



# American Public Transportation Association

## 2018 APTA Rail Conference

Hyatt Regency Denver  
650 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Denver, CO 80202

### Streetcar Subcommittee

Sunday June 10, 2018  
11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Timothy R. Borchers	Chair (Not Attending)
Eric Sitiko	Vice Chair (Presiding)
James D. Schantz	Secretary

#### Minutes

##### 1. Welcome & Introductions

Eric Sitiko

Vice Chair Eric Sitiko, who was presiding because Chair Tim Borchers was traveling internationally, called the meeting to order at 11:32 am. Once again Herzog Transit Services sponsored lunch and Eric extended the subcommittee's thanks for their generosity. The approximately 130 attendees constituted the largest groups in the subcommittee's 18 year existence.

##### 2. Meeting minutes from New Orleans, LA

Jim Schantz

Secretary Jim Schantz briefly summarized key points in the lengthy minutes covering the day-long meeting in New Orleans on April 18. The minutes had been circulated in advance of the meeting. John Smatlak prepared some edits to the minutes and the document with revisions was accepted by the group and will be posted on the APTA and subcommittee web sites.

##### 3. Updates

- **Light Rail Technical Forum**

Tom Furmaniak

Tom Furmaniak reviewed activities of the forum, which had met earlier in the day. Activities included several very informative presentations, and a list of upcoming light rail and streetcar openings. Presentations included the new Denver Southeast extension, Charlotte's Blue Line extension, and Ottawa's new Confederation Line opening later this year. The number of openings in the next few years is quite high, indicating the large number of regions who consider this technology as an effective tool to meet their transportation needs. A preliminary concept design of a 7-section 100% low floor car for Boston's Green Line was presented. The forum is also in the midst of updating the streetcar vs. light rail brochure issued four years ago.

- **Light Rail & Streetcar Conference, April 7-9, 2019, Jersey City, NJ**

Tom Furmaniak

Tom also reviewed preparations for the conference next April. Calls for presentations have been met by many submissions, leaving the planning committee with the difficult job of restructuring the presentations to fit all into the number of slots available.

- **Community Streetcar Coalition** Jeff Boothe  
 Coalition Executive Director Jeff Boothe reviewed recent coalition activities including the annual Streetcar Summit that was held in New Orleans just ahead of the subcommittee's meeting there. Activities included touring both streetcar maintenance facilities. The coalition will be sending out an online survey to its members to define the topics to be covered at the next Summit which will be in February, 2019 in Tucson.
- **Web Site Update** Jim Schantz  
 The Subcommittee's site at [www.heritagetrolley.org](http://www.heritagetrolley.org) and [www.streetcarcommitte.org](http://www.streetcarcommitte.org) continues to be updated periodically with news and other resources that could be of use to groups planning or implementing modern or heritage streetcar systems. The latest draft of the off-wire status paper and the level boarding white paper are among postings in the Technical section.
- **Work Program Update** John Smatlak  
 John Smatlak reviewed the safety oriented topics covered at the New Orleans meeting. The theme was state-of-the-art vehicle safety technology for modern streetcars from the perspectives of the practitioner, suppliers, and regulatory authorities. There is a baseline of safety technology and above that innovation. New areas of study, implementation, and regulation include impact on pedestrians in accidents and evolving driver assistance technologies. A next step would be to perform a gap analysis to understand the hard and soft differences between U.S. and European safety approaches, which could also be broadened to include customer amenities.

#### 4. Presentations

- **El Paso Progress and Updates** Carl Jackson  
 Unfortunately, Carl Jackson was unable to attend, so the El Paso update was deferred to a subsequent meeting, with the expectation that the heritage trolley there will begin operation later in 2018.
- **Perspectives and Updates from FTA** Angela Dluger  
 Angela Dluger presented an update on the FTA's Safety Office in Washington. Their safety functions are split into two directorates: Office of System Safety which sets policy, does rule making, handles training, and does outreach. This office issues special and general directives. The second directorate is the Office of Safety Review handles compliance, which includes working with State Safety Oversight offices. A third area is Program Oversight, which handles various reviews of project activities. The Certification Training Program strives to build a common understanding of safety requirements among staff overseeing safety on FTA funded projects.
- **President's Visit** Paul Skoutelas  
 An unscheduled surprise was a visit from APTA's new President Paul Skoutelas, who briefly addressed the subcommittee. As he was visiting a streetcar meeting for the first time since assuming his new position, he expressed amazement at the high number of attendees and took it a sign of the importance and commitment that member organizations have to streetcar and light rail solutions. He praised the group for the breadth of its embrace of the streetcar field including technical, planning, and funding topics. He urged the group to carry on its advocacy for

continued and increased funding for streetcar projects.

- **Memphis Trolley's Road to Recovery**

Gary Rosenfeld

Gary Rosenfeld had last presented one year ago Memphis' plans to bring its heritage streetcar system back into operation after a pair of serious fires. He reported now that those plans had been realized and operation of the Main Street line resumed on April 30. As of now there are only three cars running, as their overhaul contractor, Gomaco of Ida Grove, IA, has been short of skilled workers, so delivery dates of additional cars have been missed. The reopening was well received by the city as 50,000 passengers were carried in May, a traditionally heavy month for Memphis due to numerous music festivals. The recovery of the system had been started with an APTA peer review in 2014. The largest activity in the recovery was retraining staff as they worked to tackle all of the long term issues the peer review identified. There had to be a top down commitment to training, safety, and quality. He cautioned others that in addressing major problems the agency has to tell its story, not social media or news. Published claims need to be answered promptly. Business owners and political leaders welcomed the reopening and there are already signs of new economic development along the route. Lessons learned from the project include the importance of setting a deadline for everyone to focus on; carefully examining the interrelationship of the many required documents; differentiating between "nice-to-have" and "must-have" components so a project can live within budget; and keeping passengers in mind. MATA's plans call for reopening the Riverfront line in 2019 and the Madison line in 2020, with a total fleet of 16 cars.

- **Kansas City: Expansion and Updates**

Ralph Davis

The modern streetcar has been operating for two years and carried its 4 millionth passenger just before the second anniversary. As expected, there has been considerable economic development along the route. The system has three cars all of which are needed for service making maintenance problems a significant interruption. Two more cars are on order (and will be built by CAF in Spain to speed delivery). A citizen satisfaction survey found 98% have a favorable opinion of the system. Based on this success, the city is moving quickly to plan two extensions, a one-mile \$35 million link to the riverfront north of the current line and a 3.7 mile line to the university south of downtown. The southern extension, estimated to cost \$250 million, will replace a 13-year old BRT-light system which is nearing the end of its life cycle. The city is planning another special taxing district to pay part of the capital cost of the line, supplemented by Federal grants. Meetings with citizens and current streetcar operators are being used to examine different configurations for the line (center vs. curb running) and its stations. The hope is to open the line for service in 2023. The city is pursuing a TIGER grant for the northern extension and Small Starts for the southern.

- **Tempe**

Luis Mota

Preparations for the 3.6 mile Tempe, AZ streetcar are moving ahead. The line will connect with the Phoenix light rail at two points and 25% of the route will be offwire, with batteries in the cars propelling them through these sections. The route will serve the Arizona State University campus and downtown Tempe. The line's streetcars will be serviced at the Phoenix light rail shops. The design team has had to carefully review every component to hold costs down. Design is complete at the 100% level and approval to launch construction should come soon. Future extensions are already being evaluated.

**5. Next meeting:**

The next meeting will be held in conjunction with the APTA Annual Conference September 23-26, 2018 in Nashville.

**6. Adjournment.**

Eric Sitiko adjourned the meeting at 1:20 pm.

*Lunch sponsored by*

