

HHT Committee

From: Stacy S. Crivello
Sent: Thursday, March 05, 2015 11:14 AM
To: HHT Committee
Subject: FW: Regards emails with Rev. Andrew Valentine and Harry Johnson, HHT-5

From: Vivian Lindsey [mailto:aglhrt2@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2015 5:45 PM
To: Stacy S. Crivello
Cc: Vivian Kuualoha Lindsey; Rev. Andrew Valentine
Subject: Regards emails with Rev. Andrew Valentine and Harry Johnson

From: "Harry Johnson" <harry.johnson@meoinc.org>
Date: Tue, Feb 17, 2015 at 17:45
Subject: Feb 7 Paratransit trips to Kula

Andrew,

I've been asked to review the trips for passengers attending a meeting at 206 Holopuni Road in Kula and respond to your concerns.

There are frequently late pick ups and extended rides. Saturday February 7, 2 runs I am involved with was the cause of gross extended rides. We had a common destination in Kula, but the other riders originated in Wailuku and Kahului. Both riders were brought to Kihei to drop off someone at Kam 1 park and then taken to Kula. This added at least 20 miles of trip length to get to Kula. This kind of extra riding puts great stress on a disabled persons body and mind. We go along because the only option is to stay home

I reviewed the trips for the following persons who attended this meeting based upon the common address indicated above and the total time that they remained on the bus.

Damien Oliveria 1 hour and 13 minutes
Andrew Valentine 41 minutes
Elsie Santos 37minutes
Alohilani Hue Sing 1 hour and 13 minutes

All riders to this address requested for a pick up time, not a drop off time. If a passenger used the Maui Bus fixed route service from Kahului, they would need to get to Kaahaumanu Shopping center first, then transfer to the Upcounty route, and then transfer to the Kula route. This would take close to 2 hours to possibly get to the final destination of 206 Holopuni Road. (Either Lower Kula/Pulehunui or Kula Hardware bus stops). But final address is still on the opposite side of the highway.

I understand your frustration on the matter and hope that we can remedy the amount of time clients remain on the buses based upon the shared ridership. We remain within the bounds of the paratransit requirements as stated in a previous email.

Mahalo,

Harry

Re: Feb 12, 2015 Paratransit trip

- Reply ▼

-

-

-

-

-

- Delete

- More ▼

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

-

- ThuRev. Andrew Valentine, Jr

Show details



Attachments, pictures and links in this message have been blocked for your safety. Show content

Thank you Harry for the reply. The culprit here is MDOT. We gave requested from the onset a

rider panel to review plans and programs and assist the county in educating riders. This is something that ADA encourages; to involve the disabled community in planning and development of programs etc. Sad to say Maui County does not communicate to us until a service/program is in place. This is not how it is stated in the ADA nor with the offerings from Easter Seals, Project Action. Project Action offers training and materials to help develop "grass roots" involvement. As stated in the ADA introduction, you have to go to greater lengths to communicate with the disabled community.

. The computer assist program is a good tool to enhance the scheduling of rides etc. But to forget that you are transporting people who have serious medical issues and are trying to remain viable in their community is a travesty. The demand response paratransit service is a taxi service in its offering, the variable is that it is a ride sharing operation. From day one it has been this way. But for the MDOT to try to mold us more like the "fixed Route service" is contrary to the intent and scope of a "complementary paratransit service". The rules that MDOT has implemented are more restrictive to riders and places a hardship on them to plan and enjoy their independent life style. In short 'people are apprehensive' of if they will make their key appointments.

It is a good thing you were with Robert's and MEO. However with Robert's we knew when the bus coming in a timely manner and felt a more courteous atmosphere. With MEO we feel like numbers/cargo. The advisory council is a positive step in the right direction. People must have an outlet to voice their frustration and confusion when things happen. The Advisory Council is the only place they feel safe from retribution or intimidation. But even there an air of, 'take it or leave it', pops up on occasion.

I fully believe MEO is trying to provide a quality, personable service; but the MDOT guidelines make that difficult. Their interpretation of ADA standards are different than I've encountered in other communities when I travel every year.

Thank you Harry for making the honest effort to give us good service.

Respectfully,
Rev. Andrew Valentine, Jr., Chair
Paratransit Advisory Council

, Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

From,: "Harry Johnson" <harry.johnson@meoinc.org>

Date: Wed, Feb 18, 2015 at 15:39

Subject: Re: Feb 12, 2015 Paratransit trip

Andrew,

From the perspective of a manager who's been at both Robert's Hawaii and MEO when the paratransit was in each company, I know for a surety that there were very little compliance options when it was operated by Robert's Hawaii. They relayed all their services through a manual system of blocked zones and times. A manual matrix if you will.

There was no such thing as enforcing ADA rules and policies or even educating riders of such rules. Trips were done as much as they could have been done with the maximum amount of vehicles, ADA or not, on the road. Efficiency was not a part of the playing field. It was a 'taxi' service and that's one of the reasons why the County paid the amount they paid for their service.

The full blown education of the service came into play when the contract changed hands and more particularly on November 11, 2013, the system came into existence. The paratransit committee was spurned because of the lack of education on the paratransit system as a whole. The committee was created to educate all users and non-users alike to the rules of engagement for the paratransit service. I have attended every session and from what I understand, the members of that committee were assigned to understand and come up with solutions to stabilize the paratransit service. From my recollection, a few in the committee have done their homework on the matter and have brought sufficient pieces of education for the committee and users of the service. But to be honest, the majority of the meeting is just listening to complaints about the service. I think that if we understand what the County has implemented to be the rules of engagement for the paratransit service, this would eliminate the concerns brought up in the meeting and focus on how the rules of paratransit were applied or not applied into their concerns.

I have a meeting with a paratransit client in two weeks and we will go over the rules of the paratransit service as administered in the contract so that I can educate and help everyone understand what those policies are and how it is applied to the Ecolane software. This is not only an educational experience for clients, but staff here at MEO as well. All of this is based upon how the County determines what's valid for the paratransit service or not. We are just the provider and when Ecolane was created for Maui County, it was created by the rules of engagement that were accepted and applied by the County. But then again, it's up to the client to adhere to this piece of entropy in their own individual lives. Some will. Some won't.

The paratransit committee, the Commission on Persons with Disabilities, and the Maui Disability Alliance group should just form one group because the issues are the same at every meeting. But the education of the service is nonetheless, compliant to the rules set by the County. It's an education issue and while I'm not placing blame on anyone, there has to be at some point an agreement to settle common grounds because this can go on and on.

Harry

On Wed, Feb 18, 2015 at 1:30 PM, Rev. Andrew Valentine, Jr <revhandlin@yahoo.com> wrote:

you have indicated variables that the basic rider has no knowledge of. It seems that the problem lies with MDOT and their interpretation of the ADA Paratransit guidelines. You are not in an enviable situation..

My question would be 'has the general ridership been instructed on how to best use the

service?' Every call is an adventure in the making.

Mahalo for now