

Per Open Meeting Law requirements, an in-person meeting of the New York City Transit Riders Council (NYCTRC) was convened at 2 Broadway at 12:00 pm on Thursday, March 30, 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 – virtual
Christopher Greif	Present – in person
William K. Guild	Absent
Marisol Halpern	Present – in person
Sharon King Hoge	Present – in person
Karen Hamilton	Present – in person
Cicely Harris	Present – virtual
Trudy L. Mason	Present – in person
Scott R. Nicholls	Present – in person

Staff Attendance

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

Non-member Attendance

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Carl Libassi	NYCT
Cate Contino	MTA
Andrew Kurzweil	Concerned Citizen
Debra Greif	Concerned Citizen
Jason Anthony	Concerned Citizen
David Kupferberg	Concerned Citizen
Ron Troy	Concerned Citizen

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William Stanford Jr.
Eric Wollman
Will Loreti
Mike Howard
Joanna Flores

Concerned Citizen
Concerned Citizen
Concerned Citizen
Concerned Citizen
Concerned Citizen

***Approval of Agenda for March 30, 2023 meeting.
Approval of Minutes for February 28, 2023 meeting.***

Chair/ Board Report:

Open stroller expansion

The MTA has added 1000 buses to the open stroller pilot program. The list of the 57 routes that the expansion of the program will cover [can be found on the MTA website](#) for all the boroughs. Many people have given positive feedback, so we are glad it has been expanded.

On-time/ridership update

On-time performance continues to be terrific. Ridership is still on the rise, as shown by the many crowded trains on weekends as well, some with standing room only.

Booth agents

Booth agents will now be out of the token booths, walking around stations and providing directions and interacting with riders. They will also assist riders when OMNY machines come into the stations.

Budget discussion

The state budget will probably be late this year. State leadership agrees that the MTA needs to be fully funded, and there are ongoing negotiations about how. There are many different proposals being considered that were put forth by the Governor in her Executive Budget and by the Senate and Assembly in their One-House budgets. Trudy shared that MTA Chair Janno Lieber went to Albany to discuss the budget and the MTA's funding issue. Stuart suggested that NYCTRC go on the record in support of the MTA making operational efficiencies, especially as a fare hike is on the table.

East Side Access update

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The MTA and LIRR have adjusted some of the new LIRR schedules to address some of the major concerns raised, including adding train cars to lengthen trains where possible and have modified service to and from Brooklyn. They will continue to monitor trains and schedules and make further more significant changes in September.

Karen raised that she is worried about people pushing on crowded platforms and staircases at Jamaica and the safety of travelers rushing to catch their connecting trains.

Platform barriers

A new type of platform barrier has been installed at the 57th Street F train station. It is an island platform, and this barrier is in the middle of the platform. It will allow people to lean on it or hold on to it and avoid the fear of being pushed.

Presentation: Improvements in the Customer Environment (Subway Stations) by Carl Libassi, Assistant Chief Officer, Quality Assurance and Operations Support

View the presentation along with the Q&A: <https://youtu.be/nukwpAUV7UM?t=3234>

Trudy asked how stations were chosen to receive renovations and deeper cleaning. Carl stated that the selection was based on a number of factors. When the track space is available, they're going to do things like paint track ceilings, which can't be done under regular traffic. They are working based on existing general orders so the team can have access to that area to do work.

Karen asked what the hours of the booth agents are outside of the booths now, and if it's 24/7 or as-needed. Carl said that without getting into details of the schedules, based on commutation patterns, there may be more need for customer service outside of a booth during certain hours. Predominantly, station agents will likely be outside of the booth during rush hour and other times with high traffic patterns.

Lisa asked whether the station agents will be on both sides of the station even if there isn't an up-and-over transfer option. Carl shared that the agents are assigned to the whole station, and they will make their rounds as needed.

Chris informed Carl that the tactile strips need to be replaced at the 7th Ave station on the B/Q line. Carl said he will let the General Station Manager know of this issue.

Stuart asked if the booth agents will be equipped with cell phones or devices to communicate in the event of a safety issue. Carl answered that they will be given iPhones for those instances.

Stuart also inquired about the station cleaners, a position that previously had staffing challenges and asked if the unit is still experiencing turnover. Carl shared that they now have a large workforce of cleaners after hiring more.

Scott mentioned that radios would be a better option for station agents instead of phones as sometimes cell phones don't work underground. Carl said that it's still being negotiated, and he will take that feedback back to the table.

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Executive Director update:

Lisa shared staffing updates including Kara's official start as Planning and Advocacy Manager. She also reported that Liam has tendered his resignation and Monday will be his last day. PCAC will be seeking a new Associate Director and will also be looking to fill the Research and Communications Associate position as soon as we are assigned to a recruiting manager.

Lisa shared that NYCTRC has been asked whether we would sign on to a letter in support of [Queenslink](#) and [QueensWay](#). She will send around an email so that you can take more time to look at the request in more detail and can decide if this is something we will support.

Old Business:

Trudy brought up issues with local and express trains not being held to make connections even when one train's doors close as another arrives. The train pulls out before the connection can be made. She also asked why the express trains travel at slow speeds between 42nd St and 14th St on the 4/5 line.

New Business:

Will Loreti spoke about subway surfing and how his friend was recently killed by surfing on the J train. He showed a video of how easy it is to unlatch the chains between the train cars, where you can climb up on top of the train on many lines. He expressed that the MTA should try to lock it or not make it more difficult to unlatch the chains to prevent these tragedies from happening.

Action Items: NONE

Adjourned

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nukwpAUV7UM>

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

Lisa Daglian
Executive Director