A meeting of the New York City Transit Riders Council (NYCTRC) was convened at 12:00 pm on Thursday, January 27, 2022 in the 20th floor Conf. Room 4 at 2 Broadway, New York, NY 10004 and via Zoom.

**Member Attendance**

Andrew Albert (Chair) Present

Burton M. Strauss Jr. (Vice Chair) Present

Stuart Goldstein Present

Christopher Greif Present

William K. Guild Absent

Marisol Halpern Present

Sharon King Hoge Present

Karen Hamilton Present

Cicely Harris Present

Trudy L. Mason Present

Scott R. Nicholls Absent

**Staff Attendance**

Lisa Daglian (Executive Director) Present

Kara Gurl (Research & Comm. Associate) Present

Bradley Brashears (Planning Manager) Present

Jessica Spezio (Administrative Assistant) Present

Shaul Picker (PCAC intern) Present

**Non-member Attendance**

**Name Affiliation**

Alexandra La Flair CIDNY

Jasmine Melzer Concerned citizen

Rocio Zumaya Concerned citizen

Ron Troy Concerned citizen

Cate Contino NYCT Asst Dir. Govt Affairs

Mira Philipson MTA

Howie Levine NYCT Govt Affairs

Quemuel Arroyo MTA Chief Accessibility Officer

Sara Bahri MTA Systemwide Accessibility

Jose Martinez The City

Andrew Kurzweil Concerned citizen

William Stanford Concerned citizen

David Kupferberg Concerned citizen

Mike Howard Concerned citizen

Jason Anthony Concerned citizen

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| ***Approval of Agenda for January 27, 2022 meeting.*** |
| ***Approval of Minutes for December 16, 2021 meeting.*** |
| ***Chair’s Report attached***  **Safety Issues**  A. Albert: This was a big topic at the Board and Committee meetings. Our riders are concerned with all the stabbings, pushing of people, and overall safety in the system. Platform doors would bring some real issues. Many of our stations are over 100 years old and the platforms doors are very heavy and would require rebuilding all new station platforms. The fact that we have different equipment on all of the lines doesn’t help either because they don’t line up the same. These platform doors would also cause accessibility issues system wide.  C. Greif: The platform doors are a concern on safety for the accessibility community. Homeless issues continue to be a problem and many of them use the bathroom on the trains making them unsanitary and causing service disruptions.  **New Transit Police Chief**  A. Albert: We are looking forward to working with the new Chief Jason Wilcox, whom I have known for many years, and he seems eager to help get our system safe again. With a more visible police presence, our riders will feel safer.    D. Greif: For those of us who use wheelchairs we have safety concerns when traveling along the platform with very narrow pathways by the stairs. I can easily be shoved onto the tracks, and it’s very frightening. Having police walk on the platforms will give us a sense of security.  **Ridership report**  A. Albert: Ridership had declined 60% of pre-covid rates during the Omicron outbreak. We are currently at 50% of pre-COVID ridership. We are hopeful that the increased police presence can make people feel safe and return to the system.  **Retirement of R32/ Trial of R211Subway Cars**  A. Albert: The R32 trains have officially retired. The R211s are being tested and delivered.  They will be tested out on the Rockaway test route, and we will keep you notified on when they will be out. The open gangway cars version is not available as of yet, we are not sure how those will work out. We are supposed to get between 30 and 50 of those train cars in the near future.  **170th St (#4) Accessible station**  A. Albert: The 170th street station on the number four line has been made fully accessible. A few other stations will be the New Dorp station on SIR, Grand St. on the L Line, Beach 67th Street on the A in the Rockaways, 7th Ave on the F/G Lines, and Dyckman St. on the 1 Line northbound, just to name a few.  **OMNY Update**  A. Albert: As you made have heard, OMNY had a bit of a setback. The programming has to be revised. We are looking for it to fully rollout by the second quarter of 2024. They will be installing the OMNY machines in the stations.  S. Goldstein: Have you heard that OMNY is behind schedule for the reduced fare program and for express bus riders?  A. Albert: Yes, these are some reasons for their setbacks.  C. Greif: I’m actually a part of the test group. They are having issues with the OMNY machines in Brooklyn and in the Bronx. Another issue was when I went to add money to the card in the store, the store employees didn’t know how to do it, so they have to train them better.  S. Goldstein: Is there a robust list of what private stores you can purchase these OMNY cards from aside from the vending machines? I know they mentioned 7-11 stores but is there a list?  A. Albert: I do recall seeing that they are for sale in 7-11 stores and Duane Reade and other stores but I don’t recall if there is a list.  J. Anthony: I had a hard time finding an OMNY card. The store said I had to pay for it with cash. I continue to see police officers not wearing masks. I also see police officers distracted on their cellphones.  A. Albert: I just want you to understand that officers have work issued cell phones where they receive updates and important information. What may look like them being on their cellphone can actually be them reading work-related news.  **Interborough Express**  A. Albert: You’ve all heard about the Interborough Express running along the route of the old New York Connecting Railway that would run from Bay Ridge over Avenue H toward East New York, Glendale, Maspeth, and into Jackson Heights. It would utilize an old railroad right-of-way, and they would have to determine what type of railway they would use.  T. Mason: I’ve heard they have three different proposals. Rapid transit or maybe just as a bus line or light rail. Where the funding is coming from is also up the air. These are all proposals that the governor is still deciding on.    B. Brashears: We can advocate for transparency so the public can weigh their opinions in**.**  K. Hamilton: As people learn more about the proposals, they can provide feedback. The communities don’t want it forced on them, including the people in the communities would be ideal.  S. Goldstein: This is not an unused line. It Is used for freight transportation. It is managed by NY and Atlantic and is on the LIRR Bay Ridge Branch. Is this something that transit should take on or should it be operated by the LIRR? It’s a very complex proposal with track capacity issues, and accessibility issues as well.  B. Brashears: It currently is a 1 to 2 track operation. There is a possibility to add up to 4 tracks in certain locations on the line.  L. Daglian: There have been some new FRA regulations where light rail is permitted to travel on heavy rail.  **Staff Updates:**  L. Daglian: New legislation has been passed that would add one member to NYCTRC and one new member to each commuter council who would focus on bicycle and pedestrian access. The legislation would require us at the PCAC to provide the MTA with recommendations as they develop their newly-required strategic plan. |
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| **Presentation: MTA Accessibility Look ahead, Quemuel Arroyo, Chief Accessibility Officer. View presentation here:** <https://youtu.be/VVrH_jIYHHg?t=3983>  S. King Hoge: How can someone report that an elevator is not working. It has a link to go to but it’s very vague. Can there be a phone number to call or an easier way to report this?  Q. Arroyo: That is a very good point, I will forward that information over to Sarah Meyer.  C. Greif: We have to work on updating technology, especially the AAR app.  S. King Hoge: The signs at Grand Central are small – is there a way to make them more visible?  L. Daglian: I agree with Sharon on the signage on the platform at Grand Central; it isn’t always easy to follow.    Q. Arroyo: These are both valid points and Sarah Meyer and her team are currently working on enhancing signage.  J. Melzer: Can we request the bus stops be shoveled so we don’t have to climb a three-foot snow mountain? I would also like to request there to be uniform signage regarding priority seating, elderly seating etc. on both buses and trains.  Q. Arroyo: I will definitely reach out to the NYC Sanitation Department, as they enforce the snow cleaning of bus stops and clearing passageways for our customers boarding the buses. I will make a note regarding the signage seating in the train cars.  D. Greif: Why aren’t bus drivers enforcing the priority seating areas for those of us who use motorized wheelchairs?  Q. Arroyo: I will have to get back to you because they should be enforcing priority seating.  ***Old Business:***  C. Greif: Station cleanliness continues to be an issue. I have noticed graffiti in various stations, and I’ve also noticed the outdoor stations get cleaned faster than the underground stations. What is the priority on cleaning the stations?  A. Albert: We did not receive the cleaning schedule prior to this meeting but I will also inquire about a graffiti schedule and if it’s a different priority.  D. Kupferberg: Will the funding from the governor be used to provide wheelchair accessibility on the A and the C Lines at Broadway Junction?  L. Daglian: It’s part of the infrastructure funding, but I’m not sure if it’s going to be used specifically for that station or if the funding is coming from elsewhere.  W. Stanford: If I can suggest that they need to have better communication and signs for the riders who use the buses, especially on the date of the Brooklyn Dominican day parade.  C. Greif: Why is the J train terminating at Hewes St. when they are doing construction on the Williamsburg Bridge? I’m glad they have bus service available for service into the city.  A. Albert: I’m not sure why it’s terminating at that particular station. How much longer will this work continue on the Williamsburg Bridge and how often does this work occur?  C. Greif: I’m not sure how long or if there is an end date but it occurs one weekend a month.  J. Melzer: Who can I contact to make a correction on the MTA App? There was some construction being done along a bus route and it’s finished now but it’s still listed on the app.  A. Albert: I believe it’s Sarah Meyer, we will reach out to her on this request.  ***New Business:***  C. Greif: Mask Force wasn’t promoted this time around, there isn’t any leadership at the site either for those who participated. People want to help and volunteer, and they weren’t informed. There is also still a big demand for children’s masks.  C. Contino: Mask Force is done through the customer communication tower, not my department but I will try to find out for you.  W. Stanford: Here is the form to sign up to speak at the MTA Capital Program hearings, you can register to speak in advance.  D. Kupferberg: I just want to inform you all of the upcoming temporary bus service changes on the B15, Q3 and the Q10 at JFK Airport go into effect March 27, 2022. |
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| ***Adjourned*** |

**Action Items:**

Request station cleaning schedule

**Video link:** [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVrH\_jIYHHg**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VVrH_jIYHHg)

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Daglian

Executive Director