-time information about delays on other lines.

S. Meyer: It is a goal, but would be several years away.

L. Daglian: I appreciate the announcements on trains about accessible stations. I haven't heard it on the 7 train. Are there announcements that get made if an escalator or elevator is out?

S. Meyer: This is an initiative that Systemwide Accessibility Group is working on. These are all pilots. Hopefully real-time accessibility information will get to the train operators.

A. Albert: Strip maps on the screens aren't platform specific. There are expresses showing on local platforms and vice versa. At Court on the R, the opposite direction was on the wrong side.

S. Meyer: This is made more complicated by planned work, and we are taking a look at it.

A. Albert: When there are lags in service due to not enough staff, it would be good to get the message out, whether on the countdown clocks or screens.

F. Staub: Are the people who work in booths going to be reassigned to different positions?

S. Meyer: They will still be in the booth, but will also be out of it, which is better for customer service. They can help people open the exit gate if it isn't working, help people with the MVMs, and walk up and down the subway platforms. Few systems around the world accept cash at booths. This will be in all our long-term objectives, but we have not made any decisions yet.

#### *Chair and Board Report*

A. Albert: Pat Foye is going to Empire State Development. Sarah Feinberg will be Chair, and Janno Lieber will be CEO. While the Assembly approved this change, the Senate has not, and is on recess. There is some resistance to splitting the job to two positions.

Mask wearing now is not required at outdoor stations and bus stops. Metro-North boosted service, and will do so again August 29th. Due to the hiring freeze, there are fewer bus and train operators, so less service is being operated than is scheduled. These shortages won't end soon. Crime has been down in the first weeks of June.

Fares and tolls have come in above estimates. Bob Foran said he understands congestion pricing is on the way. There have been public hearings about property takings for Second Avenue Subway Phase 2. The LIRRCC, Passengers United, and other groups asked the MTA to provide overnight shuttle bus service during Main Line shutdowns, which the LIRR agreed to.

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The M8s have been equipped to show boarding levels on TrainTime. The first R211 set should come by August. The test open gangway set will come in early 2022.

L. Daglian: We made an offer for an administrative assistant. They will hopefully be in by the end of August. We began the interview process for the research and communications assistant. We looked at 11 people, and are interviewing 6 or 7 of them. We got 156 resumes.

A. Albert: Do you anticipate going back to the office on a regular basis?

L. Daglian: We are looking at hybrid, and will see how it pans out.

### ***New Business***

C. Greif: We have three new ACTA members. They will be doing testing on some of the new buses for accessibility, like areas for walkers or baby strollers. The LIRR will provide updates on LIRR Cares. They are some communication issues about connections at Jamaica.

R. Troy: Did you learn more about accessibility between the shuttle and the Grand Central Terminal? You either have the long passage to the Lex, or crowded stairs up to the terminal. There is no elevator or escalator. Do the elevators at 1 Vanderbilt get you to Grand Central?

L. Daglian: There is an elevator right under Metro-North at the end of the passage.

R. Troy: That is a full block out of the way.

L. Daglian: The Commodore project will build a number of different accessibility improvements, and will build an accessible ramp in an unused track area.

R. Troy: There needs to be something at the west end.

S. Picker: The Short Loop connection, based on public diagrams, seems like it would block a Penn Station to Grand Central rail connection, which George Haikalis, I, and others have called for. Could you ask the MTA if this is the case? The alignment should be safeguarded.

**Action item: See if the Short Loop would block a Penn – Grand Central rail connection**

#### **Action items:**

- See if it will be possible to transfer MetroCard balances to OMNY
- See if the Short Loop would block a Penn – Grand Central rail connection

### ***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