



Citizens Advisory Committee Minutes

March 12, 2025
Location: via TEAMS

Attendance:

New Jersey: Reggie Haynes, Judy Boldurian,

Pennsylvania: Tyrone Wesley, Robert Melikian

Emeritus Member(s): Jeffrey Kessler, Alan Becker, Benjamin Saracco, Larry Davis

DRPA/PATCO: John Rink, GM; Jerry Sahi, CFO; Elisabeth Klawunn CMM; Robert Finnegan, CSSO; Cheryl Ansert, Administrative Coordinator; Edward Cobbs, Chief; Shawn Dougherty, Captain

Potential Members: Scott Pileckas, Joseph Byham, Thomas Lipski, Daniel Coyle

Call to Order

A motion was made to approve the February 12, 2025 minutes. The Minutes were approved.

Finance

CFO Sahi

DRPA Preliminary Traffic

- February 2025 traffic was roughly around 3.3M. 229k less than last year.
- February YTD traffic is around 6.9M. 166k less than last year.

DRPA Final Revenue & Traffic

- Final December YTD revenue was \$345.9M , \$30.3M better than budget.
- Final December YTD traffic was 50.5M. 1.1M better than budget.

PATCO Ridership & Revenue

- Final December YTD revenue was \$13.4M. \$0.4M less than budget.
- Final December YTD ridership was 5.6M. 0.2M less than budget.

Preliminary Operating Expense

- December YTD operating expense is \$172.9M, which is \$16.5M favorable to budget.

General DRPA

Why is there limited engagement with social media from DRPA? Responses to comments aren't made on the same day.

CEO Hanson

- Complaints, questions, & issues of safety are responded to on the same day. Frequently there are not responses to something that appears to be someone venting or stating a negative comment about PATCO.
- Our communications people are typically engaged 7AM-7PM weekdays only, no Holidays or weekends.



Discussions on the DRPA lease with Holt and what raised this with NJ government officials?

CEO Hanson

- Our Inspector General uncovered this in an audit. It was placed in the audit report and put out on the website.
- A Reporter from the Philadelphia Inquirer reviewed it and started asking questions, which raised it to the New Jersey state level.

Bob Melikian: There was a lot of property along the Admiral Wilson Blvd that there was no paperwork on and it was something that was attempted to be cleaned up.

CEO Hanson

- That was cleaned up and transferred to Camden County.

Bridge and Highway

Ben Franklin Bridge LED status update

CMM Klawunn

- The lights are up and running, last night we performed a test of every static color show we will have on the bridge.

When accidents occur on the bridges, what is the communication chain?

CEO Hanson

- Police Dispatch notifies the communications manager, Mike Williams. He notifies the press and puts the information out on social media.
- If it continues to be an issue that impacts the commuters, police dispatch gives Mike updated information and he continues to provide updates.

PATCO

Public Safety Discussion

CEO Hanson

- Without going into a lot of the details, we are close to an agreement with the City of Philadelphia that involves working together to clean and make sure that the people that do not belong on the line are taken off and not allowing them to reside in and around the stations and trains.

Chief Cobbs

- We are seeing an increase in homelessness throughout the line. We tried performing train sweeps at particular stations to remove those individuals, but this can be time consuming and does delay the travel of our riders.

Steve Benigno: How is fare evasion handled?

Chief Cobbs

- If they go through the gates and we observe it, we should be taking police action to question whether the individual has a ticket or not.
- Keep in mind if an individual conducts a theft of service, they're on the train and they're questioned the officer determines what action they need to take based on their conversation.



Reggie Haynes: When the train sweeps are being done is there any communication for the passenger's to understand what's going on to at least tell them why they are being delayed?

Captain Dougherty

- Generally, they will go over the loudspeaker and say the train is going to be delayed 1 or 2 minutes due to police activity. While we remove these individuals from the train if they're not ticketed.

Bob Melikian

- In Lower Merion Township there are volunteers from the community that go around as community watch members and report on stuff using walkie talkies provided to them which gives them direct access to the police. They are not allowed to stop anyone or confront anyone because they don't want them to get hurt. Could something like this be implemented on PATCO?

CEO Hanson

- I don't think so. Our customers on the trains can call 911, they can use the see something say something app. The cameras in the stations are monitored by police dispatch and center tower.
- We do not have enough officers to deal with this homelessness issue. They are taken off the trains in large numbers and many times they're back in the system before our officers are able to return.
- It's a great idea, but we already have eyes and ears in terms of customers, cameras, and other technology our staff have access to.
- We don't want to put those people at risk of being harmed by anyone.

Chief Cobbs

- We are dealing with homelessness and mental health issues. Approximately, 95% of our officers assigned to the Transit unit are CIT (Crisis intervention Team). They are trained in de-escalation and mental health awareness.
- It's important that every rider, every patron use 911 when on the train. Be the best witness that you can be, give a full description of the actor and the issue. With these details if a situation were to arise an officer can respond and address the issue promptly.

Tyrone: The platforms have emergency call boxes, are they being checked on a regular basis and do they all work?

CSSO Finnegan

- Yes, they are tied into our genetec platform. They are monitored everyday by our Homeland Security staff and anything that is offline or deemed non-functional is automatically entered to be repaired.
- They have just replaced across the whole line.

Issue maintaining schedule accuracy (Off-Schedule train on Feb 22, 11:54PM)

GM Rink

- February 22nd, 11:54PM we had a track out of service and we were performing signal testing.
- There was an issue with the train, which then caused 3 late trains.
- There was only 1 dispatcher working and they were handling a problem on the line and did not have time to make changes to the LED signs during that period.



Has PATCO considered allowing an outside volunteer group to sponsor a cleaning program for the stations and parking lots similar to the Adopt a Highway program?

GM Rink

- I met with all the town Mayors to discuss this, but at the time there was no interest from any of the towns or from any of the groups in the towns.

Status update on meeting potential new GTFS vendors

GM Rink

- Since our last meeting we have met with one of the vendors to talk about real time GTFS.
- Our staff asked them a bunch of questions that we are waiting to hear back on.

Eagles parade ridership figures and any observations about travel patterns vs the last parade

GM Rink

- We moved just under 60,000 people that day.
- We noticed more people arrived to go over to PA earlier and they also returned to NJ earlier than last time.
- When we started moving people back to NJ it took about 4.5 hours of continuous trains leaving every 5 minutes.

Questions from Social Media:

Larry Davis: The PATCO fare payment system replacement timeline?

GM Rink

- Should be in your minutes from last meeting, the same question was answered. We anticipate late summer for new system to be up.

Is there any interest in studying a University City extension?

CEO Hanson

- NO, it's not in our plan.

Old Business

New Business

Emeritus Status: Tyrone Wesley- March 2025

Bob Melikian- June 2025

Next CAC Meeting: April 9, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m.

Next DRPA Meeting: DRPA Board Meeting on March 19, 2025 @ 9:00 a.m.