

Transit Plus Advisory Council February 18, 2020 Minutes

PLACE: Milwaukee County Transit System Administration Building, 1942 N. 17th Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Large Conference Room

PRESENT: Marcia Perkins (Chair), Gerald Balezentis, Grace Graves, Troy Hergert,

ABSENT: Jim Bahneman (Vice-Chair), David Buck, Laurel Henschel, Annie Johnson, Diane Peterman-Simmons; Arlene Washington, Jeanette Williams

GUESTS: Danita Jackson and Mae Wingo – TPAC Applicants; Jonathan Liegois – American United; Morgen McClelland - First Transit; Tracy Harrington – National Express; Jesus Ochoa - MCTS; Fran Musci, Jo Douville and Lisa Walters - Transit Plus

CALL TO ORDER:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes from January 21, 2020 were not approved for lack of a quorum.

2020 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:

Driver/Reservationist Recognition Committee: no report.

Membership Committee: Grace Graves reported that two potential new members are here today. Grace also advised that Diane Peterman-Simmons has missed 6 meetings. A letter will be sent to Ms. Peterman-Simmons to thanking her for her participation.

Public Relations Committee: no report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

AIRA: Fran Musci reported that a press conference was held on February 5, 2020 to launch the AIRA pilot. The press conference got great attention from the press and was covered by television channels 4, 6, 12 and 58. There have been a few follow up requests made for AIRA training. Fran played the video of the press conference for the group. OPD funding for the AIRA pilot will run through the October 2020. MCTS may continue AIRA through the end of the year.

NEW BUSINESS:

MCTS Next: Jesus Ochoa of MCTS' Schedule and Planning Department reported that the MCTS Spring changes will be in effect from March 8, 2020 through May 30, 2020. He advised that the Routes 30 and 30X will be combined. The Route 23 and the Blue Line will also be combined as part of the 2020 budget. The mergers are intended to simplify service on these routes as they will have the same bus stops, and there will only be one schedule to look at. This will speed up service and eliminate bus bunching as space between buses will be evened

out. No service is reduced. The service should be better and more reliable. Temporary signs will be placed at bus stops. Information will also be available online. MCTS is analyzing the public comments it has received over the past year on the MCTS Next initiative. Consideration is being given to the 2020 budget cuts as well. A report is being finalized of recommendations to take to the County Board in late spring or early summer. MCTS Next changes will take effect in the fall at the earliest.

Gerald Balezentis was concerned about changes to the Route 80. He stated that some people cannot walk to Pick N Save. He was also interested in seeing bus stops at Springbrook and Puetz and Howell and Puetz.

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT REPORT:

Jo Douville reported that they created a poster regarding service animals. Pets are not allowed on the bus. ADA incidents are down from last year. There were 15 incidents in 2019 compared to 22 in 2018. Two presentations were provided to Bria Trinity Village and Lutheran Social Services. We are excited about AIRA and the press conference went well. There have been 8 referrals for travel training since January. We are looking forward to spring.

CARRIER REPORTS:

American United: Jonathan Liegeios reported that American United rolled back the update to their app and went back to an older interface. Their average pick up time is 18:47 and 17:20 for Transit Plus riders. January was a 3 year low for accidents. American United is exploring a possible partnership with Beyond Vision for call center support and sensitivity training for drivers. American United is also working on a bill with State legislators to increase funding for transportation for persons in poverty or with disabilities.

Mae Wingo mentioned that she called for a cab last week from her home phone, but placed her order for a return ride from her cell phone. The call out for her return ride was made to her home phone instead of her cell phone. Jonathan explained that that ride information is copied by their system for the return from the pick-up ride.

Danita Jackson also commented that more training is needed for taxi drivers so that they make a greater effort to let riders know they are there.

Transit Express: Tracy Harrington reported that Transit Express graduated a training class last week and 5 people came off behind the wheel training. They were impacted by the snow last Thursday. They usually have 47 vans out on the road at peak time. They currently have 63 drivers. They have to have a training class every month due to the churn with new hires. They could have as many as 80 drivers because they also provide service to other contracts.

First Transit: Morgen McClelland commented that winter is here. First Transit has a lot of new drivers which is challenging. They currently have 69 drivers. Their optimal number is 65. They have 2 drivers coming out of behind the wheel and 2 people in classroom training. They will have another class in March. They need to consider who is the right fit for the job. Currently First Transit has 58 vans. They have 45 to 48 on the road at peak time.

TRANSIT PLUS: Fran Musci reported that the plans for the lobby remodeling project are

under review. Hopefully they can be finalized by the end of the month. The work has to go out to bid for 4 to 6 weeks. We are still working on the plans for the DNC and there will be upcoming discussions about pick up and drop off locations outside of the soft zone. In January 2020 Transit Plus provided 36,553 van rides and 4,625 taxi rides. The on-time percentage is 96.03%.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

Grace Graves mentioned that today was a voting day and that some people cannot afford the fare to go to the polls. Grace wondered if as a community service rides could be provided for voting. In the past Milwaukee County's Office For Persons with Disabilities funded some rides to the polls. Morgen Mc Clelland stated he would give this consideration but he would have to talk to his corporate office about it. Fran Musci stated she would look into this as well. Persons with disabilities can vote with an absentee ballot.

Danita Jackson inquired if there was an on-line process for purchasing tickets. Fran Musci advised that we are not currently set up for on-line banking. We are looking to have an account based system in the future. We are trying to procure a new vendor for fixed route service first, then later for Transit Plus service. We hope in the future to be able to scan smart phones on fareboxes and get rid of tickets. Tickets are very labor intensive.

ADJOURNMENT