

**BOSTON COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
AGENDA**

**May 25, 2011, 5:30 PM- 7:30 PM
Room 900, Boston City Hall**

5:30 PM-7 PM, meeting with MBTA General Manager Richard Davey

Introductions

GM Richard Davey

Commission questions

7 PM-7:30 PM , Abbreviated regular commission meeting

Approval of April 27 Minutes

Commissioner's Report: Kristen McCosh

Chair's Report: John Kelly

Announcements

Public Input

Old Business

New Business

Next commission meeting is June 22, 5:30 PM- 7:30 PM

Boston Commission for Persons with Disabilities
Minutes for Wednesday, May 25, 2011

Present: Arnold Berry, Suzanne Leveille, Carl Richardson, Janice Ward, Heather Watkins, and John Winske. Eileen Brewster and Dave Estrada were absent. John Kelly arrived at 6:30 PM. Kristen McCosh represented the City. MBTA general manager Richard Davey came as a guest, along with Scott Donahue and Laura Brelsford from Systemwide Accessibility (SWA).

Meeting was convened at 5:45. Vice-chair Carl Richardson chaired most of the meeting due to the absence of Chair Kelly, who arrived at 6:30 PM due to his building's elevator breaking down.

Richard Davey, MBTA General Manager, spoke about the multiple initiatives the MBTA is undertaking to reach his goal of full accessibility. During the year he has been General Manager, he has completed several projects which had been on hold: Arlington, Kenmore, and Copley stations have all recently received elevators, and the State Street Station accessibility project had just been completed. (General Manager Davey was joined by Commissioner McCosh at the celebratory ribbon-cutting the following day).

General Manager Davey highlighted the following projects:

1. **Wayfinding:** GM Davey will be attending the June MBTA board meeting to launch the public discussion phase of the wayfinding/signage project, which has been developed by consultant Chris Iwerks in consultation with Judge King, the overseer of the BCIL-MBTA settlement agreement (the class action law suit settled in 2005). Meeting locations and project information will be available on the MBTA web-site. The State is implementing a new accessible public meetings policy. During this year's construction projects at Science Park and Lechmere, wayfinding and signage will be installed at the stations.

2. **Elevators:** Elevator installation began in April at Science Park Station, one of the remaining inaccessible stations. In order to accelerate project completion, the station is being completely closed for the six-month project.

Lechmere station is also receiving a new elevator. There will be a shuttle bus from North Station to provide service to Lechmere during renovation of the Science Park T station.

3. Bridge Plates: There are now portable bridge plates at all MBTA stations. There was a special order put out to all crews of the MBTA that announcements be made regarding MBTA station personnel availability for assistance with the bridgeplates. Performance statistics show that 85% success rate has been reached.

The MBTA is researching the possibility of an automatic bridgeplate, which could be activated by either customer or staff. 24 new Green line cars will have retractable plates. (All 120 Orange Line cars must also be replaced in the near future).

In answer to Carl R's question about the 85%, Laura said it measures MBTA staff response to calls from station call boxes, and is a measure not in time but in trains. She said that they are pushing for responses as trains approach rather than waiting for the next train. Mr. Davey agrees that there is room for improvement and that the T is working to strengthen strategies for a timely response.

Carl R. asked what the procedure is for a wheelchair user requesting assistance with a bridge plate when station personnel are not available. The GM said that customers should use the station call box to alert the customer service assistant. The call is routed to the MBTA operations control center which will then dispatch available station staff, or the covering inspector. The train operator may need to be notified to get off the train and assist with the bridgeplate.

Mr. Davey restated his policy that System Wide Accessibility must sign off on all construction plans, along with Operations, Engineering, and Maintenance. For the first time SWA has a seat at the table when there is an internal discussion about any physical change to be made to the MBTA or its vehicles.

On the MBTA web site there is a daily report and also a score card report, that updates accessibility across the T. Elevators are being maintained at a 99%. Customers can find daily updates to elevators and escalators at the MBTA website.

Kristen M. asked if the daily report will give updates when repairs have been completed. Mr. Davies said yes, and a monthly report is generated. Service alerts can be generated by text message, and are customizable down to the particular elevator one uses. Telephoning also works.

GM Davey discussed the plan to make Government Center accessible. If the station were kept open during construction, it would take four years and be more expensive. He is looking into a plan which would completely close the station for two years to accelerate completion. During that time shuttle buses would service Bowdoin Street and Haymarket stations.

Mr. Davey commented on illegal parking in the city bus stops. Tickets written have risen from 209 in 2008 to 1800 in 2010. So far in 2011, 812 tickets have been written. In response to a question by Kristen, GM Davey said that Ride vehicles do get ticketed if they block a bus stop.

Kristen raised the problem of Ride drivers being unable to find drop-off points. GM Davey stated the commitment of The Ride is to door-to-door service, or as close as possible. But he is looking into the possibility of designated drop-off areas in congested parts of the city -- such as downtown and hospitals.

The GM said that a complaint process is being developed with a goal of 95% response rate within 5 days.

This concluded this portion of the meeting, and General Manager Davey, Laura Brelsford, and Scott Donahue left about 7 PM.

Regular Meeting

A short regular meeting of the commission was held from 7:10 PM-7:30 PM. John Kelly, who joined the meeting at 6:30 p.m., chaired this portion of the meeting.

Carl R. made a motion to accept April meetings minutes, Janice W. seconded the motion, vote was unanimous.

Kristen M. reported on her meeting with Neighborhood Services earlier in the week, and was informed of the city policy regarding brick. Generally, the policy is "no new net brick", with concrete the default surface material, and with brick being replaced with brick. The city will bring the proposal to the June 22 meeting.

Suzanne said that a policy of replacing brick with brick brings no progress towards creating accessible paths of travel.

John K. referred members to his written report.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.