A meeting of the New York City Transit Riders Council (NYCTRC) was convened at 12:00 pm on Thursday, November 18, 2021 in the 20th floor Conf. Room 4 at 2 Broadway, New York, NY 10004 and via Zoom.

**Member Attendance**

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

**Staff Attendance**

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| Lisa Daglian (Executive Director) | Present |
| Kara Gurl (Research & Communications Associate) | Present |
| Bradley Brashears (Planning Manager) | Present |
| Jessica Spezio (Administrative Assistant)  Shaul Picker (PCAC intern) | Present  Present |

**Non-member Attendance**

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|  | **Affiliation** |
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| Andrew Kurzweil  Eric Wollman  Carl Perrera  Cate Contino  Robert Joseph  Jessica Cignarella  William Schwartz | Rail users’ network  Concerned Citizen  Bronx bus redesign  Bronx bus redesign  Bronx bus redesign |
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| ***Approval of Agenda for November 18, 2021 meeting.*** |
| ***Approval of Minutes for October 28, 2021 meeting.*** |
| ***Chair’s Report attached***  **Ridership updates:**  A. Albert: Ridership continues to rise, and we are up to 54% of pre pandemic ridership. It is also up on Metro-North and LIRR, better on LIRR.  A. Albert: Metro-North needs express services restored.  **On-time Performance:**  A. Albert: In addition, on time performance has ratcheted up to 83% but there are longer waits on the platforms. Chair Lieber has said he wants riders back on board in the system.  **Infrastructure bill:**  A. Albert: The infrastructure bill has passed with $10 billion for the MTA. Gov. Hochul announced that because of the bill, there will be no service cuts through 2025 and no fare hikes in the foreseeable future.  L. Daglian: There were 2 pots of money here. The infrastructure bill and the relief package. Operating money is coming in because less capital money needs to go to debt. This was all retro actively coming out after it was explained. This was all through the American rescue package.  A. Albert: In January we will return to peak fares on Metro-North and Long Island Railroad.  A. Albert: I’m involved in a fare working group and they have a few options being considered. We have Freedom Ticket, 20 Trip tickets, and fare capping with the OMNY system. The proposal will then be presented to the Board in the December Board meeting, and they will vote on the fare proposals.  A. Albert: Starting in early 2022 all the fare types and discounts will be available on OMNY.  **MTA Leadership changes:**  A. Albert: As I mentioned in our last meeting, we have a new leadership change and I met with Jaime Torres Springer, and he is ready to charge in and take over. The new major construction projects will be announced at CPOC.  A. Albert: Bob Foran will be leaving us in December. There will also be some changes on the Board as Larry Schwartz is leaving and Kevin Law will be departing.  A. Albert: There was a large discussion about the customer survey given by Sarah Meyer and why people haven’t returned to work. The first reason being that their employer is still allowing them to telework, and the second reason was because of crime. We would like to have more police on the trains and on the platforms. They have also said they want to put police on the buses as well. The reality is that the more people that ride, then crime goes down.  L. Daglian: As people get back into the system perception of crime decreases.  S. Goldstein: What time of the day is the crime happening?  A. Albert: At odd hours that range from 5:30am or 4:30pm and even 11:30pm.  L. Daglian: We have requested data driven deployment and transparency between the MTA police and NYPD.  C. Greif: People are sneaking in through the slam gates and not paying the fare as the people who use walkers or wheelchairs enter the station.  A. Albert: How long do the gates take to open/ close? I was told 5 seconds and that’s not a long time.  C. Grief: Will the new slam gates be big enough to allow a full-size wheelchair through? Also is the new OMNY card and app technology up to date for easier/ rider friendly use?  A. Albert: Yes, they did research, and a full-size wheelchair does fit through the gate. As for OMNY, I believe that it is up to date and the new readers are great for quick payment. |
| ***Old Business:***  S. Goldstein: Is there a cleaning schedule available for each station? I have noticed various stations that are being neglected.  B. Brashears: I believe we had a schedule but if there was work being done at that station it was skipped and wouldn’t get cleaned until the next cleaning rotation.  S. Goldstein: Is staffing an issue, is it because of Covid because Covid isn’t over so there needs to be some sort of follow up on these issues.  S. King Hoge: Fare evasion continues to be an issue, especially at the E/J platform slam gate entrance at Sutphin-Archer. Will more police be sent to that location?  C. Perrera: How does the Phase II F.T. work with the OMNY system?  A. Albert: They will have to be bridged at some point, especially while MetroCards phase out and OMNY goes fully into effect.  S. Goldstein: As MetroCard is winding down and these corporate and personal accounts and people with balances, will the money be transferred to OMNY?  A. Albert: As of right now, you’re not able to transfer funds from MetroCard to OMNY but I can’t imagine once its fully implemented that you won’t be able to.  L. Daglian: It reminds me of the WageWorks issues as we have been working with Senator Schumer’s office and Congresswoman Rice’s office and we are hopeful that legislation will come through.  L. Daglian: I wanted to discuss the Governor’s decision to postpone the AirTrain. Port Authority is preparing a team of experts and the MTA would have great involvement in this and a possible extension of the N train. |
| ***New Business:***  C. Greif: It continues to be a problem that riders are not wearing masks in S. Brooklyn. I’m referring to the B & Q trains and the B68 bus as well and there was no signage in the bus either.  L. Daglian: I don’t think it’s mask force, I believe it would be mask enforcement.  C. Greif: It would be nice to see more elected officials enforcing it as well.  A. Albert: Scott, have you ridden the SIR recently? How is mask compliance?  S. Nicholls: I would say about 50/50, maybe 60/40 but no one is complaining though.  A. Albert: Do you see police or law enforcement implementing masks?  S. Nicholls: I haven’t seen a police officer in over a year.  B. Brashears: Is the NYPD not enforcing mask anymore? There are no signs that say there is a $50 fine, many of the tourists might not even know.  L. Daglian: Yes. That changed more recently, they are supposed to be issuing tickets.  Continued after the presentation:  K. Hamilton: Has additional signage been added to the Archer Avenue busway to alert drivers?  A. Albert: How far from the previous route and are you saying this for the buses and drivers in that area?  L. Daglian: Have you seen any other signage in that area?  K. Hamilton: Yes, for the people traveling in that area. I was also in Staten Island on the Northshore BRT tour on the elevated busway in Port Richmond. They were discussing options for underneath the busway such as a park or for bike ways and even above it.  B. Brashears: I recall they were saying that they were thinking of doing an elevated busway.  A. Albert: Wouldn’t it have been wonderful if the Hudson/ Bergen light rail would join the Bayonne bridge which was built to equip for railways and run along the north shore to St. George.  K. Hamilton: What happened to the bus stops along and near 34th Street. 6th avenue and on 3rd Avenue going north.  A. Albert: We will investigate this issue and follow up.  S. Goldstein: Who is responsible for the ETA illuminated signs along the B1 route?  A. Albert: The DOT is responsible for that.  C. Greif: Is there any word on Brooklyn and Queens bus redesign?  C. Contino: Brooklyn and Queens have been pushed back. |
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| **Introduction of Speaker: Cate Contino, Assistant Director, Government & Community Relations and the Bronx Bus Redesign Team (video time- 47:50)**  A. Albert: Has the M100 change gone through the Manhattan community board?  C. Cantino: Yes, we have had workshops, and we have briefed Borough President Brewer and Borough President-elect Levine.  B. Brashears: If in the future they decide to provide commuter rail transfers from the train to the buses will there be wiggle room for better connections.  C. Contino: Bus service planning is something we are constantly doing. As for Metro-North connections, it would be financially irresponsible to run service to a closed station.  M. Halpern: Will there be free transfers on the Split bus service for another bus?  C. Contino: Yes, we are working on all the fare structures as we don’t intend for the customers to pay an additional fare. We are still working on it, and we will follow up.  S. Goldstein: Is there an option from the Bronx to Queens, instead of having to go through Manhattan? Have you reached out to the Bee Line?  R Joseph: The Q50 and the Q44 bus are strong connections from the Bronx to Queens.  C. Contino: Yes, we have taken them into account, and they are also doing their own redesigns.  T. Mason: I travel to Riverdale on the express bus to visit friends at the Senior living home. Are there any changes to the express buses?  C. Contino: There will be no changes to the express buses at this time.  C. Greif: I think the M100 should be terminating by 125th St for accessible connections, since you have seniors, wheelchairs and walkers.  C. Contino: We have been informed about this and we are looking into this but if there is a specific station that you’re inquiring about you can reach out to me.  C. Perrera: The BX35 should remain on Westchester Ave to 167th Street for closer connection to the subway.  R. Joseph: We have not heard of this, but we will look into this. |
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| ***Adjourned*** |

**Action Items: Included in body of minutes.**

**Video link:** [**PCAC YouTube**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ePeQs3x_Vc&t=262s)

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Daglian

Executive Director