

Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee

Minutes

September 16, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am in Port Authority's Neal H. Holmes Board Room at 345 Sixth Avenue, Fifth Floor, Pittsburgh, with the following in attendance:

Roll Call

<u>Via WebEx Board Committee Members</u>	<u>Board Members and Solicitor</u>
John Tague Jr., Chairman	Representative Austin Davis
Jessica Walls-Lavelle	Jennifer Liptak
Ann Ogoreuc	Representative Lori Mizgorski
Stephanie Turman	Michelle Zmijanac

Opening Remarks

Mr. Tague, Committee Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

Approval of Minutes from the June 17, 2021, Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Tague asked Committee members if there were any corrections to the minutes. There were none and members approved the minutes.

Presentations and Resolutions

1. NEXTransit:

Amy Silbermann, Director of Planning and Service Development presented the final draft of the Authority’s Long-range Transportation Plan, NEXTransit. She noted that throughout the plan’s development over the last 15 months, the plan received over 21 thousand points of inquiry, input, and comment from the public. Since the plan was presented in its draft form at the July Board Committee meeting, the following updates were made:

- Project E, the East Busway phased extension project, was re-scoped to ensure that both a terminus in Monroeville and a terminus in McKeesport are evaluated during the early planning phases of the project,
- The sustainability program section of the plan was updated to note that next steps should be a development of a separate sustainability plan and staffing to support the program’s rollout,

Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee

Minutes

September 16, 2021

- And the battery-electric bus program section of the plan was updated to be clear that a plan for a full zero-emission fleet needs to be developed in the near-term so that the plan can begin to be implemented.

The draft plan in its entirety can be found on the project's website, www.NEXTransit.network

2. Authorization to Adopt and Implement the NEXTransit Long-Range Transportation Plan

Mr. Tague says, "Mr. Chairman, the Authority's staff has finalized the proposed NEXTransit Long-Range Transportation Plan, which includes:

- a public engagement summary.
- a values development summary.
- an overview of the Authority's current system and ridership.
- a market/travel demand analysis and summary.
- policy and program recommendations.
- project recommendations.
- and information on funding and implementing the NEXTransit network.

This resolution authorizes the Authority's adoption of the NEXTransit Plan, and further authorizes the Authority's staff to implement the NEXTransit Plan.

The Resolution was presented and recommended to full board for approval.

3. Authorization to adopt Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy Statement

Inez Colon, Chief Human Resource Officer, presented a formal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy Statement. She says the policy statement was developed to demonstrate the Authority's commitment to DEI.

Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee

Minutes

September 16, 2021

POLICY STATEMENT - "Port Authority leadership recognizes the importance of promoting and fostering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in and among its workforce, supplier base and community outreach efforts in a manner that mirrors the diverse patrons and neighborhoods that the Authority's transit system serves, and the critical nature of DEI to driving further innovation and a more equitable and effective public transportation system."

This resolution authorizes the Authority to adopt the Policy and implement a DEI Operating Plan.

Authorization to Adopt Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy Statement (Inez Colon)

- Resolution was presented and recommended to full board for approval

4. Customer Service Presentation

Customer Service Improvements & Plans (Jim Ritchie and John Beeler)

Mr. Ritchie introduced John Beeler, Director, Customer Service. Mr. Beeler gave an overview of the customer service department. Listed below are Discussion Points:

- Customer service provides support for customers through information and assistance while extending a trusting environment
- Customer service at Port Authority consists of:
 - Call Center
 - Downtown Service Center
 - Digital Communications
 - Live chat
 - Social media (Twitter, Facebook)
 - Community Engagement Events
 - Senior fairs
 - Public meetings
 - IVR (Interactive phone "voice response" system) provides next arrival times and ConnectCard balance information 24/7

Processing Customer Comments and how we respond to feedback:

Customers contacts us several ways:

- Phone calls
- Digital communications

Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee

Minutes

September 16, 2021

- Email
- Social media
- Website
- Face to face
- Walk-in Service Center
- Community events
- Written correspondence

- Customer service agents collect details of the incident and document in Port Authority's comments system (HASTUS). The comment is automatically assigned a reference number and forwarded to the appropriate department within 24 hours for further investigation and resolution.

- ADA Comments are processed in a similar manner to regular comments, but we take a couple of extra steps. The comment is marked as an ADA submission, it's routed to the appropriate person, submitted for investigation and resolution. After the investigation and resolution are submitted, the OEO manager reviews the comment to ensure it was addressed appropriately and in a timely manner. The ADA compliance officer then follows up with the customer. All ADA comments are tracked on a spreadsheet.

Over the last three years, the top three comments/complaints that we have received are (since January 2019):

- Unsafe Operation – 7,018
- Punctuality – 6,998
- Pass Ups – 6,640

Training and Development, play a key role to our development. Some of the training and development we provide include:

- Six-week training session for new hires – consisting of both classroom and hands-on training.
- Continuing education and training for all staff on new procedures.
- Individual coaching and feedback sessions, that are done through monitoring recorded calls that are viewed with staff. We coach them and train them on what they have done well on the call.
- Web based training, such as handling difficult customers and how to use empathy on calls.

Technology used by customer service includes:

- ATIS trip planning system – we can provide detailed directions to our customers based off of their starting point and where they are going. We put their information into the system, and it will provide us the routes that the customer needs to take and any connecting routes they made need, until they reach their final destination.
- HASTUS
- Web Chat
- Interactive voice response system (IVR) 24/7/365
 - Next bus/LRV arrival times – speech
 - ConnectCard balance information

Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee

Minutes

September 16, 2021

- SMS (text by phone) next arrival times
- Social Media
 - Twitter
 - Facebook
 - Instagram

PENTA (rail station announcement system) – provides public service announcements, along with emergency messaging to our riders.

As our technology continues to expand, so will our ability to communicate with our customers.

Looking to the future:

- Training
- Expanded customer hours (phone & digital)
- New customer technology (currently updating the rail station announcement system)
- Community engagement
- Enhanced service center experience
 - Senior Card Cameras
 - Lobby greeter
 - Improved digital signage
 - New Point of Sale System
 - One Stop Shopping at each window
 - Solicit Feedback

Statement from Ms. Kellerman

- Ms. Kellerman wanted to add one comment, the board may remember in 2018, we implemented the voice of the customer survey. We did the first round probably close to the summertime and had gone ahead through the process to start another iteration of that. This would be that more detailed onboard survey, being able to ask questions over five to seven minutes with a passenger and then tracking the impressions of the customer experience. What can we work on? And what are our high priority issues? We have begun that process, but then COVID began and clearly a little bit more challenging to do that face-to-face conversation. We have done projects like that in the past in John's group, have been working on how we can get that feedback in a world where we stand away from people with a facemask, so we will continue to work on that.

Questions from Board Members and Others

1. Mr. Tague asked Mr. Beeler if we track Title VI complaints.
 - a) Mr. Beeler replied, yes, Title VI complaints are handled similar to the ADA complaints, the information is flagged as a Title VI complaint and goes to our OEO compliance officer who then investigates that complaint and takes the necessary action to resolve the issue.

Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee

Minutes

September 16, 2021

2. Ms. Turman made a comment that she commends the customer service department under Mr. Beeler's leadership. On the flip side of that I am really big on customer service and kudos to our operators who are faced with customers on a day-to-day basis. Also, thank you to Ms. Kellerman and her team that have done a great job on recognizing in such a hostile environment, the operators that are faced on the frontline and doing a great job during the Pandemic.
3. Ms. Zimmerman asked Mr. Beeler, looking at the bar graph, when you included the information for the past three years on pass-ups, we had 6600 pass-ups, could you identify how many pass-ups that are taking place now during COVID. Would you be able to weed that out for us?
 - a) Possibly, yes, we can look at the comments and we can run a report to see what was involved, how the pass-up occurred, we would be able to get you that information.
4. Ms. Turman asked is there a survey taken from a customer after their experience with customer service. Do you get feedback?
 - a) Mr. Beeler replied we do not have a survey for customer service, we have had surveys in the past in the service center and surveys have been conducted in customer service in the past but, that is something we are looking at to implement so we can improve and enhance the service that we are providing.