



**Special Local Advisory Council (LAC)
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 20, 2024
10:00 am**

LAC Member Attendance

District One	Andre Bryant	Present
District Two	Tamara Perrin	Present
District Three	James Jones	Present
District Four	Tammy Black	Present
District Five	Sabrina Simmons-Rice	Absent
District Six	Yvonne Roundtree	Present
District Seven	Faye Chennault-Johnson	Absent
DAAA	Rick Spivey	Absent
DAAA	Anita Owen	Present

This was a virtual meeting. There were six of nine LAC members in attendance and fifteen DDOT staff members attended.

Call to Order

Andre Bryant, LAC Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 10:03 am

Opening Remarks/LAC Chairperson

Mr. Bryant wished everyone a New Year. Mr. Bryant read the LAC purpose.

Approval of the Minutes for January 9, 2024, Executive Session Minutes

A motion was made by Tamara Perrin to accept the minutes, seconded by Yvonne Roundtree. Motion was approved.

Chairperson Report

Mr. Bryant stated he participated in a photoshoot with DDOT’s Compliance to bring more awareness to DDOT drivers of ADA passengers in wheelchairs and ADA passengers with service animals.



Mr. Bryant stated he attended the paratransit drivers training session. Mr. Bryant suggested that the paratransit drivers must make sure that the wheelchair straps are tightened. Mr. Bryant welcomed Anita Owens as the LAC secretary.

Local Advisory Council Concerns

Tamara Perrin stated that that she read over the Paratransit complaints, and they did not include the investigator.

Ms. Perrin asked what education is being provided to clients for transferring between DDOT paratransit and SMART.

Ms. Perrin asked about the incentives that are offered to drivers to be courteous to passengers beyond being written up, same category complaints, and if a phone-line for meeting minutes were available.

Michael Staley stated that it should be noted that on the paratransit side of the house, we will look into why the information was not included. But there are basically two people who do the investigations, Rochelle Campbell, and Ms. Roby.

Scharron Rambus stated that DDOT currently provides information in an accessible format so that people who do read print can access.

LaKenya Sheffield stated that people with special requests can reach out to us 5-days in advance of the meeting to request assistance by calling our customer service department and we can provide the information to them.

Michael Staley stated that there is an incentive bonus in place. It is exclusive to attendance. It has been increased from \$1000 to \$1500 per quarter and then on the paratransit side the incentives are built into the contract with service reliability and on-time performance.

Melvin Barkley stated that employees who provide good service are highlighted.

Michael Staley stated that there is something similar on the paratransit side, we receive compliments and complaints every week. Ms. Campbell, as the outreach person for paratransit, passes on those compliments to the providers.



DDOT Administration Reports

Interim Executive Director- Michael Staley

- On January 2, 2024, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to increase the bus drivers rate of pay was agreed to by DDOT and the Amalgamated Transit Union. A \$3 across the board base wage increase that took the starting wage for a driver from \$16.15 to \$19.15 per hour and the top pay from \$22.61 to \$25.61 per hour. The MOU increased the incentive bonus from \$1000 to \$1500 per quarter. The current ATU contract expires at the end of June 2025.
- DDOT has increased its service levels starting in January 2024 and will continue through the end of 2024. We have gone from 135 A.M. pull outs to 150 A.M. pull outs. In June, we are scheduled to go to 175 A.M. pull outs and in September, 200 A.M. pull outs with a 214 peak vehicle requirement. That will put DDOT back close to pre-covid service levels.
- The State fair Transit Center is scheduled to open at the end of April of this year. DDOT intend to do multiple events from an outreach point of view including representatives from the LAC if there is interest to tour the facility. This will be open to other transit advocates as well. More details to come.
- Paratransit year one, just a quick recap, we will be providing more detailed information during the month of March Community Input meeting. Which takes place on the third Thursday from 5pm until 6:30 pm. On-time performance has increased by 11% from 86%, the last number under Transdev, to 97% for one year under DDOT. The customer complaints came in for the year at least than 1% for all the trips transacted in year one.
- We are still taking public comments on the DDOT re-imagined plan. The detailed plan has been posted on the DDOT website since February first. Public comments will be accepted until March 15, 2024.

Deputy Director – Melvin Barkley - No update

Paratransit Division – Ta Nisha Roby - No update

Scheduling and Planning Director – Steve Patrnick



- The service changes for April involves peak service. Please look at the DDOT re-imagine plan that is posted on the DDOT website. Please send in your comments. The service enhancements that took place in January were bringing the Dexter route to a 20-minute daytime frequency and the Fenkell route frequency to 45-minutes. We added supplemental service to help with school start times and end times on many routes. On the Jefferson route, we improved the daytime frequency to 10 minutes and on the weekend, we improved the daytime frequency to 15 minutes. We will start looking into including some bus rapid transit features on Jefferson as a pilot. Some of the features will include things like boarding islands, signal priority and electronic information.
- **Chief Transit Police – Willaim Hart** - No updates.
- **Vehicle Maintenance Division – Nikolas Cardone**
 - We're making tremendous strides on getting as many coaches ready for revenue service as possible.
- **ADA Coordinator – Scharron Rambus**
 - Introduced himself and stated that this is first LAC meeting as the new DDOT ADA Coordinator. He has over 25 years of transportation experience which includes bus driving, money room, Farebox repair, Scheduling and Service Development and is now in the Office of Compliance. Excited to work along side the LAC Committee help bring change and information that will help the elderly and disabled community.
 - Since the last LAC meeting, the Office of Compliance monitored thirty-one (31) ADA Fixed Route trips, for 7 ADA regulated areas, Route Identification, Boarding Location, Lift/Ramp, Bus Accessibility, Wheelchair Securement, Bus Announcements, and Service Animals. We observed many of our passengers with mobility devices boarding and needing a little extra time to get seated. It was rewarding to see our drivers honor the DDOT policy that states Drivers must ensure that adequate time is provided to allow ADA riders to complete boarding or disembarking from the vehicle. Drivers are to pay attention to riders who need extra time.



- The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has approved our Vehicle Accessibility Plan. This plan is required to be revised and reviewed by our LAC and Executive Director every five years. The plan expires in November 2027.
- We are recruiting new members for our LAC committee. We have several LAC members who are nearing the end of their term. The membership term is four years. If you are interested or know someone who would like to serve in this compacity. I can be reached at 313-316-2793.
- The Office of Compliance have Investigated 38 ADA Fixed-Route complaints, 27 were complaints of passengers in wheelchairs being passed up or denied service. In 2023, we had a total of 43 ADA pass-up complaints, up from 14 in 2022. We noticed this significate increase. We are working with the Transportation Operations Division to bring a reduction in the number of these complaints. A bulletin was issued to drivers regarding our DDOT POLICY - Forward Planning: Drivers are to watch for passengers waiting at bus stops using mobility devices.
- We have had 689 applicants that were determined eligible for DDOT’s ADA Complimentary Paratransit Service. There were no denials, therefore the Paratransit Appeals board has not met.
- The Improve Detroit app now features a “Bus Shelter” category! Broken glass, a missing bench, or other issues such as weather or any other thing that is obstructing a bus stop, please report via the app. For those we are not able to download the app you can call our customer service to make your report at 313.933.1300. Thanks for riding and helping to improve DDOT!
- **Chief Safety Officer-Corie Holmes**
 - Mr. Rambus, I just wanted to kind of reiterate some of the things that you said. Our training department, through your help. And the compliance department's team has really added some features to training. Thanks to the awareness and the issues that we're experiencing. With the new training part of our curriculum, we are providing ADA training twice. I just wanted everybody on the call to know that we hear the complaints, and that we're actively doing something about it. So, thank you for your time.



- **Old Business - None**
- **New Business – None**

Public Comments

Marguerite Maddox Scarlett asked in the chat, why are the DPD and Transit Police changing. William Hart responded that those questions need to be directed to the Mayor's Office.

Mr. Cunningham asked how many people are in attendance. The audio system for the Q-line, People Mover, and DDOT should announce Bus driver job openings. The interior cards should be used to advertise jobs and announce meetings. Michael Staley, it looks like the participation count is at 45. Scharron Rambus stated that we have 24 participants and that is minus LAC members and DDOT employees.

Ms. Perrin asked how we do extend meeting notices to the senior population in the assisted living and senior facilities.

Mr. Cunningham, I would love to put some signs up at the senior citizens buildings around the city, and then take them down.

Rochella Stewart, I'm with the Detroit People's Platform, a part of their justice team. I want to know how many mechanics DDOT have and how many more are needed to have buses maintained for the drivers. I also would like to know about accountability for the drivers. Are there talks to redo that two-year period on accidents and different reports on drivers. I am against the DPD on buses. I will continue to fight for a low-income fare 200% below the poverty level for returning citizens and the homeless. I would also like to know the record of DDOT lawsuits.



Michael Staley, currently we have a mechanic deficit of about 25 general automotive mechanics. That's about a 25% deficit based on the number of mechanics that were included in the fiscal year 2024 budget. Ms. Stewart was talking about the 2 years look back on accidents. That's part of the collective bargaining agreement, as I mentioned earlier. DDOT will be at the table with the Amalgamated Transit Union probably in about 8 months from now to negotiate the next collective bargaining agreement. Miss Stewart has made a previous request from DDOT regarding the lawsuits. We referred her to the appropriate department within the city, which is the law department.

Marguerite Maddox Scarlett comments that she is frustrated that the Transit Police are being taken over. The Transit Police were trained to be careful with persons with disabilities.

Willaim Heart, I'd like to thank Marguerite because she's helped with our policies, and with the training of our officers. I will pass those concerns along to my counterparts over at DPD.

Renard Monczunski, I'm a community organizer. People's platform, and I'm a resident of District 6 in Detroit. I want to comment about the annunciator to make sure that they're all being utilized, so that passengers can know the streets and their stops. They work on my routes, but I can't speak for all the other routes that are being used across the city. I would like to know the status of the Paratransit contracts, and when the contracts expire. I Oppose the DPD on buses because of the aggression and compassion for persons with disabilities.

Michael Staley, I can address the question about the about DDOT paratransit. There were emergency contracts that were established in January 2023 that expired on June 13, 2023, after City council voted down the Transdev renewal. On July 1, 2023, DDOT contracted with 5 service providers, Big Star Checker Cab Del Rey. Moe, and People's Express on 5-year contracts. So those contracts are set to expire on June 30, 2028. DDOT will explore all options nearing the expirations of the contracts.



Scharron Rambus mentioned that the office of compliance monitor routes Monthly and the annunciator is one of the areas in which we monitor, and if one is found not to be working properly, we notify vehicle maintenance immediately.

Robert Pawlowski, I'm the vice chair for the regional Transit authority Systems advisory committee. The local Advisory Council for Detroit Department of Transportation is very disorganized, and it lacks transparency. I want to see some transparency from DDOT staff about getting information out about notices to the public about these meetings. The information needs to be posted. We also need to know who's on DDOT staff.

Scharron Rambus responded that notices are posted a year in advance. They've been posted at Rosa Parks with the 2024 dates since the end of 2023. Also, notices have gone out 30 days and 2 weeks prior to the meeting. Notices are on all our social media outlets. Notices are going out about the meetings. I'm not sure if any of the LAC members want to chime in and verify that you receive the information as well you can. We are working diligently and hard with the LAC members. We value their input and so we make sure that the notices are out.

Andre Bryant asked what the differences are between the Transit Police and DPD.

William Heart, we're both license police departments. The difference between is that Transit Police focused only on transit.

Alics Dillard, I'm with goodwill of Greater Detroit. We had an incident at the bus shelter in front of Goodwill on Grand River, where 2 of our participants went out to the bus shelter, this guy sold them some drugs, and they overdosed. He sales drugs regularly from this shelter. Can the shelter be removed or updated.

Willaim Heart, we will address this problem. We will be leaving June 13, 2024.

Michael Staley, Mr. Dillard, you can reach out to Ms. Roby with our Paratransit Department.



Corie Holmes, you have my assurance that I will go out this evening to look at the shelter.

Scharron Rambus, Tammy Black, one of our LAC members put in chat, "I'm sorry that I had to leave our meeting. I would like to share Community Tree House Center, Detroit's Solar Work Force Development program including people of different abilities? She asked us to please share. And she will email a flyer to everyone.

Melvin Barkley, NFL draft is April 20-27 in the downtown area. The city will be shutting down several downtown streets at the end of March. We're in talks with the NFL, State of Michigan, and City officials to lessen the impact on our ADA and other fixed route passengers.

Meeting adjournment

Andre Bryant motioned that the meeting be adjourned and seconded by James Jones. No opposition. Motion approved.

The meeting adjourned 11:22 am

Next meeting will be held on May 14, 2024 @ 10 am.

Respectfully submitted by:

Scharron Rambus

Scharron Rambus
Regulatory Compliance Officer – ADA

Andre Bryant

Andre Bryant
Chairperson, Local Advisory Council