

A meeting of the New York City Transit Riders Council (NYCTRC) was convened at 12:00 pm on Thursday, May 28, 2020 via virtual conference call.

Member Attendance

Andrew Albert (Chair)	Present
Burton M. Strauss Jr. (Vice Chair)	Present
Stuart Goldstein	Present
Christopher D. Greif	Present
William K. Guild	Absent
Marisol Halpern	Present
Sharon King Hoge	Present
Trudy L. Mason	Present
Scott R. Nicholls	Present
Edith Prentiss	Present

Staff Attendance

Lisa Daglian (Executive Director)	Present
Ellyn Shannon (Associate Director)	Present
Bradley Brashears (Planning Manager)	Present
Sheila Binesh (Transportation Planner)	Present
Deborah Morrison (Administrative Assistant)	Present

Non-Member Attendance

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Cate Contino	NYCT
Jason Anthony	Concerned citizen
Andrew Pollack	Concerned citizen
Matt Kemper	Concerned citizen
Dwayne Finkelstein	Concerned citizen
Karen Schuman	Concerned citizen
Joshua	Concerned citizen
Andrew Kurzweil	Concerned citizen
Matt Shotkin	Concerned citizen
Shaul Picker	Concerned citizen
Robert Berrios	Brooklyn District 51 Rep.

Approval of Minutes for April 23, 2020 meeting.

Approval of Agenda for May 28, 2020 meeting.

Chair's - Board Report attached.

- 130 losses of life among MTA frontline employees – majority are subway and bus employees.
- Service has started to uptick: According to interim President Feinberg, we were only carrying 9% of the normal passenger load, and now it is up to 11% - still way down. \$591 million in losses of fares alone and sure that is up now.
- We have received some money from the Cares Act - \$1.3 billion. And according to Chief Financial Officer we have over \$4 billion in liquidity, which will not last that long.
- Rating Bonds: Moody's has our bonds as AA3, outlook negative; Fitch has MTA bonds as AA-, outlook stable; Standard & Poors AA, outlook negative; and Crawl has AA, credit watch as downgrade.
- Capital Program: There were several projects on hold excluding – Astoria Boulevard elevators; CBTC; work on the 42nd Street shuttle; LIRR Expansion Project in Jamaica; everything else was on hold and apparently that is no longer the case. The Culver Line CBTC installation and new interlocking at Kings Highway – for nine weeks there will be no service beyond Church Avenue. We need to know if there will be a shuttle bus, as was originally envisioned?
- C. Contino: We put out a press release and launched a Culver Line specific website – at this time we are doing the work we can with the resources we have within the essential service plans. I will share those two links in the chat. No news of shuttle buses for now.

<https://new.mta.info/projects/culver-line-signal-modernization> ;
<https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/mediaContact/public/view.cfm?>

- Installation of east-bound toll gates on the Verrazano Bridge so two-way tolling can begin, which should also bring the MTA some money.
- Change in debarment regulations – we were concerned that if contractors were 10% over budget or 10% late in completing a project they would be debarred and this of course cut down on people bidding and contractors inflating the costs in case they were late. Now that process has changed – there will not be automatic debarment without looking at extenuating circumstances – all issues will be brought to the Finance Committee and MTA Board.
- New Cleaning technologies – including ultra-violet lights which is being tested in subway cars - if successful will be tested with passengers onboard; and antimicrobial that keeps germs and viruses off surfaces for at least 90 days at a time.
- Possible new app technology that will tell passengers in advance how crowded a train or station is – we will be following all these developments.
- Andy Byford is new head of London transport system – Our loss is London's gain.
- Congestion Pricing: Was slated to begin in 2021 – still waiting to get from the federal government what type of environmental impact statement will be necessary from Secretary of Transportation Chao.

T. Mason: The Governor addressed many infrastructure needs and expressed to the feds and the President that we need the type of environmental impact statement for congestion pricing – EAS or EIS? Federal action and the proposed legislation to provide money to the states is needed.

L. Daglian: In the Governor's current press conference he says he was not focusing too much on congestion pricing but focusing more on job creation.

T. Mason: He was focusing on infrastructure, infrastructure, infrastructure, which will create jobs.

A. Albert: I am glad he pushed Gateway, as it is the most important infrastructure project in the country.

Chair's – Board Report contd...

- With the Governor opening the mid-Hudson Valley and Long Island, both MNR and LIRR are adding service. In the case of MNR – additional frequencies; and with LIRR just adding additional cars on existing trains – no increases in frequencies for now.
- Signal improvement project between Babylon and Patchogue, which should improve train service once that is done.
- Penn Station Project, PSA, four new Bronx stations was also pushed by the Governor with the federal government.

C. Greif: F Train – They did update the information that gives out more information on accessibility and reroutes.

A. Albert: From what I saw on the notices, this is a weekend only project, correct?

C. Greif: Yes.

A. Albert: We will still be looking into whether or not there will be shuttle bus service when the F train is not running between Church Avenue and Coney Island.

A. Pollack: How will it be feasible to take reservations to ride the subway, bus, and commuter railroads?

A. Albert: I would imagine that if someone gets a notice that their train is too full, will opt to travel anyways – people will jump the turnstiles. I can't imagine that this will work.

L. Daglian: On the TfL website they have a list of stations that are most crowded; hours with the most crowding; which entrances are most crowded; alternate entrances; and it is on their website.

S. Picker: In order to ensure that there is safe social distancing, is the MTA looking to increase frequency of service, especially in the off-peak hours to pre-COVID levels?

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A. Albert: Frequencies were boosted when many of the workers were out sick returned, and that help fix that problem. There are talks about a gradual return to service – President Feinberg is asking if employers can stagger worker hours – different shifts – not as many days per week. They will have to prepare for an eventual return to service. These discussions are happening internally.

S. Goldstein: F Train this weekend, they had a sign up at the Neptune Station that you had the option of walking to the bus or walking nine minutes to the 2 Line – I don't think it is realistic to expect people to walk nine minutes to another station.

Did the Governor say anything about testing for employees, whether it is antibody testing or COVID testing?

T. Mason: Yes, the first-line employees, they are the first line of people being tested, with fire and police. Transit workers are on the list within the first round. It's listed among the essentials.

R. Berrios: I represent District 51 in Brooklyn - During the 1-5 AM shutdown can they bring back the B51 bus, as people would rather take it to downtown Brooklyn. There are too many bus connections to make – can they bring it back for the 1-5 AM hours?

A. Albert: That is a good question. We can inquire about bringing back the B51 between 1-5 AM.

C. Greif: The B39 bus is running.

R. Berrios: Yes, the B39 is running, but is not helping people trying to get to and from downtown Brooklyn. It goes to Williamsburg and is a long commute.

Action Item: Find out about the possible return of B51 bus service between 1-5 AM for downtown Brooklyn riders.

J. Anthony: I spoke to Sarah Meyer and Sarah Feinberg about the crowding on the M40. Comments about people not wearing masks.

Old Business: None

New Business

A. Albert: A week from today is the full PCAC meeting. We are endeavoring to get Mark Dowd MTA Chief Innovation Officer – to speak about new disinfecting technology and a host of other things.

A. Albert: Three weeks ago, television stations were giving MTA updates that were incorrect. These ticker notices were saying that certain lines were not running, which was not true, so I reported it to subways - the MTA is updating their feeds. They are no longer showing incorrect service.

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C. Greif: I sent an email to you about stations not being cleaned – on the F, B, Q.

A. Albert: I got your email and will inquire about those particular stations.

Action Item: Inquire about Chris Greif's list of stations not being cleaned.

S. Picker: I've only seen this on the GO bulletin – the 42nd Street shuttle is out for the rest of the year to expedite construction work and I think this is a great move by the transit authority to shorten the time it will take to complete, but not sure why they are not making this public – not on the website?

A. Albert: I think it is a good move as well – it was terrible while it was open with everybody on one track trying to board from the narrow platforms – it will be a major improvement.

L. Daglian: On the website it says it is out but does not say for how long.

S. King Hoge: Sometimes when you use the mta.info trip planning – there is two different websites – it says there is no service to Wassaic, and I wish someone could look into this?

A. Albert: I know there is no service there on the weekends, but there is during weekdays. I just went on MNR Train Time and did Grand Central to Wassaic and there are times.

S. King Hoge: Yes, you went to the right one, there is another that doesn't have Wassaic. I will take down notes when it happens again when using the Trip Planner.

L. Daglian: When using the Trip Planner there are no trips to Wassaic, I am looking now.

A. Albert: I will report this, thank you.

Action Item: Report that the MTA's Trip Planner does not recognize MNR's Wassaic station.

L. Daglian: Work the PCAC is doing – A lot of my time has been spent on the federal request for the \$3.9 billion, and also looking at the Capital Program regarding some of the issues that could arise if that funding does not come through. We have been active with Op-Eds, testimonies at the MTA Board, and also focused on the 1-5 AM closures.

Bradley and team have been working hard on the PCAC Annual Report, which we will share soon. Bradley is also updating the Atlantic Ticket/Freedom Ticket report. We opted to not sign onto an elected official letter about expanding Atlantic Ticket at this time because it is a daunting time to consider anything but running the service.

B. Brashears: I have prepared a testimony regarding the permanence of Atlantic Ticket for the next board meeting, and once the timing is right we would like to release our Freedom Ticket expansion report as a tool to help regain the ridership.

L. Daglian: Ellyn has been working on the PCAC Strategic Plan and jumping on numerous calls with me.

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E. Shannon: I'm looking at a strategic plan about how we operate and will be talking with the Councils to discuss our goals to achieve in the coming - ahead during the fall.

L. Daglian: Sheila is now working on looking at best practices on restarting the MTA – looking at buses; infographic opportunities; and has two reports one about sexual assault that once we return to our new normal can revisit these.

S. Binesh: I'm doing research on best practices and awaiting bus data.

E. Prentiss: I mentioned at the previous meeting the positions of the poles in subway cars – and how it is problematic to reach the pole and maintain distance. Is anyone in car design keeping track of this? This will become a major issue for the next crisis.

A. Albert: If it is the 160s, we have a lot of those cars already in service that they probably won't change. But we have many cars on order that we could inquire about – 211s and 262s.

E. Prentiss: That is all I am asking for.

A. Albert: When this COVID thing is over we can visit a station or yard and have the car people with us to show what Edith is talking about and we can see if a retrofit is possible, but should definitely happen for new car designs.

Adjourned

This meeting was conducted via Zoom Conference Call: [Zoom Video](#)

Action Items

- **Find out about the possible return of B51 bus service between 1-5 AM for downtown Brooklyn riders.**
- **Inquire about Chris Greif's list of stations not being cleaned.**
- **Report that the MTA's Trip Planner does not recognize MNR's Wassaic station.**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Daglian
Executive Director