



metroplan orlando

A REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PARTNERSHIP

**ORANGE/ OSCEOLA/ SEMINOLE COUNTIES JOINT TRANSPORTATION
DISADVANTAGED LOCAL COORDINATING BOARD PUBLIC MEETING
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS**

DATE: November 09, 2023

LOCATION: MetroPlan Orlando
250 S. Orange Avenue, Suite 200
Orlando, FL 32801

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

Those that attended the meeting in person were:

Ms. Marilyn Baldwin, representing the Disabled
Mayor Pat Bates, Seminole County
Ms. Neika Berry, Citizen Advocate (Non-system User)
Ms. Charlotte Campbell, At-Large Alternate
Commissioner Olga Castano, Osceola County, Chairperson
Ms. Betsy Delano, representing the Medical Community
Mr. Carlos Colon for Ms. Jamie Ledgerwood, FDOT
Mr. Bob Melia, Citizen Advocate (System User)
Ms. Janee Olds, Career Source CF
Mr. Wayne Olson, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Mr. Wilfredo Raices, State Coordinating Council of Early Childhood
Mr. Calvin Smith, AHCA
Ms. Cheryl Stone, representing the Elderly
Commissioner Mayra Uribe, Orange County
Mr. Adam Zubritsky, OCPS

Members Not in Attendance

Ms. Dianne Arnold, Economically Disadvantaged
Ms. Sharon Jennings, Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Ms. Karla Radka, Senior Resource Alliance
Ms. Alnita Whitt, Veterans
Vacant, For-Profit Operator
Vacant, EMS
Vacant, SunRail CAC

Others in Attendance

Mr. Norman Hickling, ACCESS LYNX
Ms. Selita Stubbs, ACCESS LYNX
Mr. Benjamin Gonzalez, ACCESS LYNX
Ms. Virginia Whittington, MetroPlan Orlando
Ms. Cynthia Lambert, MetroPlan Orlando
Ms. Leilani Vaiaoga, MetroPlan Orlando
Ms. Mary Ann Horne, MetroPlan Orlando

Ms. Lisa Smith, MetroPlan Orlando
Ms. Rachel Frederick, MetroPlan Orlando

A complete list of other attendees is available upon request.

Commissioner Olga Castano, Chairperson, called the public meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone. Mayor Pat Bates led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Rachel Frederick called roll and confirmed that a quorum was present. Ms. Virginia Whittington informed those in attendance of the purpose of the annual public meeting, provided details on how the public meeting was noticed, the options for submitting and/or making comments, an overview of the virtual meeting guidelines, and how to use the virtual raise hand feature to be recognized by the Chairperson. She stated that two sign language interpreters were present to assist a member of the public who is hearing impaired. In addition, she confirmed that the meeting had been properly noticed. She shared that representatives from ACCESS LYNX and Transdev were in attendance – and that a complete copy of the comments would be provided to ACCESS LYNX for follow-up. Lastly, Ms. Whittington thanked attendees for participating and providing their comments and detailed that any person wishing to speak would be allowed two minutes to do so.

Public Comments:

- Ms. Whittington acknowledged that public comments received via email/voicemail had been provided to the members of the LCB but would also be read into the record.

Online Commenters

- Ms. Sheila Young, Orange County said she thoroughly enjoyed using UZERV, however whenever she had been assigned a van, they had been 90% late. She stated that Pinellas County and Jacksonville has Mobility on Demand which costs a little more, but she would be very happy to pay extra if she could call and book same day service. She also offered to serve on a committee if needed to investigate the possibility of offering such a service. Ms. Young also commented on the hold time when calling to book a ride which can be 30 minutes.
- Ms. Joanne Counelis, Seminole County, spoke asking for 24hr bus and train service every 15 minutes, including holidays, weekends, and nighttime.
- Mr. Rich Prehart Jr., commented that dispatch tries to put too many trips into one, making many passengers late. For the last two weeks he has been late going to and from work and drivers are not familiar with employee lots around Disney.
- Ms. Marsha Bukala, Orange County, commented that she had been on hold for 20 minutes when trying to check or book a ride. She asked for an accessible website to make reservations. Also, she added that the journey to and from her medical appointments can take much longer than the appointment itself. She added to the request for On-Demand service and also noted her positive experience with UZERV.
- Ms. Tina Griffin, commented on the extra distance and mileage her journeys take and is told it is the way the dispatch schedules the trip. She also noted that she spoke to Customer Service in July about a specific complaint, and no-one has been in touch with her to follow up.

- Mr. Samuel Rhoulhac, Seminole County, has been a rider for three years and has noticed a lack of sensitivity and compassion for passengers. He said that the focus is on logistics and times, and that it gets lost they are transporting passengers not packages. He also recommended a link between Pawpass and reservations, so that when he books a ride it can automatically be prepaid.
- Mr. Mark Schlesinger posted a question on zoom. Ms. Lisa Smith read the comment into the record. “This team does amazing work, and I cannot thank you enough for all you do. I have a question about inter-county transportation. On a personal note: my daughter is special needs and lives in Lakeland (Polk County) - and had a job offer at SeaWorld - but was unable to accept the position, because there was no coordination between Polk & Orange Counties (common drop-off/pick-up point with coordinated schedules, for example). The same situation appears to be between Brevard & Orange County. Is this anything that is being worked on?”

In person Comments

- Ms. Itzel M. Rivera, Seminole County, commented that she could be on hold for 30 minutes when scheduling a trip and does not think there is effective communication between the driver and the dispatcher. She recently lost a medical appointment as she arrived late, due to another passenger being picked up. She also added that the drivers have difficulty finding addresses and says the GPS needs updating.
- Ms. Tonia Boston Crumbley, Seminole, is a former first responder and has been riding ACCESS LYNX for 18 months. She states she is visually impaired. She has no issues and is thankful for the drivers. However, says the GPS equipment needs help.
- Mr. Erick Lutz, Orange County, enjoys using UZERV and says he has travelled on approximately 750 trips in the last 12 months. He commented that he only uses the vans on Sundays, and they could use some work, that the service is not consistent. He added that previously when on hold you would be made aware of your place in the queue. Currently it announces your wait time to be answered and this is vague. He ended by complimenting individual staff members at customer service.
- Ms. Lynda Sands, Seminole County, has been riding since 2018. She commented that the drivers and dispatchers are not on the same page, that even today the drivers have to wait 20 – 30 minutes to speak to a dispatcher. She added that trips can go past her house to drop someone else rather than drop her first and that new drivers have attitudes. Additionally, she said that the GPS is from the 1930's. Another comment was the length of time on hold, which could be an hour, when calling for an ETA.
- Ms. Migdalia Flacon, Orange County, has been using ACCESS LYNX since 2006 in many locations and Orlando is the best one. She said she is very happy with the service. She shared that trips of a longer distance, pick up other passengers and it can make a journey very long.
- Ms. Verlie Norris, Seminole County stated that the newer vans can only accommodate smaller wheelchairs and she can only use the older vans to fit her wheelchair.
- Ms. Dipti Sampann, Orange County, stated that she has to wait a long time for customer service. Also, she said there is a GPS issue with drivers going the wrong way and dropping her off late.

- Mr. David Bottomley, Orange County commented on wheelchair friendly bus stops, in particular those that are not ADA compliant with regard to Florida Statute 337.408
- Ms. Alma Rhees, Osceola County, shared she had a driver who talked on her earpiece the whole journey and she thinks that drivers should be made aware of safety. Also, she shared her experience riding a neighborhood bus where the driver strapped the wheelchair in but did not strap her in. She chose to sit in a seat with a seatbelt which was safer, with the hard turns the driver was making. She thanked everyone for trying to make the system better.
- Ms. Daisy Rosado, Osceola County, completed a speaker card, but chose not to speak when called.
- Ms. Charlotte Campbell, Orange County, stated she has used ACCESS LYNX for 10 years. She complimented UZERV in particular. However, in recent weeks she completed an ACCESS LYNX form, but only after returning it she realized she had been sent the wrong form. Now when calling to book rides, she has been told she has not been recertified and gets passed between lots of departments to book one trip. This has taken an hour at times to book a ride. Also, she said that every day the charge is different for the same trip. She said she is very happy to have ACCESS LYNX to use.

Ms. Virginia Whittington and Ms. Mary Ann Horne then read into the record comments received via email and phone message, prior to the meeting.

Member comments:

Commissioner Mayra Uribe thanked everyone for attending and acknowledged the serious concerns raised. She highlighted the issues of the GPS systems and also that attention should be given to the app and online booking facility. Commissioner Uribe expressed particular concern with the routing issues and taking passengers on long unnecessary journeys going home via other counties. She stated that medical and work rides should take priority and also spoke of her concern with the communication between dispatch and drivers.

Ms. Marilyn Baldwin volunteered to restart the ad hoc committee to help resolve the concerns. She also noted the comments raised regarding vehicles that were difficult - and sometimes impossible to access - for some disabled passengers. She voiced her strong support to resolve these issues.

Commissioner Castano spoke of her compassion for those affected. She noted that awareness and customer service training would be beneficial and also the need to improve the GPS system. Commissioner Castano thanked everyone that brought forward concerns at the public meeting. She assured the speakers that ACCESS LYNX will receive a copy of the comments received for follow up.

There being no further comments, the public comment period was closed.

The public meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.