A virtual meeting of the Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council (LIRRCC) was convened at 4:00 pm on Thursday, January 13, 2022 via Zoom.

**Member Attendance**

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| Gerard P. Bringmann (Chair) | Present |
| Bryan Peranzo | Present |
| Marilyn Poterson | Absent |
| Larry Rubinstein (Vice Chair)Christy Tolbert | PresentPresent |
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**Staff Attendance**

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| Lisa Daglian (Executive Director) | Present |
| Bradley Brashears (Planning Manager) | Present |
| Kara Gurl (Research & Comms. Associate)Jessica Spezio (Administrative Assistant)Shaul Picker (Research Intern) | PresentPresentAbsent |

**Non-member Attendance**

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| **Name** | **Affiliation** |
| Hector GarciaChristopher GreifDeborah GreifRon Troy  | Senior Director External Affairs (LIRR)NYCTRC MemberConcerned citizen Concerned Citizen |

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| ***Approval of Agenda for January 13, 2022 meeting.******Approval of Minutes for November 4, 2021 meeting.*****Chair’s Report:** * Early last month, I attended a press conference held in Penn Station by Senator Schumer at which he announced a working agreement between the MTA and Amtrak to both perform the long overdue remediation of the East River Tunnels and the work required for the Penn Access Project.
* Later in the month, I attended a Press Conference held in Penn Station by Congressman Tom Souzzi regarding the conditions in Penn Station. I focused my remarks on the homeless/panhandlers there, as this has been an ongoing concern of our ridership that was highlighted in the LIRR’s recent Customer Satisfaction Survey.
* At the December MTA Board Meeting, it was announced that “all off-peak, all the time” has been extended until the end of February, at which time a new pilot program will be implemented with a 20-trip ticket at 20% off that will suit the needs of the 2-3 day a week rider once peak fares resume on March 1st. Also starting in March will be a 10% discount on the standard monthly tickets.
* Governor Hochul recently announced that she is sending Janno Lieber’s name to the NYS Senate for confirmation as the permanent CEO/ Chairman of the MTA.
* Regarding openings on the LIRRCC, now that new administrations have taken office in Brooklyn, Queens & Nassau, we will resume our push to get nominees to fill our vacancies up to the Governor’s Office.

**Winter Prep and update:**H. Garcia: We had our first storm last week. We started our winter operations plans to prepare for storms a few weeks ago. We have meetings scheduled for three days leading up to the storm to prepare for them. G. Bringmann: Where do we get our weather forecast from? It seems that this last storm caught us by surprise as there were extremely icy conditions. H. Garcia: Yes, I agree we were caught off guard by the ice conditions. **Ridership and mask enforcement update:**H. Garcia: Ridership was up to 50% in November/ December, and we are back in the 40% ridership compared to pre-pandemic levels. G. Bringmann: We know that conductors try to avoid conflicts on mask enforcement but are there any new updates? Can we follow up with MTA police on that? H. Garcia: We know they were making the announcements and I will follow up further.C. Greif: I have noticed that it seems construction workers are refusing to wear masks. Can we request to enforce this more along the Babylon/ Montauk Line?H. Garcia: Okay, I’ve made a note of it. **New fare implementation/timing and next steps:**H. Garcia: Peak fares will go back into effect in March. There will also be discounts on the 20 -trip ticket sales. G. Bringmann: These are pilot programs that are running for the next few months and then they will decide if they will make them permanent or not, correct? H. Garcia: Yes. That is correct, and they will probably run into the summer months. Then we will review the data and decide whether to keep running the programs or if it gets approved and becomes permanent. L. Rubinstein: How long does the 20-trip tickets last? It should be more than 30 days; it should be six months. H. Garcia: I don’t have that information right now, but I can find out and get back to you guys.G. Bringmann: I think there are a few things that still need to be ironed out. The union was concerned about people using the 20-trip for three or four people at a time. B. Brashears: The regular 10-trip tickets last for 60 days per the website. I’m also not sure about the 20-trip tickets of the expiration date. L. Rubinstein: I have a 10-trip in my pocket that I purchased on 12/28/21 and it says valid until 6/28/22 so this one is good for six months. It says on the site a 10-trip is only valid for 60 days, this one is six months. Something is wrong; this needs to be investigated. B. Peranzo: If the 10-trip is good for 60 days, then 20-trips should be good for at least 90 days.**Garden City/ Third Track update:** H. Garcia: We got the permit between Christmas and the new year that will allow for work around the last bridge replacement. They conceded before January 4th and we already have the permits and we have started the work. There is a scheduled weekend in April for an outage to put the bridge in and we are still on track to finish by the end of the year.G. Bringmann: It seems that finishing on time was what everyone was worried about and even Governor Hochul said we were on track. H. Garcia: We have to finish the Queens’s interlocking to make Third Track work and finish the new Elmont Station. Most of the outages aren’t because of the contractors, it’s on the railroads to finish the track work to get the system running. **Penn Station update:**G. Bringmann: Is Penn Station’s progress still on track? H. Garcia: Yes, we are still on track for completion of early 2023. **Weather updates:** G. Bringmann: What are the station waiting room hours? As far as extreme weather conditions, how is it determined?H. Garcia: If it’s below 30 degrees they are kept open 24/7. **New Business:** G. Bringmann: Bicycles are not supposed to be on a rush-hour train. You don’t need a permit for a bicycle anymore. A new issue is scooters, there is no policy for them, but people are considering them to be a problem.H. Garcia: We are monitoring this new issue and because ridership is low, it’s not a big problem but we have to figure out what we will be doing going forward.L. Rubinstein: What is technically considered a bicycle? They have folding ones that you can store on the racks.G. Bringmann: I don’t think folding bicycles are an issue. I think it’s the full bikes that block the aisles and doorways. B. Peranzo: There is also supposed to be a limit of four bikes per train. So, they are on the train during rush hour and there are more bikes than there should be.C. Greif: The conductors do prioritize accessible passengers over bikes, as we have seen from traveling.B. Peranzo: We need to have a scooter policy made. There is a difference between a regular scooter and a motorized scooter that runs on batteries or gas. Should even be allowed. G. Bringmann: Most of the complaints we receive are from people walking on the platforms. They are complaining about people who ride the scooter in and through the station. The safety of the walking passengers is a concern, that they can get hit by a fast-passing scooter.B. Peranzo: There really isn’t a good place to put the bikes without them being in the way.G. Bringmann: The only place is the accessibility area and that’s if there isn’t a passenger there in a wheelchair, they need to find alternate options. L. Daglian: It’s definitely a problem across the whole system, I’m sure it’s a problem for the conductors as they are told to notify rail control of a hazard when a passenger boards a train with an electric or gas run bikes and scooters. This is something we can possibly take up at the Board meetings. L. Daglian: There is legislation in Albany that would add a member to each of our Councils who has experience and interest in the areas of pedestrian and bicycle access to MTA facilities. It will require the MTA to develop a strategic plan on pedestrian and bicycle access to bridges, parking at the commuter stations, and onboard the trains. L. Daglian: A chapter amendment was developed that revises the original legislation further. A few bicycle advocacy organizations pushed to bring a bill before the Senate and the Assembly, which did pass in a very revised form and with many thanks to the MTA. We at the PCAC are required to make recommendations by June 2022 on ways they can improve bike and pedestrian access to their facilities such as bridges, rails, train stations, and on buses. We will be reaching out to the bill sponsors and we also need to see who the appointing electives will be. The MTA will also need to meet with Bridges and Tunnels folks to see how we can collaborate. B. Brashears: We need to take peak hours into effect, and we need to meet the needs of both sides of commuters. B. Peranzo: Bike parking at the stations needs to be restored and how can they add additional bike access on the equipment? We can possibly do a questionnaire to help support the program and ask for input on the bike commuters. B. Brashears: We might be able to request the MTA to do a survey on bike riders in the system. D. Greif: Will the bike spaces take away from accessibility spaces?G. Bringmann: No, definitely not but obviously this has to be discussed.**Commuter Bill of Rights:**L. Daglian: Reviews and discusses the list with the members. Changes and edits to be made about service; it will not all be written in caps and something will be added something about accessibility. L. Rubinstein: We should add something about the healthy/ cleanliness of the trains especially after Covid, so passengers feel safe. G. Bringmann: Modify number eight for sure, add something about accessibility. We have also spoken to the railroad about our posters being updated with our current address, emails, and our phone numbers. B. Peranzo: Where else can we post this Bill of Rights? Possibly post it on our PCAC website as well. B. Brashears: We should share this and update them for all of our councils across the board and then post it to our PCAC website. B. Peranzo: It should also be posted on the MTA’s website as well. G. Bringmann: We need to discuss the 2022 council priorities and fill vacancies.L. Daglian: You had submitted a list from a few years ago and I don’t believe resiliency was on there, but we can add it along with any other new suggestions. **Old Business:** L. Rubinstein: Along with NYC police on subways can they enforce police on the railroads and see if anything can be done with providing safety on the railroads?L. Daglian: I’m not sure what role Nassau/ Suffolk police have in patrolling the trains, but they do patrol the stations. L. Rubinstein: We should put in a request to Governor Hochul to provide more security on the LIRR as well along with the MTA police. L. Daglian: That’s a good suggestion.**Action items: None*****Adjourned*****Meeting recording:** [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXY95OQMpw4**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXY95OQMpw4)The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM.Respectfully submitted,Lisa DaglianExecutive Director |