

**Transit Plus Advisory Council
December 20, 2022**

PLACE: Microsoft Teams Meeting

PRESENT: James Bahneman – Chair, David Buck, Grace Graves, Laurel Henschel, Nilima Mehra, Marcia Perkins, Arlene Washington – Vice Chair, Mae Wingo

ABSENT: Gerald Balezentis, Annie Johnson, Jeanette Williams

GUESTS: Kevin Meyers; Morgan McClelland – First Transit; Quentin Averhart – Transit Express; Fran Musci and Paula Schultz – Transit Plus.

CALL TO ORDER: James Bahneman called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the November 15, 2022, meeting were approved as written.

COMMITTEES:

Driver/Reservationist Recognition Committee: No report.

Membership Committee: No report.

Public Relations: David Buck reported that medical providers in Milwaukee County are warning about a triple threat pandemic. People can get the flu, COVID, and RSV all at the same time. It is highly recommended that people get vaccinated and continue to wear masks. Congratulations to First Transit on receiving the new van contract. The PR Committee wishes MCTS and the Council members Happy Holidays. All are looking forward to the January in-person TPAC meeting.

Nomination Committee: Fran Musci asked if everyone had completed their ballot. One person had not. Fran will collect that ballot after the meeting and email the final results to TPAC members.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Milwaukee County Mask Mandate: Fran reported that the mask mandate is still in effect due to the number of COVID cases in Milwaukee County.

2023 Milwaukee County Budget: The budget has passed. Funding for the extension of the current taxi program until the end of 2023 was passed.

Van RFP: First Transit was awarded the contract. Starting November 1, 2023, all riders will be on First Transit. This will give First Transit time to purchase additional vehicles and hire staff. First Transit has offered to hire employees in good standing with Transit Express on November 1, 2023.

Taxi: Future of the taxi program is still uncertain. The funding added to the 2023 budget is not enough to cover the changes needed for ADA compliance. There will be a January meeting with the Department of Health and Human Services, Milwaukee County DOT, and MCTS to discuss. DHHS might take over the program for same days rides while incorporating the required driver drug testing and accessible vehicles. David Buck inquired about the status of the taxi task force. Fran stated that MCDOT is in the process of putting the task force together. They will meet in the New Year and will have input on the new program.

NEW BUSINESS:

Election of 2023 Officers: Fran will collect the final ballot after this meeting and email the results.

Milwaukee County's COVID Transportation Service is Ending: The ride service that was set up to transport people who tested positive for COVID separately via a

contract with American United will be ending. The program was funded by CARES Act funds which will be discontinued at the end of this month.

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT REPORT: Paula Schultz reported that AIRA Wayfinding subscription has been renewed for 2023. Use of the AIRA app will continue to be free on MCTS routes and buses. Paula outlined the changes to fixed route bus service that took effect on December 4, 2022. There will be free bus and van rides on New Year's Eve from 8 pm until the end of service compliments of Miller Lite. Paula gave an update on the new fare collection system for fixed route stating that information will be sent out after the first of the year. Transit Plus riders who use the fixed route bus will be issued a Reduced Fare card around April 1.

CARRIER REPORTS:

American United: No representative from American United present.

Transit Express: Quentin Averhart on behalf of Transit Express congratulated First Transit on the new van contract. Transit Express is continuing to hire staff. They continue to remind passengers about the mask mandate.

First Transit: Thanks to all for the congratulations. First Transit continues to hire staff. Job mobility continues but they will proceed with their recruiting efforts.

TRANSIT PLUS REPORT: Fran reported that Transit Plus van ridership was down slightly in November to 28,763 rides. The year-to-date rides are over 310,000 compared to 269,581 last year. Transit Plus anticipates that ridership will continue to increase in 2023. Fran reported that the Service Infractions Program issue may have been solved. If so, Transit Plus could start mailing out No Show warning letters in January. Some Transit Plus riders may have received a letter from the Milwaukee County Aging & Disability Resource Center that discusses changes in their program. The cost of rides for that program will be increasing from \$3 to \$4. There will also be a limit of 2 grocery shopping trips per month. Fran reminded everyone that the January 17, 2023 TPAC meeting will be in-person and will include a luncheon. The luncheon will begin at 1 pm and the meeting will be from 2-3 pm.

OPEN DISCUSSION: There was a question about why it takes so long to get through when trying to make reservations/cancellations. Fran recommended that callers do not hang up but stay on the line until their call is answered. If they hang up, their call will go to the end of the queue. Also, the best time to call is mid-day between 10 am and 1 pm when the call volume is lower. Morgan also recommended that callers stay on the line.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be January 17, 2023, at the Transit Plus office.