

Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2025

Per Open Meeting Law requirements, an in-person meeting of the New York City Transit Riders Council (NYCTRC) was convened at 2 Broadway New York, NY, and at CB10 215 West 125th Street 4th Floor New York, NY*, 35 Worth St, New York, NY 10013** at 12:00 PM on Thursday, November 20, 2025. Members of the public and Council members unable to attend were present via Zoom.

Member Attendance

Andrew Albert (Chair)	Present
Burton M. Strauss Jr. (Vice Chair)	Present—virtual
Dante Arnwine	Absent
Andrew Bennett	Absent
Stuart Goldstein	Present
Christopher D. Greif	Present
Marisol Halpern	Present
Karen Hamilton	Absent
Cicely Harris	Present*
Gene Haynes	Absent
Khalia Hayslett	Present—virtual
Sharon King Hoge	Present—virtual
Trudy L. Mason	Present
Scott R. Nicholls	Present**

Staff Attendance

Lisa Daglian (Executive Director)	Absent
Brian Fritsch (Associate Director)	Present
Kara Gurl (Planning & Adv. Manager)	Present
Jack Connors (Research & Comm. Associate)	Present
Jessica Spezio (Administrative Assistant)	Present
Henry Mei (Intern)	Present
Benjy Ross (Intern)	Absent

Non-member Attendance

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Alan Foster	MTA NYCT
Allie Becktol	Concerned citizen
Alan Flax	Concerned citizen

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Harry B

Concerned citizen

Approval of December 18, 2025 Agenda

Approval of October 30, 2025 Agenda

Approval of November 20, 2025 Agenda

Approval of September 25, 2025 Minutes

Approval of October 30, 2025 Minutes

Approval of November 20, 2025 Minutes

Chair/ Board Report: by Andrew Albert

Updates from the MTA this month:

- Andrew updated attendees on the ongoing efforts by the MTA to maintain improvements to the 33rd Street corridor during upcoming Penn Station work, emphasizing coordination with Amtrak and New Jersey Transit. He stressed the MTA's insistence that no prior work be compromised.
- Regular updates on Penn Station's progress are planned, with meetings resuming on a regular basis.
- Andrew highlighted the completion of the St Albans Long Island Railroad Station accessibility project and encouraged viewing visuals on the MTA website. He noted that the Long Island Railroad is nearing full accessibility, with continuous improvements.
- New train cars 211's are now in operation on several subway lines (A, B, C, and G), with positive feedback from riders.
- 115 new buses have been introduced, including hybrids and clean diesels, and further bus service enhancements are in progress, particularly on the A and L lines. Congestion pricing was credited for funding and enabling many of these improvements.
- Andrew reported on budget news: The MTA has reduced its operating deficit by \$675 million over four years, and expects a manageable deficit of \$160 million in 2027, partly dependent on casino revenue and fare evasion reductions.
- Crime on public transit is down 14% year-over-year, with the addition of more personnel and targeted security enhancements (including unpickable locks and cameras) cited as contributors.
- Additional topics included the debate over maintaining two-person train operation versus automation, concerns for safety and accessibility, and anticipated legislative outcomes.

Bylaws:

1. Executive Committee Structure & Alignment
 - The meeting began without a quorum; approval of minutes and the agenda was deferred.
 - Updates to TRC bylaws were presented. A central issue was how the TRC Executive Committee should function, with a proposal to align TRC's committee with the broader PCAC Executive Committee.
 - The PCAC Executive Committee would consist of six members: chairs of each council plus two representatives from each.
2. Role and Frequency of Executive Committee Meetings
 - Discussion revealed that very few issues have historically reached the executive committee—most disputes are resolved without escalation.
 - The committee is designed to address both internal (TRC-specific) and broader issues.
3. Quorum and Attendance for Executive Meetings
 - Questions were raised about what happens if all six committee members can't be present.
 - It was clarified that meetings can still proceed with a minimum quorum (three out of six). Reports are then conveyed to absent representatives.
4. Policy for Member Attendance & Resignation Procedures
 - The group addressed how to handle members who regularly miss meetings.
 - If a member fails to meet attendance requirements outlined in Article IV, Section 6, a two-thirds vote of TRC members can ask them to resign. If unresponsive, outreach will be made to the elected official who nominated them for a replacement.
 - There are three resignation options: voluntary resignation; outreach to nominating official if unresponsive; and a legal "for cause" process (the latter is discouraged due to complexity).
5. Virtual Attendance & Accessibility
 - Participants discussed rules around remote participation—whether virtual attendance counts toward quorum and under what circumstances.
 - It was clarified that a remote member may be counted present (not absent) if joining virtually, but only counts toward quorum if the virtual site is publicly accessible and the address is provided.
 - Additional language will be added to the bylaws to clarify conditions under which virtual attendance and alternate locations contribute to meeting quorum, especially for those with mobility issues or extenuating circumstances.
6. Accessibility Concerns
 - Requests were made to ensure accessibility in attendance policies, particularly in excusing absences due to health, mobility, or other legitimate reasons (e.g., bad weather, disability).

- The group agreed to memorialize these accommodations and make bylaws clearer regarding when absences can be excused.

7. Next Steps

- Chair and members agreed to further clarify bylaw language on these attendance/virtual participation points before final passage (when a quorum is reached).

Presentation: F/M Swap- Alan Foster, Director, Rail Network Planning and Operations Improvement at MTA NYCT

View presentation and Q & A: <https://youtu.be/almHH00CFyU?t=1403>

- The F and M train routes in Queens and Manhattan are being swapped to address service merge bottlenecks and improve reliability.
- The new plan: the M will run via 63rd Street, and the F will run via 53rd Street, eliminating problematic merge points and isolating express/local service flows.
- This change will take effect on December 8, weekdays only (6am–9:30pm). At nights and weekends, service patterns will stay the same as today.
- Key benefits include increased reliability, reduced crowding, faster peak trips, and new direct service connections for some travelers.
- A small percentage of riders will experience longer travel times or slightly longer waits (about a minute), but overall, most customers will benefit.
- Enhanced communications: Posters and brochures are being distributed, maps and customer information screens are being updated, and customer ambassadors will be present at affected stations. Conductors are being trained for the new patterns and automated announcements.
- Accessibility needs for seniors and riders with disabilities were specifically discussed, emphasizing the need for clear updates and support during the transition.
- The presentation included Q&A about affected stations, transfer options during off-hours, crowding, customer information, and the operational reasons behind swap times.

Q & A from the presentation

Q: *Will platform and station signage clearly indicate the new train directions and service changes?*

A: Yes. *Electronic billboards and customer information screens at stations will display the direction and service for F and M trains, including last train times for each route at every affected station.*

Q: *Why does the swap only occur on weekdays from 6am to 9:30pm? Why not make it 24/7?*

A: *The schedule matches the current M train pattern, which cannot operate reliably on Queens Boulevard at night or weekends due to ongoing planned work. This avoids confusion and ensures reliability.*

Q: *Will maps, digital displays, and automated announcements reflect the F/M swap on launch day?*

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A: Yes. Both digital and printed maps are being updated. Automated announcements, digital displays, and customer information screens will match the new service. Conductors are being trained and provided with scripts for accuracy.

Q: Will M trains be lengthened to accommodate expected crowding?

A: No. M trains will remain 8 cars due to platform length limits at certain stations.

Q: What if there are delays on the M or F lines—can trains reroute to fill gaps?

A: In cases of prolonged delays, dispatchers may temporarily reroute F or M trains over the other's route to maintain service, but routine schedules will follow the new plan.

Q: How are accessibility needs (for seniors, people with disabilities, etc.) being addressed?

A: Customer ambassadors will be present at primary and affected stations to help riders, with a special focus on accessibility concerns. Updated posters and brochures will include clear accessible transfer instructions and highlight locations with high ridership among seniors or people with disabilities (e.g., Roosevelt Ave).

Q: If F/M does not serve a station during off-hours, what are the alternatives?

A: The E train and cross-platform transfers enable continued access to all affected stations; no station will be left without service at any time, though some trips may require an extra transfer.

Q: Why are paper maps often instantly outdated after reprinting?

A: Frequent accessibility upgrades and service improvements mean paper maps quickly become obsolete. Emphasis will remain on digital maps and screens, which provide the most current information.

Q: During disruptions or for those unfamiliar with the system, how will customer communication support riders?

A: There will be enhanced announcements, increased on-platform presence by ambassadors, and expanded signage (both digital and printed) to guide customers, especially during the transition period and initial days of the swap.

Associate Director Report/ Staff update:

- Brian reported on the release of a collaborative research project and awards related to New York City bus service, delivered with the “strap hangers” campaign.
- The “Poke Award” was given to the M42 bus for being the slowest high-ridership route in the city, improving slightly this year largely due to congestion pricing.
- The “Schleppy Award” went to the Q8 bus for being the least reliable, though it is expected to improve with the Queens bus network redesign.
- The report also recognized most improved routes, including the M79 and the SIM32 express bus, both showing significant speed gains over the past year.
- Brian credited congestion pricing with driving much of the positive movement in bus performance and cited active headway management and transit signal priority as keys for further improvement.
- He emphasized the need for the city to fully implement the Streets Plan, add more bus and priority lanes, enforce parking regulations, and invest in better management technologies.
- Brian discussed expanding Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and circulated a poll among TRC members for feedback on where BRT could be most successful and to identify potential political hurdles.

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- Follow-up discussion included requests for better notification to members about newsworthy events and project releases, as well as continued analysis on segment-specific bus data and community involvement in transit planning.

Old Business:

- Chris updated the group on accessibility signage efforts at Grand Central. He reported that new signage is being installed and that collaboration with MTA accessibility is ongoing.
- Khalia raised concerns about ongoing issues with the Access-A-Ride (paratransit) service, noting that significant problems remain in the community. She recommended the committee add this topic to a future agenda for a deeper review of relevant policies.

New Business:

- Khalia expressed that current OMNY info sessions are not publicly accessible enough; invitations are being sent only to those who register, limiting outreach. She recommends that sessions should be broadcast more broadly, including on social media and the MTA website.
- Chris acknowledged the issue and described ongoing outreach efforts, including in-person engagement at senior centers and community events, but agreed that visibility could be improved.
- TRC members discussed the need for coordinated advocacy to help the MTA reach more of the community and ensure eligible riders have access to critical information about the transition.

Public input Q &A:

- A public attendee identified as “Alan” raised several questions and suggestions:
 - Asked why the MetroCard transfer time cannot be extended from 2 hours and 18 minutes to 2 hours 30 minutes, citing increased traffic and delays.
 - Commented that fare increases are often accompanied by service decreases.
 - Noted that other cities, such as San Francisco, allow multiple transfers on one fare, and suggested NYC could learn from these practices.
 - Inquired about information display on the OMNY tap system and suggested improvements.
- Andrew responded, confirming that reviewing transfer times is an ongoing topic, and stated that enhancements to the OMNY tap system (such as showing transfer progress) are in development. The discussion also referenced the multi-ride savings feature of OMNY and transition timelines.

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Adjourned

Video link: [NYCTRC Meeting November 20, 2025 \(Part 1 \) - YouTube](#)
[NYCTRC Meeting November 20, 2025 \(Part II\)](#)

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Daglian
Executive Director