

Per Open Meeting Law requirements, an in-person meeting of the New York City Transit Riders Council (NYCTRC) was convened in a publicly accessible location at 12:00 pm on Thursday, February 28, 2023. Members of the public and Council members unable to attend were present via Zoom.

Member Attendance

Andrew Albert (Chair)	Present – in person
Burton M. Strauss Jr. (Vice Chair)	Present – in person
Stuart Goldstein	Present – in person
Christopher Greif	Present – in person
William K. Guild	Absent
Marisol Halpern	Absent
Sharon King Hoge	Present – virtual
Karen Hamilton	Present – virtual
Cicely Harris	Present – in person
Trudy L. Mason	Present – in person
Scott R. Nicholls	Present – in person

Staff Attendance

Lisa Daglian (Executive Director)	Present
Liam Blank (Associate Director)	Present
Kara Gurl (Research & Comm. Associate)	Present
Jessica Spezio (Administrative Assistant)	Present – virtual
Ryan Leighton (PCAC Intern)	Present

Non-member Attendance

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Quemuel Arroyo	MTA – Chief Accessibility Officer
Mira Philipson	MTA
Rachel Cohen	MTA
Howie Levine	MTA
Cate Contino	MTA
Cathy Li	MTA C&D
Andrew Kurzweil	Concerned Citizen
Debra Greif	Concerned Citizen
Jason Anthony	Concerned Citizen

NYCTRC MINUTES

2

David Kupferberg
Ron Troy
William Stanford Jr.

Concerned Citizen
Concerned Citizen
Concerned citizen

Approval of Agenda for February 28, 2023 meeting. Approval of Minutes for January 26, 2023 meeting

Lisa points out the new format for the minutes that will be used for PCAC and all three councils that are more streamlined and that follow the MTA Board minutes. Key points and discussions are included, with a link to the publicly posted YouTube video, which will function as the official minutes. All meetings are recorded and posted on the PCAC [YouTube page](#) and on the PCAC website.

Chair/ Board Report:

Grand Central Madison opened with full service yesterday, February 27, 2023. From the news reports and from my personal experience, there are both positives and negatives. This is a massive increase in Long Island Rail Road service, the first in over 100 years, which is wonderful news. Every branch now has a choice of going to the east side or the west side in Midtown Manhattan. However, the transfers and connections at Jamaica are not what they were due to the elimination of timed connections. Brooklyn service now requires riders to transfer at the far end of Jamaica on tracks 11 or 12.

Karen shared her experience on her commute, stating that riders are told at Jamaica that their connecting trains may or may not wait, and everyone was running to transfer especially to Brooklyn-- it was like pandemonium heading to track 11. Karen expressed concern that people will hurt themselves running for trains. There are also no more one-seat rides to Brooklyn outside of rush hour.

Trudy mentioned that there has been a lot of negative publicity and media attention regarding issues with the new service including on the Port Washington line. Changes need to be made along that branch.

Stuart brought up the Combo Ticket that allows riders to travel between the LIRR and Metro-North on one ticket, and the need to increase service on the railroads for interborough trips within NYC.

On-Time Performance is relatively high these days. Both the Long Island Rail Road, Metro-North and the subways are at 85%, including on weekends, which is amazing.

NYCTRC MINUTES

3

New ADA Stations are in the works as was announced. [See the full list of stations here](#). All platforms at Broadway junction are going to be made accessible, which is very important. The IBX is planned to stop at Broadway Junction, so that will be one big connection soon enough. There are some constraints with making certain subway stations accessible, including the Central Park West stations, but the goal is for people to never be more than two stations away from an elevator. Other ADA upgrades to be discussed during Quemuel's presentation later in this meeting.

New Long Island Rail Road Stations Congressman Grace Meng of Queens is recommending a return for the Elmhurst Long Island Rail Road Station. I am certainly not opposed to that, but Elmhurst is not a transit desert as she and some others are advocating. The East New York LIRR station also needs improvements.

Budget Discussions the MTA and all of us are anxiously awaiting the legislature's discussion of Governor Hochul's goals for the proposed budget, which would bail out the MTA, just as they need to be bailed out. It would increase the Payroll Mobility Tax on city and suburban employers from .34% to .5%; they are not happy with that. The Governor is also asking City Hall to contribute an additional 500 million dollars to cover the cost of Access-A-Ride, student MetroCards, and PMT exemptions.

Trudy explained that the proposal for casino revenue to fund the MTA is unlikely because the current law requires casino revenue to go to education, so the law would need to be changed. Additionally, the revenue would not be expected until 2026 at the very earliest.

Presentation: 2023 Accessible Station Openings by Quemuel Arroyo, MTA Chief Accessibility Officer

Quemuel shared an overview of his presentation that focuses on the capital plan, to shed some light on the work that's coming and already underway. Twelve stations are being made accessible this year alone, and over 17 other stations are getting contracts to make them accessible. 636 million dollars were recently committed for accessibility upgrades, including elevator replacements and installations. 47% of the total capital plan budget is dedicated to accessibility projects, an unprecedented investment in making the system accessible.

View presentation along with the Q&A: <https://youtu.be/mp7VavFVzeQ?t=2919>

Old Business:

Trudy raised the issue of asking the MTA to strongly recommend that people wear masks on trains and buses again. Lisa reported that PCAC has released multiple

NYCTRC MINUTES

4

statements, letters, and testimonies on this topic and the answer from the MTA has been no.

Stuart inquired about the rules of conduct listed on digital signs and if they've been updated to reflect that masks are no longer required. He also agreed with Trudy that mask use should be encouraged. Stuart also asked whether there is a cleaning schedule for stations available for members to see, and whether the new stations manager can come to a future NYCTRC meeting to speak.

Chris suggested that the West 4th Street station needs to be thoroughly cleaned and power washed as it's always dirty and smells.

New Business:

None

Action Items:

Inquire about the station cleaning schedule

Adjourned

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mp7VavFVzeQ>

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM.
Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Daglian
Executive Director