

**Transit Plus Advisory Council  
February 16, 2021 Minutes**

**PLACE:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**PRESENT:** Arlene Washington (Vice-Chair), Gerald Balezentis, David Buck, Grace Graves, Laurel Henschel, Danita Jackson,

**ABSENT:** James Bahneman (Chair), Annie Johnson, Nilima Mehra, Marcia Perkins, Jeanette Williams, Mae Wingo

**GUESTS:** Kevin Meyers – Transit Plus Client; Jonathan Liegeios and Nick Arizola – American United; Morgen McClelland - First Transit; Tracy Harrington – National Express; Jeff Sponcia – MCTS Scheduling and Planning Dept.; Fran Musci, Jo Douville, and Lisa Walters - Transit Plus

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes of the January 19, 2021 meeting were approved.

**COMMITTEES:**

**Driver/Reservationist Recognition Committee:** no report.

**Membership Committee:** Grace Graves stated that she would reach out to previous applicant Robert Jenkins and to Nilima Mehra to see if they had continued interest in the Council.

**Public Relations Committee:** David Buck reported that there is currently a State and Federal mask mandate. The annual visit to Madison to meet with legislators will probably not be in person this year, but will most likely be virtual. MCTS has awarded the Rosa Parks scholarship to two students.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Lobby Remodeling:** Fran Musci reported that demolition started yesterday for the lobby remodel. The project is expected to take six weeks. When complete we there will be a customer facing lobby.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**MCTS NEXT:** Jeff Sponcia of Milwaukee County Transit System's Schedule and Planning Department provided a presentation to the Council on Phase I of the fixed route bus changes that will begin on March 7, 2021. Ten routes will be impacted this spring. Phase II will take place in June and Phase III in August. The purpose of the change is to introduce and expand high frequency service and advance racial equity. Some bus stops will be removed to speed up service. Signs have been placed at 600 stops to inform the public of the changes. For more

detailed information about the routes that are changing go to [RideMCTS.com/NEXT](http://RideMCTS.com/NEXT).

**MOBILITY MANAGEMENT REPORT:** Jo Douville reported that the Mobility Management team is continuing to do virtual presentations. They are answering questions and providing outreach for MCTS Next. Postcards have been sent out to people on the effected routes. Five or six organizations including Washington State have asked us for information about our ADA Sensitivity Training. Jo and Geri are working on a course with Easter Seals on travel instruction. We are working on opening our program since COVID vaccines are becoming available. They were featured on Specturm 1 news recently regarding the AIRA wayfinding app. The weather has been cold but they are still busy.

### **CARRIER REPORTS:**

**American United:** Jonathan Liegeios reported that American United's numbers are down 50% and that they have 30% fewer drivers than last year. Average pick up time in January was 21 minutes.

**Transit Express:** Tracy Harrington reported that they are dealing with cold weather and snow. They want to keep everyone safe when the roads are slippery. Tracy asked everyone for patience when the roads are bad.

**First Transit:** Morgen McClelland reported that First Transit is continuing to operate despite the weather. They have more cancellations when the weather is bad. Ridership increased from 50% to 52% in January. Would like to see service increase further.

**TRANSIT PLUS:** Fran Musci reported that Transit Plus ridership is down. We are working on strategic goals for 2021 and on COVID concerns.

### **OPEN DISCUSSION:**

Gerald Balezentis mentioned that he had made a complaint call to First Transit and that his call had not been returned. He stated that he canceled a ride but that the van showed up anyway. Morgen advised Gerald that he did attempt to return his call but that the number available for him was not current.

David Buck mentioned that on February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 a.m. a driver started up the motor before his seat belt was fastened. Morgen stated he would look into this.

Danita Jackson was interested in knowing if Transit Plus had received any complaints about riders not wearing face masks. Lisa Walters and Morgen McClelland stated that they recall receiving complaints from a couple of people, but not many, who were upset that someone on the van was not wearing a mask. It was explained to those clients that because of their disability some riders are unable to wear a mask.

### **ADJOURNMENT**