

**REGION OF PEEL  
TRANSHelp ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)**

**MINUTES**

The TransHelp Advisory Committee met on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in the Training Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, TransHelp Headquarters, at 2 Copper Road, Brampton.

**Members Present:** Steven Viera, Jeremy Harvey, Joanne Strang, Anu Missar, Mark Castro, Hassan Karkour, Maria Constantin-Evenson, Mary Ann Ninan

**Members Absent:** Azhar Karim

**Other Attendees:** Ana Hoffman, David Margiotta, Jennifer Diaz, Ilijana Culjak-Nicolau, Rachelle Brown

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*Chaired by Steven Viera.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Steven Viera, Chair of the TransHelp Advisory Committee (TAC) called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. No conflicts of interest.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- Added to Item #8 - Other Business – GTA-AAC – *Jeremy to send out (item not reviewed at meeting)*

*Moved by: Mary Ann Ninan – Second: Maria Constantin-Evenson*

**3. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes of the TransHelp Advisory Committee meeting held January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019, were approved – Meeting Chaired by Steven Viera.

*Accepted by: Mary Ann Ninan – Second: Jeremy Harvey*

**4. COMMUNICATIONS**

**Fare Increase – May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019.**

- Reiteration of recent memo sent to passengers regarding the rate increase. Rates will be increasing from \$3.50 to \$3.75 (Cash Fare) and from \$118 to \$125 (MPASS) effective May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019.
- TransHelp will automatically change the amount to be authorized to the \$125 per month for MPASS passengers on pre-authorized payments.
- Last rate increase was three years ago. Fares compliant with AODA.
- There will be a reminder this week on trip planner.

### **Emails to TAC Committee**

- TransHelp reviews and sends emails sent to the TAC inbox to the Chair and Co-Chair, however good to review at meetings so the committee is aware of issues being reported by other passengers.
  - Email #1: Email regarding a vehicle accommodation request. Client Services reached out and provided options for next steps.
  - Email #2: Concern from a Caledon passenger regarding different level of service provided to Brampton and Mississauga compared to passengers living in Caledon who have booking restrictions as they need to book through CCS. Mark responded that it would be raised at TAC and provided information on a current Caledon review taking place.
  - The Town of Caledon is doing its own transportation feasibility study and things could change, however it was agreed in TAC that any changes to service delivery in Caledon would be at Council's direction pending any reviews and recommendations.
  - Mark will respond to the passenger advising her of this and encourage her to speak with the Town.
  - Email #3: Concern raised by son of passenger whose TransHelp service was suspended due to arrears. Management reviewing arrears and suspension policy, currently nothing is formalized.

## **5. QUALITY AND ATMP**

### **PAP Transition**

- Transition is going well, staff have had two meetings in Caledon and a number at Mississauga Community Living.
  - There are only 56 PAP clients remaining to move over to TransHelp (pending application reviews/ decisions), out of the 128 PAP clients
  - Still on track for the May 30<sup>th</sup> deadline.

### **On-Line Booking Update**

- Plan to have an approved and signed off plan by the end of this year
- Posting for a position to work on the creation of the plan
- Aiming to have the services start in mid to late 2020

### **Caledon Transit Study**

- The Town of Caledon is compiling input from residents on the future of transit in Caledon. During this process, TransHelp will continue to provide services through CCS.

- There is an RFP drafted to see how TransHelp will continue to operate in Caledon, however we have put any changes on hold pending the Caledon Transit Study completion.

## **6. OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE**

### **Booking Changes – 3-month Update & Call Centre Waiting Times**

- The Call Centre had several issues with call wait times due to training issues and shortage of staff to handle the new booking window changes. In the last three months, we did see a difference in the call volumes during the peak times (4 to 6 pm) and the call centre is trying to rectify the staffing issues.
- TransHelp has agreed that since TTC doesn't confirm rides until 9 pm, that, if for the purposes of transferring (and the passenger tells us it is for transfer for TTC only) that if they call post 9 pm, we will honor that confirmed time booking.
- All complaints related to booking changes went to Ana to review and there were many in the month of January and February. However, no complaints recorded regarding the booking window between March and by the time of the meeting.
- Staff are still in the process of implementing on-line booking to eliminate some of the issues with the call centre.
- On-time performance has gone up because of changes made, making the service more efficient and therefore getting more passengers on vehicles.
- Last meeting it was noted that there was insufficient time to enter the client ID when passengers contact the call centre. Extra time was added to accommodate this request; however, the committee would like management to go back and re-evaluate that option since the Call Centre still asks passengers for their number, this ultimately increases the call time. Management will address with the Call Centre.

### **Round Table to provide feedback on the booking changes**

- Jeremy stated that we do a survey on the booking changes. One suggestion was to add to the option at the end of the call centre prompt. Agreed would take back to the call centre, however this was not a TransHelp measure, rather that it is the Call Centre so not sure if that is an option that would be available to TransHelp. Mark mentioned that TransHelp is due for a "Client Experience Survey" so he would take that back to the Management staff.
- Joanne felt the booking times were going backwards from previous years and thought 6 pm is a difficult time to meet. Subscription rides are not always a viable option.
- Anu didn't really have concerns with the changes, seems to work for her
- Mary Ann felt that 6 pm was also a difficult time to meet especially with the Call Centre wait times. She also mentioned that the IVR is not working and is getting blank responses. Also, that the call volumes seem to be long from 11 am. Mark did explain that 10 am to 12 pm was a peak period.
- Maria stated the 6 pm cut off again is too tight and could be alleviated with on-line booking. Stated that the flexible rides do work as she has used them however the Call Centre continues to refer to them as standby. Ana would take that up with the Call Centre as they should not be referring to those rides

as standby. Maria also stated that the agent who spoke to her reminded her several times that the time wasn't guaranteed, which was frustrating.

- Hassan stated that 8 to 8:30 pm cut off would be a better option. Survey should be done both in the winter and summer. On Saturday there were long wait times and the automated message for the call centre stated to call before 4 pm which is confusing to passengers. Note the message is about trying to avoid peak times, however staff will go back to review the messaging to make sure it is not misinforming passengers on the call times. Jeremy suggested having that information on the internet with call times so that people can see the peak times. Joanne suggested to have more information on the website for any content such as this, the more we can direct them to the website, the easier it is for them to address passengers.
- Steven stated that again the number of calls between 4 and 6 still provides long wait times. Also dropped calls are an issue with the Call Centre. On-line booking could resolve many issues.

## **7. CLIENT SERVICES**

- Deferred. However, statistics given to the group to review.

## **8. OTHER BUSINESS**

- Deferred. Jeremy to send out his information on the GTAT.

## **9. NEXT MEETING**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 10:00am; Training Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, TransHelp office, 2 Copper Rd, Brampton.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 12:05pm.