
An in person meeting of the Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council (LIRRCC) was held at 4:30 pm on Thursday, February 13, 2025 at One West Street, Mineola, NY. The public and members unable to attend in person joined via Zoom.

Member Attendance

Gerard P. Bringmann (Chair)	Present
Brit Byrd	Present
Bryan Peranzo	Present
Larry Rubinstein (Vice-Chair)	Present
Christy Tolbert	Present
Peter Gorry	Absent

Staff Attendance

Lisa Daglian (Executive Director)	Present
Brian Fritsch (Associate Director)	Present
Kara Gurl (Planning & Advocacy Manager)	Present
Jack Connors (Research & Comm. Assoc.)	Present
Jessica Spezio (Administrative Assistant)	Present

Non-member Attendance

Name	Affiliation
Ana Garcia	LIRR
Adam Wittenstein	Concerned Citizen
Matty Buchys Hyland	Concerned Citizen
Debra Greif	Concerned Citizen
Christopher Greif	NYCTRC Member
Stu Desser	Concerned Citizen

Approval of Agenda May 2, 2024
Approval of Agenda July 11, 2024
Approval of Agenda October 10, 2024
Approval of Agenda November 7, 2024
Approval of Agenda January 9, 2025
Approval of Agenda February 13, 2025

Approval of Minutes April 11, 2024
Approval of Minutes October 10, 2024 (Unofficial minutes)

Chair's Report:

The meeting began with the approval of past meeting minutes and the introduction of new member Brit Byrd, Brooklyn representative.

- 2024 proved to be a good year for the LIRR, with the best on-time performance of their (non-Covid) history at 95.65%. The goal of 94% was exceeded for each month of the year. There was also a 15.7% increase in ridership over 2023. With Congestion Pricing now in effect, this trend is expected to continue into 2025, with more people taking the train instead of driving into the Congestion Relief Zone.
- The results of the latest rider satisfaction survey have been released and while there is room for improvement, the results are trending upward with a 6 point increase in overall customer satisfaction, to 76%, in the Fall 2024 survey (vs. Spring of '24)
- The MTA/LIRR has changed its strategy for securing permanent vendors for Grand Central Madison. They are no longer accepting bids for a master lessee and will start entertaining individual proposals for retail space. There are 32 units available for lease at the station.
- Earlier this week, the MTA unveiled its latest accessibility improvement. Convo Access will provide deaf/hard of hearing commuters with American Sign Language interpreters on a 24/7 basis via a QR code at every subway and LIRR station.
- I followed up on our request to have a ticket vending machine installed on the LIRR's Western Concourse at Penn Station. New ticket machines are on order and once delivered, our request will be taken under advisement.
- There is a concern at the MTA about reports that the new federal administration will direct New York State to shut down the Congestion Pricing program, which has been performing up to expectations to date. The MTA will undoubtedly fight any such directive in a court of law, as it is a critical piece of the MTA's 2020-24

Capital Plan. The fear is that Washington will withhold federal transportation funding should their directive, should it be issued, not be carried out. Talks regarding this issue are ongoing between the Governor & President.

Executive Director update: by Brian Fritsch

The team has been actively meeting with legislators in Albany, receiving positive feedback on our Rider-First Fare Agenda. They've also been pushing other priorities like the Rider Representation Act and reforming the nominating process for LIRRCC. Brian emphasized that the team is focused on ensuring the capital plan is fully funded.

Supporting the MTA Capital Plan (2025-2029):

- The plan currently faces a \$35.4 billion shortfall
- PCAC released a report called "Take Your Pick Albany" listing two dozen potential funding sources
- The proposed funding sources could total \$44.8 billion that could be bonded to three-quarters of a trillion dollars

Advancing the Rider First Fair Agenda:

- Sent a letter to the governor and legislative leaders co-signed by 15 advocacy organizations and over a dozen elected officials

Five key fare policy proposals:

- Close AM peak loophole for seniors, disabled, and Medicare-eligible riders
- Create a Family Fare for riders 12-17
- Expand Fair Fares program to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level
- Include commuter rails in Fair Fares program
- Create a Weekly CityTicket with transfers to subways and buses

LIRR Updates: By Ana Garcia

- Ana provided updates on ADA station improvements, including elevators and platform extensions at Forest Hills and Hollis stations, and ongoing projects at Laurelton and Babylon stations.
- Laurelton Station is undergoing structural steel replacements and ADA ramp adjustments, with scheduled outages for track work.
- Babylon station is on track for completion by mid-2026, with the first half expected to be finished by May 2026.

Social Media and Communications Update: by Kara Gurl

- There are still multiple reports of missed connections at Jamaica, with trains arriving at the transfer point late and transfer trains not waiting even as the incoming train pulls into the station. Headed Eastbound, this causes some riders to wait up to an hour.

- We've seen ongoing complaints about the aging M3 fleet, which cannot be phased out until new train cars are purchased.
- In early February, there were service issues on the Far Rockaway branch due to a car struck by a vehicle on the tracks. When posting about service alternatives, it appeared that the LIRR representatives were not fully aware of the A train shutdown in the Rockaways, causing frustration from riders who had turned to the LIRR as a backup from their usual A train commute.
- There remain some ongoing issues with cross-honoring LIRR fares on the subway, with some station agents unaware of the cross-honoring policies.

Old Business:

Lisa mentioned that Stu previously raised the issue of tilting trains. After a recent meeting, she followed up with LIRR President Rob Free, who explained that tilting trains are intended for higher-speed travel. The LIRR's priority is investing in tracks, infrastructure, signals, and standardized rolling stock usable across the system, rather than specialized trains for a single line.

Adam W. raised concerns about issues with a feedback form for the LIRR. He also stated that he submitted inquiries about ADA accommodations due to a processing disorder but received no response despite multiple attempts via email and the feedback form. Ana said she would look into this and get back to him.

New Business:

None

Action items:

None

Adjourned

Meeting recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZFpjVtkIsT4>

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.
Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Daglian
Executive Director