



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

DATE: November 18, 2021

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:

Mayor Pat Bates, Seminole County
Commissioner Jim Fisher, Osceola County
Ms. Marilyn Baldwin, Disabled
Ms. Neika Berry, Citizen Advocate (Non-system User)
Ms. Sharon Jennings, Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Mr. Bob Melia, Citizen Advocate (System User)
Ms. Janee Olds, Career Source CF
Mr. Wayne Olson, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Ms. Jo Santiago, FDOT
Mr. Calvin Smith, AHCA
Ms. Alnita Whitt, Veterans
Mr. Adam Zubritsky, OCPS

Members Not in Attendance

Commissioner Mayra Uribe, Orange County
Ms. Dianne Arnold, Economically Disadvantaged
Mr. Chad Ballard, Medical Community
Ms. Karla Radka, Senior Resource Alliance
Mr. Wilfredo Raices, State Coordinating Council of Early Childhood
Vacant, Elderly

Others in Attendance

Mr. Norman Hickling, ACCESS LYNX
Mr. Benjamin Gonzalez, ACCESS LYNX
Ms. Selita Stubbs, ACCESS LYNX
Mr. Lendy Castillo, ACCESS LYNX
Ms. Ms. Virginia Whittington, MetroPlan Orlando
Ms. Leilani Vaiaoga, MetroPlan Orlando
Ms. Cynthia Lambert, MetroPlan Orlando
Ms. Mary Ann Horne, MetroPlan Orlando
Ms. Lisa Smith, MetroPlan Orlando
A complete list of other attendees is available upon request.

Mayor Pat Bates, Vice Chairperson, called the public workshop to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone. Commissioner Jim Fisher led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Lisa Smith called roll and confirmed that a quorum was present. Ms. Virginia Whittington informed those in attendance of the purpose of the annual public workshop meeting, provided details on how the public workshop 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 also confirmed that the meeting had been properly noticed. Lastly, Ms. Whittington thanked attendees for participating and providing their comments.

Mayor Bates explained that the meeting consisted of two parts: the public workshop and the regularly scheduled quarterly TDLCB meeting which would immediately follow. She requested that public workshop participants fill out a speaker card if they wished to make public comments. Mayor Bates announced that each speaker would be allowed two minutes.

Public Comments:

Online Commenters

- Ms. Whittington acknowledged that public comments received via email had been provided to the members.
- Ms. Whittington stated that an online speaker card had received from Mr. Bradley Kreiter, however, he was not present when his name was called to make his public comment and therefore did not address the Board.
- Mr. Tim Gruber commented that his son is an Access LYNX user and despite being well qualified with two renewals was listed as ineligible in 2020 and reclassified as TD. His son uses the service for work and has had rides don't show up or arrive late with no calls or estimate on arrival. Mr. Gruber commented on rigid rules for the service which include the inability to correct bookings. In addition, he noted that the booking window of only one day suggesting it should be seven days to allow more time to plan the trips. (Note: Mr. Gruber's allotted time expired and he was encouraged to submit his comments in writing via email, which he did following the meeting.)
- Ms. Sanjanette Scott commented on the tardiness of her rides. She understands there are low staffing issues, but she is late to and from appointments and does not receive a call to let her know the ride will be late.
- Mr. Scott Porter commented that he has a hard time using the service due to the conditions to use the service. He submitted an appeal, and he received no response to his appeal.
- Ms. Whittington stated that online speaker card had been received from Mr. Tim O'Neal, however, he was not present when his name was called and therefore did not address the Board.
- Mr. Matt Ortiz commented that he understands there is a driver shortage, but his rides are habitually late and there is no communication regarding his ride being delayed.
- Ms. Sheila Young commented that she loves the UZURV service, however they tell riders to look for a certain color car and a majority of riders are visually impaired. She felt that ACCESS LYNX should rethink the pay scale for drivers. In addition, she felt riders should receive a call if their ride was going to be late.

- Ms. Earlene Powell Crosskey commented that she is an ACCESS LYNX rider since 2013. She noted that the drivers were courteous and nice and got her to where she needed to go. She uses UZURV now and is very pleased with the service.

In person Comments

Ms. Alma Reese commented that everyone has had bad experiences, but she was concerned regarding the drivers' lack of urgency to get to her destination.

Mr. Harold Gustafson commented that he has been using the service for a couple of years and he is happy to not have to rely on friends for rides, but a few things need to change. He suggested additional training for drivers in order to ensure they are aware of the safety ties to secure wheelchairs. In addition, the cost for an all-day pass for regular bus service is \$4.50 while ACCESS LYNX is \$4 each leg of the trip, which is a lot if a rider just needs to pick up a \$5 item at the store.

Mr. Eric Lutz commented that he has been an ACCESS LYNX rider for ten years. He has noticed a slowdown recently and a number of safety and efficiency issues. He suggested phones for drivers to communicate with riders and tablets for buses to access Google maps. He noted that there are services like UZURV that should be expanded. Mr. Lutz acknowledged ACCESS LYNX staff that he felt did a good job.

Ms. Joanne Counelis (Seminole County resident) commented on the need for 24-hour bus and train service. She added service is needed on Country Club Road from the SunRail station to Seminole State College as well as Oviedo Boulevard to the Aquatics Center. Bus and train service is needed every half hour and holidays so nobody is stranded.

Ms. Pauline Powell commented that her rides are habitually late. One driver drove in turned around and left reporting her as a no show. She commented that the drivers have no compassion for seniors and need to be better screened. In addition, she knew of another disabled rider that was stranded and had to find an alternative ride home getting causing them to arrive home very late.

Prior to closing the public comment period Mayor Bates asked if anyone else wanted to make public comments.

Ms. Pitha Belando commented that she was thankful for the service, especially with Covid. She had concerns regarding late rides and being left outside late at night waiting for her ride to arrive.

Mayor Bates thanked everyone that brought forward concerns at the public workshop. She assured the speakers that ACCESS LYNX will receive a copy of the comments received.

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

Ms. Whittington shared that she had recently attended a CTD Planners workshop where the Commission wanted to see Public Workshops include opportunities for educating the public on the Transportation Disadvantaged program and/or other options riders may not be aware of. LYNX was asked to provide an overview of their How to Ride guide, and their new Eligibility Application that had been approved by the LCB earlier in the year.

How to Ride Presentation

Mr. Lendy Castillo, LYNX, presented information on “How to Ride” detailing options open for riding the LYNX, ACCESS LYNX and NeighborLink transportation services. He reviewed the Travel Training and ACCESS Plus programs. Mr. Castillo noted that participants who complete the Travel Training program would receive a free 30-day bus pass.

Presentation on Revised Eligibility Application

Mr. Norm Hickling gave a presentation on the ACCESS LYNX updated eligibility application. Mr. Hickling told attendees that previously there had been one eligibility requirement. The revised application, he noted, incorporated state level items. There still was a 21-day review period for the application and medical information needed to be signed off on by a licensed physician. Mr. Hickling reported that UZURV is a private contractor, and their vehicles had no amenities to accommodate wheelchairs.

Member Comments: There were no member comments.

Mayor Bates thanked those in attendance and invited them to stay for the TDLCB meeting.

The public workshop adjourned at 10:59 a.m.