



ALEXANDRIA TRANSIT COMPANY (DASH)

ADVISORY COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

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NOTICE: These are the operating guidelines for the DASH Advisory Committee. These guidelines can only be changed with approval of the DASH General Manager. Proposed edits are to be submitted to the General Manager for review, thereafter the General Manager shall consider and discuss with the Committee prior to rendering a determination on the approved changes.

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Section 2: PURPOSE

The DASH Advisory Committee (DAC) exists to provide a communication link between DASH, its customers, and the Alexandria community for the purposes of providing input to DASH leadership on a wide variety of service-related issues, improving customer outreach, and promoting an overall excellent customer experience for DASH riders. The DAC is an advisory body and does not set or establish DASH policy, alter service standards, influence contracts, modify service or routes, or affect personnel matters. As the DAC is not a governing body and does not set policy, it is, therefore, not subject to the rules of public meetings or the requirements of FOIA except where such laws apply generally to DASH business.

The Committee serves the following primary roles:

- A. Assists DASH staff in the execution of the organization's mission and programs/services.
- B. Participates in discussions about service quality, service-related issues, and potential solutions with DASH staff.
- C. Provides advisory input to DASH staff and leadership on key decisions.
- D. Identifies customer needs and assesses whether or not those needs are being met by current DASH services and policies.
- E. Serves as DASH Ambassadors in the community, helping to communicate information about DASH to existing, new, and prospective riders.
- F. Assists DASH staff with the planning, execution, and evaluation of public outreach programs and activities in support of DASH decision-making processes.
- G. Communicates with DASH Staff as needed in helping to inform decision-makers regarding service quality, capacity, and reliability; and where needed advocates for change to positively affect the experience of DASH riders.
- H. Occasionally takes formal positions on key issues with the DASH customer as top priority regarding DASH service, funding, and operations to help decision makers consider the impacts of their actions.

Section 3: MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Membership

- A. The DASH General Manager appoints members to the Committee considering the recommendations of the Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson in accordance with the requirements set forth in these Guidelines.
- B. Membership rosters and contact information for the Committee are posted on the DASH website and updated as needed when members resign or are otherwise removed from an Advisory Committee role.

- C. DASH shall provide a designated Staff Committee Liaison who serves the roles of coordinating the meeting agendas, assisting in the facilitation of meetings, and working with the members to advance the success of the committee.

3.2 Application for Membership

- A. Advisory Committee positions will be posted publicly by DASH, including advertisements on DASH buses, and on the DASH website (www.dashbus.com). Positions may be actively recruited through community organizations and City Commissions including, but not limited to, the Commission on Aging, and the Commission on Persons with Disabilities.
- B. A person interested in membership in any DASH Advisory Committee shall complete a brief membership application and include a letter of interest/intent or resume demonstrating their relevant qualifications and purpose for serving on the Committee. Assistance in completing such an application shall be provided upon request.
- C. Committee members may also recommend to the General Manager additional persons to be considered for membership.
- D. A list of all open seats on the Advisory Committee and the expiration of the terms of the current members shall be maintained by DASH staff and shall be posted on the DASH website at www.dashbus.com.

3.3 Composition of the Committee

- A. The Committee shall be composed of a total of not less than nine (9) and not more than seventeen (17) members.
- B. It shall be the effort of DASH and any current committee members to ensure that wherever possible, membership in the Committee is diverse and representative of all riders and community members.
- C. Every two years - a new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be elected by a plurality of the committee members seated at that time. Such person shall serve this role until the expiration of their current term on the committee, regardless of their reappointment status.

3.4 Term / Term Limits

- A. The term of an individual serving on a committee shall be as follows:
 - i A term is two (2) calendar years from the anniversary date of appointment to the Committee. (For example, if appointed July 15, the term shall expire on July 15 after two calendar years)
 - ii Following the expiration of a term, members seeking to remain on the committee shall state their interest of continuing to serve to the Chair and the General Manger.
 - iii Members may serve not more than three (3) consecutive terms for a combined total of six (6) years.

- iv A Chairperson or Vice Chairperson may not hold their positions for more than two consecutive terms or four (4) years.
- v An individual who served previously and is term-limited out must wait at least one (1) calendar year before reapplying to serve.

3.5 Attendance Requirements / Absences

- A. Members of the Committee must attend at least 50% of regularly scheduled meetings.
- B. Notification of a pending absence should be given to the designated DASH staff committee liaison prior to the meeting.
- C. In the event a member who misses more than 50% of regularly scheduled meetings, the Chair may recommend to the General Manager for such member for removal.
- D. Any member once removed due to unexcused absences will not be eligible for reappointment for a minimum of two (2) years.

3.6 Removal

- A. Any member of the Committee who fails to adhere to these guidelines or demonstrates a blatant disregard for the duties in serving upon the Committee shall be considered for removal.
- B. In such cases where removal is considered, the Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson shall meet with the General Manager to discuss the issues and recommend action regarding that person's seat.
- C. The General Manager shall make the final determination as to the recommendation of the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson following consideration of the facts and the recommendation of the rest of the Committee Members if deemed necessary.

Section 4: MEETINGS

4.1 Regular Meetings

- A. Regular meetings shall be held on a date, time and location to be determined by the Staff Committee Liaison after conferring with the committee regarding availability and access to meeting space. The committee shall meet, at a minimum, four (4) times a year but may meet more often if deemed necessary. Meetings will typically be held at the DASH Offices (3000 Business Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22314), but alternate locations may be considered at the discretion of Committee members in order to promote attendance, facilitate community interaction or to observe a service-related issue in person.
- B. The committee may elect to meet more frequently as necessary or desired with the concurrence of the Staff Committee Liaison.

- C. Individuals requiring assistance to reach the DASH Offices or other Committee meeting locations may request for special transportation to be provided and pre-arranged by DASH free of charge. Such transportation shall be limited to and from the individuals primary place of residence or employment. Such transportation may be provided in groups to or from the nearest accessible Metrorail Station, or DASH bus stop, as determined by DASH Management.

4.2 Committee Actions

- A. The Committee will maintain the authority to take positions on key organizational decisions related to service and customer experience. To this end, the Committee may draft and endorse advisory letters on key issues that will be provided to the General Manager and/or Senior Management Team for consideration.
- B. In order to meet quorum requirements for actions to be taken, at least half of the Committee members must be in attendance. For example, if the Committee is comprised of 12 members, at least six (6) members must be present for the Committee to take any action under consideration.
- C. Advisory letters may be drafted by Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, or a designated Committee member. DASH staff can assist with letter preparation as needed.
- D. Advisory letters to DASH leadership, letters representing the committee's position on public issues, or letters to the DASH Board, City Council, or City Manager, which take a position on a particular issue shall follow an approval procedure. Such procedure shall follow "Robert's Rules of Order" as outlined in **Section 4.6.**
 - i In the event a DAC recommendation to DASH management, comment to the Council, or other city bodies on an issue takes the form of a written document, there may be cases where multiple revisions are necessary. This process may be completed utilizing mail/e-mail voting with the final document requiring the concurrence of the majority of those responding to the Chair. The Chair shall take into consideration any significant changes recommended by a DAC member and may consider calling a special meeting to discuss if necessary. The chair shall also inform the DASH General Manager or external body of any significant (more than one) dissent by a DAC member.
- E. If the Committee votes to act on an issue, appropriate DASH staff will provide updates and explanations at future Committee meetings, as needed, to follow up on the issue until it is fully resolved.

4.3 Special Meetings

- A. A special meeting of the Advisory Committee may be called by the Chairperson or a simple majority of voting members with the concurrence of the Staff Committee Liaison. Members shall be given ten days written or verbal notice

prior to said meeting unless the meeting is deemed urgent or an emergency by the Chairperson.

- B. Examples of urgent or emergency meetings include (but are not limited to): Adhering to unexpected external deadlines, unexpected budget matters, adverse route or service matters, dangerous or threatening conditions for the users of the DASH system, in response to a community event or disaster, or an emergency involving a member of the committee. The notice of the meeting must set forth items to be considered and no other items shall be considered.

4.4 Public Feedback and Solicitation

- A. Each Committee Member shall, at least once a year, participate in a DASH special event for the purpose of joining DASH staff in soliciting customer feedback about DASH programs and services as they relate specifically to the Committee.
- B. Such special events may be in a variety of formats including but not limited to: a public meeting, an event at a community organization, condominium association, senior home, community center, bus stop information tables, participation in a community event or street fair, Metro stop information stand, customer surveys or any combination thereof.
- C. Committee Member input from special events shall be reviewed and discussed by the Committee which shall then provide any formal recommendations to DASH staff for improvement or for recognition of excellent service.

4.5 Access to Meetings

- A. All meetings of the Advisory Committee shall be open to the public. No person shall be denied access to any meeting of the Committee unless that person is disruptive or otherwise prevents or impedes the business of the meeting. Guests/public speakers to the committee may be accommodated at the discretion of the Chairperson and/or Vice Chairperson.
- B. Meeting information shall be advertised on the DASH website no less than 10 days in advance of the meeting date, except where an emergency meeting is called by the Chairperson. In the event of an emergency meeting, as much notice as possible shall be given and the details of the meeting shall be posted on the DASH website as quickly as possible.
- C. Members of the Committee may participate by utilizing audio/video conferencing when it is available and feasible if they so desire. DASH shall make appropriate accommodations to the extent feasible to facilitate this connection. Should it be deemed infeasible or excessively burdensome at any time, then such an option shall be discontinued.

4.6 Parliamentary Procedure

- A. Generally, Robert's Rules of Order, revised, shall govern the business procedures of the committee in all cases not provided for in these guidelines.
- B. The basics of Robert's Rules of order are as follows:

- i **Motion:** To introduce a new piece of business or propose a decision or action, a motion must be made by a group member ("I move that.....") A second motion must then also be made (raise your hand and state, "I second it.") After limited discussion the group then votes on the motion. A majority vote is required for the motion to pass which is dependent upon a quorum of members being present.
- ii **Amend:** This is the process used to change a motion under consideration. Perhaps you like the idea proposed but not exactly as offered. Raise your hand and make the following motion: "I move to amend the motion on the floor." This also requires a second. After the motion to amend is seconded, a majority vote is needed to decide whether the amendment is accepted. Then a vote is taken on the amended motion. In some situations, a "friendly amendment" is made. If the person who made the original motion agrees with the suggested changes, the amended motion may be voted on without a separate vote to approve the amendment.
- iii **Commit:** This is used to place a motion in the committee. It requires a second. A majority vote must rule to carry it. At the next meeting, the committee is required to prepare a report on the motion committed. If an appropriate committee exists, the motion goes to that committee. If not, a new committee is established.
- iv **Table:** To table a discussion is to lay aside the business at hand in such a manner that it will be considered later in the meeting or at another time ("I make a motion to table this discussion until the next meeting. In the meantime, we will get more information so we can better discuss the issue.") A second is needed and a majority vote required to table the item being discussed.
- v **Adjourn:** A motion is made to end the meeting. A second motion is required. A majority vote is then required for the meeting to be adjourned (ended).

Note: If more than one motion is proposed, the most recent takes precedence over the ones preceding it. For example, if #iv, a motion to table the discussion, is proposed, it must be voted on before #ii, a motion to amend can be decided.

- C. Remember, these processes are designed to ensure that everyone has a chance to participate and to share ideas in an orderly manner. Parliamentary procedure should not be used to prevent discussion of important issues.