



# Streetcar Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Hilton Hotel  
720 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL

**Sunday September 29, 2013**  
**11:30 AM – 1:00 PM**

<i>Tom Hickey</i>	<i>Chair</i>
<i>Paul Grether</i>	<i>Vice Chair</i>
<i>James Schantz</i>	<i>Secretary</i>

## MINUTES OF MEETING

- 1. Welcome & Introductions** Tom Hickey

Chairman Hickey called the meeting to order at 11:35 am, welcomed everyone and thanked Brookville Equipment Corporation for sponsoring lunch. Attendees introduced themselves. The turnout was very large, with approximately 95 people in the room as the meeting began.
- 2. Previous meeting minutes from Philadelphia, PA June 2, 2013**

Minutes were mailed in advance and some were distributed to those requesting a copy. No comments on the minutes and they were read as approved.
- 3. APTA Updates**
  - 13<sup>th</sup> National LRT & Streetcar Conference  
This conference is being planned for November 2015. Still very much in the initial planning stage and besides the date all other details are being worked out.
  - New officers of the subcommittee are Tom Hickey and Paul Grether. Next year they will be stepping down as chair and vice chair. Paul Grether will become the new chair
- 4. Work Program Activities**
  - Level Boarding Technical Memo John Smatlak

A technical memo explaining the issues surrounding level boarding and accessible facilities for modern streetcars has been circulated for comment. Working jointly with the Community Streetcar Coalition on this. Last year a technical memo describing the issues surrounding level boarding for streetcars and is available on the web. Further development of this topic will be the subject of a dedicated work program. This will describe the decisions planners need to make early in a project's planning stage and will cover options and considerations that apply to different technical approaches.
  - Wheel Re-Profiling for Streetcars John Smatlak

Finding a practical and affordable solution to maintaining wheel profiles continues to be a problem for smaller streetcar operators, and will be more critical as 100% low floor cars are introduced (as wheels can not be easily removed from those cars). The subcommittee wants to facilitate discussions in this area and solicits the involvement of interested parties.

- Application of NFPA 130 to Low Floor Vehicles John Smatlak  
 John Smatlak reported on the development of a draft problem statement “Application of NFPA-130 to Low-Floor Vehicles”. This fire protection statement was developed before low floor cars, which have very little equipment below the floor, were developed so the standard may need to be reviewed. The problem statement was drafted by an ad hoc working group comprised of individuals from several APTA committees working directly with Martin Schroeder. The draft has been distributed to the carbuilder community for input. Once this input is received the document will be revised, a working group will be formalized, and discussions will be held directly with the appropriate NFPA committee.
- Streetcar White Paper Tom Furmaniak  
 Plans continue to write a paper designed as an introduction for people new to the streetcar field. It will help explain the differences and similarities between streetcars and light rail. Time constraints have prevented progress on this project to date, but the authors will be prioritizing the project this year.
- UITP Meeting in Salt Lake City John Smatlak  
 John Smatlak and Charles Joseph attended UITP light rail committee. Only operators are committee members (no consultants). They are dealing with many of the same issues, such as funding and off wire technology. The subcommittee will continue to look for opportunities to exchange ideas and/or work together with its UITP counterpart.
- Mission Statement Tom Hickey  
 APTA has requested that the subcommittee compose a mission statement to be shown to prospective members and be posted on the web sites. The current draft is:

“The APTA Streetcar subcommittee promotes streetcar lines in urban centers, the exchange of information among individuals and organizations promoting, planning, funding, designing, and building such lines. This is done by providing forums for the dissemination of relevant studies and experience by assisting in the development of appropriate safety and technical standards and by encouraging sensible and reasonable regulatory measures.”

Comments were invited and members suggested adding “operating” and “maintaining” to the list of roles and emphasizing “partnership” with regulators in setting regulatory measures. The initial draft will be posted on the web sites for comments.

## 7. Project Updates

### Atlanta

Tim Borchers

City of Atlanta is in partnership with MARTA and the Atlanta Downtown development group. MARTA will engage a contract operator to run the system. Route is 2.7 miles downtown. Siemens S70 streetcars to be used and are already built. Maintenance facility is 50-60% complete. Track about 55% complete. OCS installation is about to start. Project is on-time and within budget. Utility relocation was a huge issue.

### Kansas City

City will build and own system. Local businesses participated in establishing local funding and will play a major role in hiring an operator. The starter line is two miles from the River Market to Union Station. They are moving quickly to build project in response to strong local political support. Vehicle announcement will be made soon (since revealed to be a piggy-back of four cars on the Cincinnati CAF order). Utility relocation will start this fall, followed by track construction in spring 2014. Opening planned for 2015. The project is funded by a \$20

million TIGER Grant, supplementing \$17 million of other funding. The project formed a Transportation Development District which will implement special assessment and sales tax in the district served by the line. Total to be raised from this is \$63 million. Kansas City is using low profile block rail as the line crosses three bridges, which offer limited depth for the track slab. Enthusiasm in the city is high, and 9 proposed extensions are under study. Economic development is already occurring along the route.

### **Cincinnati**

Paul Grether

Project is now under construction after many twists and turns. They have signed a contract in early 2013 with CAF for five Urbos 3 streetcars. It will be the first 100% low floor vehicle in the US, and the first in the US with no full length axles. City of Cincinnati awarded \$17.4 million in local funds and the Federal government awarded an additional \$5 million in TIGER 3 funds which helped cover the gap between what engineers had estimated for construction cost and the final bids. Utility relocation is underway as is demolition on the site of the maintenance facility. March 2015 is deadline for construction of the first track segment and for delivery of the cars to begin. The route is 3.6 track miles.

### **San Antonio**

Board of directors just selected a Locally Preferred Alternative for the 12-track-mile route after an 18 month long process involving over 100 meetings.

### **New Orleans**

Paul Grether for Justine Augustine

The city now has five streetcar lines after completion of the TIGER-funded Loyola/Union Passenger Terminal route. Utility relocation part of project was major, given that many unmapped utility lines were found. Expansion plans exist for a number of other routes.

### **Boston**

Andrew Brennan

Extension currently under construction is really Light Rail running on dedicated rail right of way through dense neighborhoods from Lechmere Station. The green line is busiest light rail system in the country carrying 235,000 passengers daily. The extension consists of a 3.2 mile extension into Medford with a one-mile branch serving Union Square, Somerville. Preliminary construction is underway. Total cost is \$1.4 billion to be funded via the FTA New Starts program. Project is dealing with 40 different utilities that may have lines running through the right of way. Bids are currently in from firms for supplying 24 light rail cars. Major construction work is scheduled to start in 2015. First segment will open in 2017 with the final route opening in 2019.

## **8. Next Meeting**

- Cincinnati, Ohio - Dec 2013 – Jan 2014 Timeframe  
Possible Joint FTA/APTA Meeting

Paul Grether

Vice Chair Grether described the plans for a midyear meeting in Cincinnati to be held in the December-January period. It is hoped to announce firm dates by October and to invite participation by the Community Streetcar Coalition. Paul Grether discussed the possibilities of incorporating an FTA Streetcar Summit (similar to the workshop held in Portland) into this meeting. Paul also described his plans to incorporate a visit to Dayton (a trackless trolley operator) into the Cincinnati meeting.

- Montreal, Canada June 2014 at the APTA Rail Conference

## **9. New Business**

Chairman Hickey reported that the Modern Streetcar Vehicle Guidelines prepared by the committee are attracting wide interest.

Jeff Boothe reported that FTA spent a great deal of time addressing concerns over strict implementation of Buy America for utility relocation. Waivers will not be granted easily as was the case in the past, but the FTA urges projects facing difficult Buy America issues to involve them in early discussions to explore alternatives.

## **10. Adjourn**

Chairman Hickey declared the meeting adjourned at 12:55 pm

*prepared by Charles Joseph and Jim Schantz*