



# PCAC

PERMANENT CITIZENS  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MTA

## Meeting Minutes of

### June 3, 2021

A virtual meeting of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC) was convened at 12:00 noon on June 3, 2021 by Zoom.

#### Member Attendance

Andrew Albert (Chair)	Present
Randolph Glucksman (Vice Chair)	Present
Francena Amparo (MNRCC)	Absent
Gerard P. Bringmann (LIRRCC)	Present
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
Bryan Peranzo (LIRRCC)	Absent
Marilyn N. Poterson (LIRRCC)	Present
Edith M. Prentiss (NYCTRC)	Present
Larry Rubinstein (LIRRCC)	Present
Burton M. Strauss, Jr. (NYCTRC)	Present
Christy Tolbert (LIRRCC)	Present
Walter Zullig (MNRCC)	Present

#### Staff Attendance

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

#### Non-member Attendance

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Pat Warren	MTA
Cate Contino	New York City Transit
Ron Troy	Concerned citizen
Bill Schwartz	Concerned citizen
Matt Shotkin	Concerned citizen
Matt Kamper	Concerned citizen
Andy Pollack	Concerned citizen
Andrew Kurzweil	Concerned citizen

## PCAC MINUTES

2

### ***Approval of agenda for June 3, 2021 meeting*** ***Approval of minutes for March 4, 2021 meeting***

#### **PCAC Chair's Report:**

In the last day, we learned someone tried to hack the MTA. It was discovered relatively quickly, they were locked out, no harm was done, and steps were taken to improve cybersecurity.

The Take-The-Train campaign is highlighting summer destinations. The MTA is increasing the number of electric buses to be in by year's end from 45 to 60. There was a discussion at the Board Meeting about the number of police officers we have vs. the number we were told we had. We have 2,663 officers, not all in place all the time, but there are many more police than there were before. 200 MTA security officers were hired. Revenues are above budget. The McKinsey estimate for when people would return was somewhat pessimistic.

Most major construction on East Side Access is complete. Penn Access is moving forward. Over 11,000 people got vaccines given out in subway stations. The MTA prepared an RFP for four Access-A-Ride providers, and Curb was disqualified since they had advanced knowledge they were the highest bidder. They went to court and got a temporary restraining order. The MTA was enjoined from doing the procurement last month. It is expected to be adjudicated before next month's meeting. The first R211s will arrive within a month or two. The open gangway test set might arrive by year's end.

#### **LIRRCC Chair's Report:**

We have a new member, the first in a few years, Christy Tolbert from Wyandanch. I had an interview with the Governor's office, and my name will be submitted to the Senate for confirmation. On May 24, I spoke at Senator Schumer's press conference at Merrick station along with Lisa, Randy, State Senator Kaminsky and several commuters, calling for the IRS to allow commuters to access pre-tax money from their WageWorks and TransitChek accounts. Schumer is pushing the IRS, but if he can't make this happen, I don't know who can.

The LIRR is working on a pilot program for dual-mode battery electric retrofitted M7 trains, which they hope to get running on the Oyster Bay Branch in the next year. We had a meeting with the MTA IG in regards to the homeless problem at Penn Station and throughout the MTA. They are working with the providers, giving them a checklist to address. The State Senate held a hearing on May 7 about the East River Tunnel repairs. There was some talk about repairing the tunnels using the system used on the L line. Amtrak is pushing back. Worst-case scenario, work will begin in the next year or so once East Side Access comes on board.

#### **MNRCC Chair's Report:**

Walter Zullig joined the MNRCC this week. It has been over five years since we got our last member, Orrin. I was finally able to go to a Mask Force at Grand Central last week.

*Nomination and Election of Gerard Bringmann to be next Chair of PCAC, effective July 1, 2021.*

L. Daglian: We interviewed for the administrative assistant position and made an offer. We hope to introduce you to our candidate in the next few months. We received over 700 applications and decided to bring someone from within the MTA with two finalists. One is a subway conductor, and one works in a bus depot.

## PCAC MINUTES

### 3

L. Rubinstein: How many people were you trying to hire?

L. Daglian: We have one more position-the research and communications position. Bradley and I are going to go over 130 cover letters and resumes to see who we want to interview. We are not filling Ellyn's position at this time. Our next move is to work on Bradley's promotion. I would not have any sanity left without Bradley to keep the ship steered in the right direction. He was accepted into the Eno Transportation Center's managerial program for a summer management training program. There was stiff competition for the national program.

C. Greif: If anyone should be Lisa's second-in-command, it should be Bradley.

L. Daglian: We have received some return to office guidance so we will work with PCAC leadership and staff to figure out when to make that return more completely. Once we see when the MTA returns to in person board meetings, it will be time to discuss whether you want our meetings in person or virtual. We get great attendance when they are held over Zoom.

I wanted to give you an overview of work we are doing on the website. Sheila was working on this project, so it has been a bit slower than we preferred as she is at another job. We are hoping to go relatively live towards the end of June.

A. Albert: Will the images rotate or be static?

L. Daglian: This is a question we anticipated. Our designer is not a big fan of rotating picture.

A. Albert: Either we show all three images on the home page or have one picture that rotates.

B. Brashears: The designer is trying to make sure the picture for the PCAC is at a location where you will have transit and commuter rail users as well. When you get to the individual council pages, there will be a picture of the trains, and we could change them to be more people-focused. If we want to change the pictures, we can do so, but we can't rotate them.

L. Daglian: We welcome your pictures.

S. Goldstein: Something you said about whether we want to continue our meetings virtually made me think of the City Council website, which has links if you want to see a budget or committee hearing. Is there something we can do with our website to encourage public participation, or further tout what we do, creating a page linking people to the meetings?

L. Daglian: We can have the live link.

B. Brashears: Right now, links are on the events page, which references our council meetings, but it may be a great idea to put it on the front page as well.

**Action item: Look into add links to meetings on the front page of the website.**

L. Daglian: We are tasking our new admin with a lot of website work so we wanted to be sure we could bring someone in who was open to doing it.

## PCAC MINUTES

4

C. Greif: It would be nice to make the website have more color to get people's attention.

L. Daglian: We thought redesigning the website was a big task without doing a wholesale change to how we are branded. We can look at that going forward. The website is flexible enough we can adapt it, unlike the current website, which crashes if you sneeze at it.

C. Greif: Are you going to do a press conference announcing the website's completion?

L. Daglian: It is not something we are considering. We will do a press release.

*Presentation: Patrick Warren, MTA Chief Safety and Security Officer*

C. Greif: With many ADA stations being added, there are safety concerns as some people have to walk to the center of the platform to get to the elevators. Are you going to add cameras at accessible stations in all boroughs and on the LIRR? I have heard concerns on the A, B and Q.

P. Warren: We put cameras inside and outside elevators, in emergency exit areas, points where the tunnels and right-of-way can be accessed from the platform, at help points, and fare arrays. All of the system will have cameras by year's end, but we expect it sooner.

C. Greif: We are seeing concerns of safety in the two routes on Brighton Beach, with two passengers assaulting bus drivers recently, as well as on routes going to Bay Ridge. Are you planning to work with the Eagle Teams to hop on some lines?

P. Warren: We continue to put Eagle Teams on buses. We started the process of hiring more Eagle Team members a few weeks ago. There are 6,000 buses moving daily, and having 6,000 security people on them three shifts a day is not economically feasible. We look at the data, and look for lines with more trouble, and focus resources where we can get the greatest effect.

S. Hoge: How are police officers supervised and instructed? I repeatedly see groups of five or seven standing, talking and looking at their phones. Sunday, I saw three people jump over the turnstile, and there were five police officers less than fifteen feet away.

P. Warren: Leadership has been asked to address it, and in the last few weeks I have seen a much better look, with officers more spread out across platforms, but there is more to be done.

B. Brashears: Many people don't like going into the shelters because they are not safe, so they come back into the system. Do you have access to information so you know the repeat people who keep coming back into the system? What outreach efforts would be best to address them?

P. Warren: We don't have constant access to that information, but can get it in specific cases. We have counters looking at the different lines and stations over a 2-3 week period to get an assessment of locations where homeless people congregate. We have monthly borough roundtables, bringing together the NYPD, MTAPD, the MTA's homeless outreach, the City's Department of Homeless Services, and station leadership. We identify chronic cases of individuals being at a location for multiple days or doing acts against our rules. We then set up joint outreach groups that go to these sites and see if we can get them into a shelter.

S. Goldstein: Can you share progress made on some of the new air purification technologies?

## PCAC MINUTES

### 5

P. Warren: Some of the new technologies we experimented with proved to be effective. The challenge is they are not necessarily logistically feasible in our cars and stations. It would take a lot more time to use UV light to disinfect subway cars and buses than it would to use an electrostatic sprayer. We continue to look at UV filtration for the railroads. We have not decided whether this should go to full production.

L. Rubinstein: What kind of damage could have been done as part of the cyberattack?

P. Warren: It would be speculation to say how bad it could have been. We spare no cost to protect the system from these attacks. We have been largely successful to-date.

B. Brashears: Do you get or have you sought out any assistance from the federal level?

P. Warren: Our cyberterrorism groups are in constant contact with the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security on these issues. There are grant funding sources we have access to.

W. Zullig: I have ridden multiple Select Bus Service routes, and only once have had a fare inspector check my ticket. Do you know what the rate of fare evasion on the SBS routes is?

P. Warren: We have some statistics. Like speed traps, you have them in specific locations, and hopefully it is enough to serve as a deterrent. We are looking to put more people out there, but it won't be a panacea. This is a cultural issue across New York bigger than the MTA. There are people who have decided they don't have to pay to get on a bus or a train. The other day some 4-5-year-old kids ran under turnstiles ahead of their mother and opened the emergency exit for her. It is taught in a family sense, and it will take the city to decide they want to solve it.

A. Albert: I used to see the Eagle Teams fairly frequently but have not seen them in ages.

P. Warren: They are out there.

C. Greif: I saw them in the morning rush on the B82 SBS at Kings Highway yesterday.

A. Albert: OMNY and all-door boarding is going to create new challenges to the bus system.

P. Warren: With OMNY, Eagle Teams will have validators to see if people paid, which we can't do with MetroCard.

A. Albert: Do you support a system whereby if you board a rear door, there is something you tap there, and if you didn't, there is an alarm that goes off to alert the bus operator?

P. Warren: As a result of employee assaults, we don't ask our employees to try to enforce rules.

A. Albert: Floor-to-ceiling fare arrays could be installed in the subway so it is harder to get in.

L. Daglian: There was legislation intended to ban people convicted of certain crimes from the system. Has it been in effect, and have any people been banned? Is there any last-minute educating to elected officials we can do to move the bill to ban people who assault operators?

## PCAC MINUTES

6

P. Warren: The law only talked about sex crimes. There is interest in doing it, but I am not sure if anyone has been barred. DAs are reluctant to put these bans in place. Your support advocating the city on how they handle these things would be very helpful. In terms of the bill in the Assembly, I can't tell you which way it is going to go, but there is some support for it.

We started a working group looking at fare arrays a couple months ago as we work on a pilot for wide aisle gates. We originally looked at it in regard to the airport, but thought this was an opportunity to eliminate the use of slam gates as wide aisle gates could allow people who need to get out get out. Eliminating slam gates at chronic locations would help reduce fare evasion. It would be a huge capital expense to change all the fare arrays. We are getting ready for the next twenty-year needs assessment and they are reaching the end of their useful lives. We are looking at it as an opportunity to see what we want to be different, and will take a hard look at what is out there. We are looking at camera systems that help us identify places and times of day where there is more constant fare evasion through Artificial Intelligence algorithms.

A. Albert: Are the new cameras being installed obvious?

P. Warren: We are not trying to hide them, but they are not big so you have to look hard to see them. We haven't really had much vandalism of cameras, and most people doing spur of the moment crimes aren't smart enough to look for them.

### ***New Business***

A. Pollack: When will half hourly weekend service on the Babylon and Port Washington Branches be restored? From the Queens Courier, I heard that at Bayside, pigeons are moving into the bottom section of the canopy, the metal structure has been accumulating rust, and there is a hole in one of the eastbound steel staircases, and parts of the canopy need repairs.

A. Albert: The hourly frequency on the Port Washington allows trackwork and other work to be done. Phil Eng led me to believe that the old frequency would return in no uncertain terms.

L. Daglian: Chris has been nominated and recognized for the 2021 community service award by Assembly member Mathylde Frontus in Brooklyn. Congratulations.

### ***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