

MINUTES

Care Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting

301 E. Belt Blvd., Richmond, VA 23224 – Eldridge F. Coles Boardroom

Date | time 11/15/2018, 10:00a.m.-12:00p.m. | *Meeting called to order by* Jeanette Gholson @ 10:15 a.m.

In Attendance

Tim Barham, Angela Allah, Sheronda Hill, Kelsey Calder, Buddy Sherer, Barbara Payne, Kim Rollins, Mia Bailey, Tish Jarvis, Jean Lombos, Dexter Hurt, Carrie Rose-Pace, Martha Duke, Portia Baskerville, Angela Fries, Jeanette Gholson, Tameka Robinson, Rashaad Walker, Alexander Anderson, Ethel De Priest, Patricia Daniels, Sylvia Baskins, Rosalyn Burns, Jenny Schneider, Josh Smith, Kara White, Barbara Gillison, Barry Cutler, Maureen Eberhardt, Millie McCrae, Cynthia Lantz, Floyd Phipps, Josh Smith, Cody Ward, Ankit Mathur, and Brendan McNiff

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meetings held on May 17, 2018 and August 16, 2018 were unanimously approved, as distributed, by CAC Directors.

Review CAC Purpose and Guidelines (Chief of Transit Operations)

Appointment of CAC Members (Chief of Transit Operations)

Mr. Tim Barham announced that this meeting was the annual meeting. He also, briefly reviewed and discussed, CAC Purpose and Guidelines and informed meeting attendees that copies of the guidelines were available should anyone want to read over the guidelines in detail.

Appointment of CAC Officers

CAC Chair Jeanette Gholson announces the appointment of CAC Members and officers. She also acknowledges Josh Smith as a new voting member. Ms. Rosalyn Burns nominates Ms. Gholson to remain as Chair of the CAC Committee. After the committee voted, Ms. Gholson accepted. Ms. Gholson nominated Ms. Burns to remain as Vice-Chair. After the committee voted, Ms. Burns accepted. Ms. Gholson confirms the entire CAC Member body for the 2019 term.

Care on Demand Service Updates

Mr. Ankit Mathur introduced Mr. Cody Ward, who is Director of Operations at RoundTrip. Mr. Mathur stated that Round Trip has had the pleasure to serve CARE Members of GRTC for almost a year. This upcoming December will be one year. He stated that it has been an honor and a pleasure to serve and that they look forward to continuing to serve the CARE Members in the future.

Mr. Ward stated that since coming up on one year of working with GRTC, they have seen a 62% increase, year-to-date, in ridership with a 19% increase month over month. 64% increase in drops and trips. From an operational stand point, RoundTrip is looking to increase their operational staff, so that they can potentially, look at 24-7 coverage as well as using that staff to reduce wait times for customers when they call in and added coverage during service hours. Mr. Ward acknowledges RoundTrip has received feedback that there are longer wait times and that they are making sure that they are addressing that issue.

RoundTrip has seen success with the Summer and Fall promotions so they're extending the promotion for Winter. There is a promo code for 15% off trips. The various promotional programs were described in detail. If you have any questions, the phone number is 1-877-396-8080 ext. 5, which is a direct line for GRTC's CARE Customers.

Mr. Ward informed Ms. Gholson that number is also where concerns can be reported, and if necessary, the concerns/issues can be escalated to the Operations Manager for RoundTrip. Ms. Baskins asked if calls are answered on the weekends? Mr. Ward explained that they do have coverage on the weekends. Ms. Baskins explained that one of her riders called on a Sunday and could never get through. She said the person, trying to get through, could not and informed Ms. Baskins that they do not have operations on the weekends. Mr. Barham explained, unless it's UZURV and that he will double check to be sure and that there are two providers, RoundTrip and UZURV. RoundTrip does offer service during the week and on the weekends. Ms. Lantz asked what the hours were. Mr. Ward responded that their service hours, for call ins, are 7a.m.-11p.m. If you call in at 10:59p.m. to book a ride for 3:00a.m., that can be done. The ride service is 24-7. The call center hours stop at 11:00p.m. There is a form online that can be used to book a ride 24-7. Ms. Baskins asked for the contact information for UZURV. Ms. Rose Pace stated that UZURV's Call Center# is 804-499-3400. Their call center is open Monday-Friday, 7a.m.-7p.m., Saturday 9a.m.-5p.m. and closed on Sundays at the call center. Mr. Ward informed Ms. Lantz that the web address for, GRTC Customers using RoundTrip, is www.rideroundtrip.com/GRTC.

Mr. Barham explained that the service started August of last year (2017), a little over, 400 trips that first month. Now the trip count is just over 2,000 trips. October was the busiest month, for both providers, with an On-Time Performance percentage, roughly between, 97% and 100%. Customers, have shown, they like the Care On-Demand Service. Service area/jurisdiction statistics are trackable, which has shown, Henrico County Residents use the service frequently. They also provide service for both ambulatory and non-ambulatory customers, with both being charged the same fee. 10-12% of the trips are passengers with mobility devices. Door-to-door service is also provided as well, if needed or requested. GRTC is continuing to look ahead to improve the service so that it continues to be successful. CARE's service runs parallel with GRTC, pertaining to service hours and ADA Guidelines, while still adhering to the mandated CARE service area. Mr. Barham stated that Care On-Demand is going into its second year and will continue moving forward, in addition to First Transit, to provide an overall successful Paratransit Service.

Mr. Smith ask about the cost of UZURV. Mr. Barham explained that the cost of Care On-Demand (RoundTrip and UZURV) is a minimum of \$6.00. GRTC pays, up to, an additional \$15.00 of the cost of the ride for a total of \$21.00. Additional fees incurred depend on the time of day and the miles traveled. Any cost/fees over \$21.00 will be the responsibility of the customer.

Ms. Lantz wanted to know what steps, should a customer take, to book a trip. She also wanted to know what information can be given to reassure customers that the drivers are safe. In response to Ms. Lantz's questions, Mr. Ward explained the steps in detail along with providing the names of the providers (Lyft and Depend-A-Care who assist RoundTrip with providing the service. Lyft performs very stringent background checks performed on the federal, state and local levels. Sex offender registration checks are also performed. Nineteen-

point vehicle inspections are performed on vehicles. For non-ambulatory customers, RoundTrip works with local providers, such as Depend-A-Care. Credentials are verified, and policies followed, that are administered through, the state Medicaid, federal Medicare and other state programs, in addition to following the background check policies mentioned above. Mr. Ward also mentioned that every driver must go through training and follow rules pertaining to vehicle cleanliness.

Ms. White asked about the difference between the two service providers and the wait time for a vehicle for a non-ambulatory passenger. Mr. Barham explained that they both provide similar types of service, in terms of, direct non-stop service. There is no shared ride. RoundTrip and UZURV can vary when it comes to cost and hours of operation. GRTC does provide set guidelines to RoundTrip and UZURV, that they both follow. Mr. Ward stated that Round Trip has between 10 and 20 non-ambulatory service providers. Those providers have their own schedules, so it will be a matter of what their availability is and who can get to a customer the soonest. Non-ambulatory trip wait times can be from 10 minutes and up to 2 hours. RoundTrip will do what they can, to get a non-ambulatory vehicle out, as soon as possible, to transport customers.

Ms. Lantz wanted information about standing reservations. Mr. Ward explained that customers can book repeating trips and they can be booked as far in advance as a customer wants.

Ms. Baskins asked if drivers alert passengers, that are visually impaired, that their ride has arrived. Mr. Ward stated that there is a field that lets drivers know if a passenger is visually impaired. As a partnership with LYFT, drivers are required to call the customer to let them know that their ride has arrived.

Ms. Baskerville asked if the driver will assist the customer when they arrive outside. Mr. Ward stated that under Lyft Guidelines, drivers are not required to assist. However, most will assist with items in and out of the trunk or provide an arm for civility. Lyft drivers are not medically trained professionals, so they do not provide door-to-door service. If customers would like door-to-door service, RoundTrip can notify a provider of that type of service.

Ms. Fries asked what the time frame is for scheduling a ride. Mr. Ward stated that it is a true on demand service, in a sense, that if a customer requests a ride, it could be there in five minutes. Lyft is available 24 hours a day and the call center is open from 7a.m.-11p.m.

Ms. Baskerville asked if Lyft and RoundTrip were the same. Mr. Ward stated that Lyft is nationwide. RoundTrip is a local service that partners with Lyft.

Ms. Baskins asked if it were possible to get a breakdown of the pricing for the Care On-Demand service for the next meeting. Mr. Barham stated that it is currently listed on the website and that we could have something printed out for the next meeting. Customers do not book directly with Lyft. Customers should call RoundTrip or UZURV to schedule rides.

Mr. Mathur, from RoundTrip, informed meeting members that the promotions are for RoundTrip, only. The code for promotions will be sent out by mail and added to the website so customers will have access to the discounts.

Operations/First Transit

A. Staffing Updates

Mr. Sherer stated that there is a shortage on operators, not just locally, but across the country. First Transit has hired, in the last month, 6 operators with 6 more starting on Monday. The goal is to hire 20 more operators in the next couple of months. The goal, in the screening process, is to hire individuals

who are ready, willing, and qualified to do the job. Thorough screenings and background checks are performed, to help ensure, that customers are in the hands of safe operators.

B. Service Improvements

Twenty-three new vehicles have been added to the fleet. The seven sedans are still apart of the fleet. The sedans serve as a supplement to the vans. Ms. Burns stated that different sized customers, poses an issue, when riding in the sedans. Mr. Sherer stated that some customers like the sedans, some customers don't. The sedans are used when there is a shortage of vans. Because of the 23 new vans added, the van fleet should be sustainable for a while.

Ms. Baskerville asked how long drivers are in training and what happens when a driver has an accident. She also stated that when drivers call in for directions, the people responding on the other end of the call, are not very pleasant. Mr. Sherer explained the operator training in detail. He also stated that they monitor the radio transmissions and continue to address any operator and dispatcher issues. Mr. Smith offered his assistance, in the event, drivers need help with training. Mr. Sherer explained that all standing reservations are cancelled on holidays. Customers with standing reservations, who wish to travel on holidays, will need to call customer service to set up reservations for that day. Currently, there is no room for additional standing reservations, between the hours of, 7a.m.-9a.m. and 2p.m.-5p.m.

C. Short Pump Stops

Short Pump Town Center has agreed to allow two stops, for pick-ups and drop-offs, at the mall. One stop will be near Maggiano's Restaurant, on the first level. The other stop is over near The Funny Bone. Both stops will allow a short wait time without impeding traffic. The stops will be labeled "stop one" and "stop two". Once the stops have been confirmed, a message will be placed on the phone lines letting customers know that the stops will start in 30 days. The stops may start the first part of February.

D. Improvements in Dispatch

The tracking system has improved so that the vehicles can be seen more frequently by dispatchers.

E. Safety Meetings for Drivers

Mr. Sherer explained that safety meetings are still held monthly. Drivers are required to attend, at least, one safety meeting per month. The bag policy for riding on the vans is two bags per passenger. The bags cannot take up a seat and must go on the customer's lap. Grocery baskets are not allowed on the vans. Ms. Fries was informed that the two-bag limit needs to be consistent and RoundTrip could be an alternative when needing to transport more than two bags. Ms. Bailey explained that the safety agenda comes from corporate and is company-wide. She has incorporated Safety Bootcamps, that consist of, issues or concerns that customers have brought to First Transit's attention.

Chairperson's Report

Ms. Gholson expressed gratitude to GRTC and First Transit for providing access to alternative forms of transportation, such as RoundTrip and UZURV. She also asked that customers continue to attend CAC Meetings to share their comments and/or concerns.

Unfinished Business

A. Validator Update

Mr. Hurt stated that the validator project has moved into its second phase. The use of validators could go live in January, which is an extension from the previous roll-out month of December. There will be additional information released to customers in the future. There will be a transition period from tickets to tap cards, so that customers won't lose money on tickets already purchased. The new cards will include photos. There will also be One-Ride tap cards available. There have been discussions about how organizations, who purchases tickets in bulk, will transition to the use of the new tap cards. The value card will work the same as a ticket in terms of value. IT is working to ensure that CARE tap cards don't allow fare payment when swiped on the fixed route buses.

B. Online Reservations

Mr. Lombos explained that IT continues to work on AMBLE and a launch date has not been established. He is working with Routematch to rectify the issues with AMBLE. With AMBLE, the cut-off for making reservations online is 4:00pm. Customers can still call customer services to make reservations. Any changes to online reservations, including cancellations, will need to be made by calling customer service.

C. IVR Calling System

The IVR is designed to call customers 10 minutes before the vehicle arrives. However, the calls are based off the schedule of trips, not the actual ETA of the vehicle. Currently, the IVR has been disabled until it is determined how to deliver the estimated time of arrival. Customers will be updated about the use of the IVR as soon as the issue with this program has been corrected.

New Business

A. Fixed Route/Pulse Updates

Mr. Barham explained that in August, VCU began a partnership with GRTC. As a result, additional service was added to The Pulse in September, by changing headways to 10 minutes, during weekdays, all day. The routes 7, 19, and 91 had their service extended, to include traveling to Short Pump and Eastern Henrico, with additional service to the airport. City of Richmond Care customers can now travel the corridor, of the added service area, for 1 ticket instead of 2 tickets. Rules for traveling outside the $\frac{3}{4}$ of mile area are still in effect for Richmond residents. Henrico County Residents are not affected by the service area changes. Kelsey Calder is available for travel training, if assistance is needed. Public meetings were recently held, and public comments/concerns are still welcomed regarding service

changes to the 4A and 4B routes. There will be additional service changes that will take place in January.

Public Comments

Barbara Gillison: She enjoyed today's meeting, The Pulse and the buses. She still hasn't gotten around to the online reservations yet. It was nice seeing everyone and have a nice Thanksgiving.

Angela Fries: Thanks for addressing complaints because she is a believer in customer service. Some of the drivers are very nice and some are not. She hopes everyone has a nice holiday and Happy Thanksgiving.

Martha Duke: She wants to compliment the new drivers. She said that she doesn't see the problematic drivers anymore, which is a good thing. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Alexander Anderson: He is glad that the stop signs have changed, which makes the stops easier to find. He also stated that he called in looking for the person that helped him learn how to ride the bus and was told that that the program had ended.

Josh Smith: He's glad to be on board, and he is willing to offer his assistance if there is anyone that needs his help. He explained that if you're not a part of the solution, then you're a part of the problem.

Portia Baskerville: When meeting announcements are placed on the phone line, could they be removed by next week or before next month because customers must listen to that?

Rashaad Walker: Kim read, on behalf of Mr. Walker, a complaint regarding lost wages due to not arriving on time or at all for work. He would like to know if he could be compensated for the wages lost.

Maureen Eberhardt: Vehicles started arriving to pick people up with varying pick-up times. Some of the pick-up times were early, which did not give enough time for everyone to finish. Another instance involved a young man who was picked up between 4:30p.m. and 5:00p.m. and did not arrive home until 8:00p.m. Those are concerns she felt needed to be addressed.

Barry Cutler: Mr. Cutler expressed concerns about the use of Google Chrome when trying to download the RoundTrip application. His concern is that it is not user-friendly for individuals who are visually impaired and asked if there was a version of the application that can be assessed through Fire Fox and/or Internet Explorer. He also asked if he would have to use the two designated Short Pump Town Center stops if he wanted to go to restaurants near the mall.

Tameka Robinson: RoundTrip is wonderful. Their staff is wonderful, especially Barbara. Thanks for sharing the coupon code. She expressed a concern about not being able to cancel a ride sooner than 7:00 a.m. because of no access the GRTC portal.

Floyd Phipps: There is a long walk to catch the route 2C bus from where he lives.

Jeanette Gholson: There is a breezeway, if you wanted to put a third stop, between Chick-Fil-A and Macy's

Next Meeting

February 21, 2019, 10:00 a.m.-Noon, 301 E. Belt Blvd., Richmond, VA 23224

Meeting was adjourned at 12.01 p.m.