

**Transit Plus Advisory Council
April 20, 2021 Minutes**

PLACE: Microsoft Teams Meeting

PRESENT: James Bahneman (Chair), Gerald Balezentis, David Buck, Grace Graves, Danita Jackson, Nilima Mehra, Marcia Perkins, Mae Wingo

ABSENT: Arlene Washington (Vice-Chair), Laurel Henschel, Annie Johnson, Jeanette Williams

GUESTS: Kevin Meyers – Transit Plus client; Jonathan Liegeios and Nick Arizola – American United; Honey Toy and Richard Brubaker - First Transit; Chris Fox, Jo Douville, and Lisa Walters - Transit Plus

CALL TO ORDER:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the March 16, 2021 meeting were approved.

COMMITTEES:

Driver/Reservationist Recognition Committee: no report.

Membership Committee: no report.

Public Relations Committee: David Buck reported that the J& J vaccine is on hold due to side effects otherwise vaccines are going well. MCTS Next upgrades going well. He is giving updates to the National Federation for the Blind's Milwaukee Chapter.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Lobby Remodeling: Chris Fox reported that the lobby remodeling project is complete and looks nice. However, the lobby is still closed to the public. Cashier and reduced fare services will be combined up front. This will increase building security. The next step will be the renovation of the Transit Plus office.

Federal Mask Mandate: Chris Fox reported that the federal mask mandate is still in effect and that this is not expected to change any time soon. Everyone seems to be following the rules. Transit Plus has only received 3 or 4 exemption requests.

NEW BUSINESS:

Reservation Window: Chris Fox advised that Transit Plus is considering adjusting the reservation window from 14 to 7 days in the next van contract. Transit Plus is interested in TPAC's thoughts about making a change. Members were asked how early do they typically request trips and most said between 1-2 days to a week in advance. Gerald Balezentis and

David Buck thought that the reservation window should remain 14 days. Richard Brubaker of First Transit also commented that it was convenient for their riders to be able to schedule medical rides 14 days ahead.

Fixed Route Capacity: Chris Fox reported that capacity on the MCTS buses will be increasing from 15 to 20 people. Ridership is increasing on fixed route so we expect that we will also see an increase in paratransit rides as well. Currently ridership is at 50% capacity.

MCTS Customer Satisfaction Survey: Chris Fox reported that MCTS Marketing is conducting a customer satisfaction survey for those who use the bus. We will send Council members a link to the survey via email. There will be a Transit Plus survey coming in June.

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT REPORT: Jo Douville reported that virtual public outreach presentations were provided to Lutheran Social Services, Fairview school and Lincoln Center for the Arts. They also recently provided ADA Sensitivity Training to a class of twelve new drivers. A Travel Trainer from Appleton also participated in the training. Now that everyone on the team has been vaccinated they are hoping to do in person presentations again. The travel trainers are doing in-person travel training as referrals come in. They are working with Marketing on travel training promotional materials to send to existing Transit Plus clients and to the general public. Boardings are increasing on fixed route and paratransit.

CARRIER REPORTS:

American United: Jonathan Liegeios reported that American United is seeing a surge in demand from MPS staff and students, and from the general public as well. American United has an account contract with MPS and has recently gotten more work from them. Hopefully, this will level off next week. A large portion of their drivers are now vaccinated. It will help service when even more are vaccinated. They are holding ADA sensitivity training in May. Danita Jackson mentioned that she has had long wait times of two hours recently. Jonathan explained that weekend rides have been a problem and that they are trying to have a larger fleet out on the weekends. They are trying to recruit to keep the driver numbers up and to keep the drivers engaged.

Transit Express: no report

First Transit: Richard Brubaker reported that First Transit has six drivers in training today and that they are moving more vehicles up from Chicago. Hiring enough drivers to meet volume is a challenge.

TRANSIT PLUS: Chris Fox reported that there were 21,102 van rides provided in March 2021. This is an increase from March 2020. Ridership is currently at 50-60% of pre-COVID levels. MCTS Planning Department is coming to the May TPAC meeting to explain the June MCTS Next bus route changes. In June, Bus Rapid Transit information will be available.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

Gerald Balezentis was interested in knowing who to contact to get a bench or shelter for the

Route 80 layover across from Target. Chris Fox stated that he would contact MCTS' Planning Department so that they could contact the City of Oak Creek about that.

Kevin Meyers inquired about the current status of City of Milwaukee PPVL licensing. Richard Brubaker stated that they are still having trouble getting PPVL's and that it is currently taking 3 to 4 weeks. First Transit has 3 or 4 new hires they need to get licensed.

ADJOURNMENT