

**Transit Plus Advisory Council
May 18, 2021 Minutes**

PLACE: Microsoft Teams Meeting

PRESENT: James Bahneman (Chair), Arlene Washington (Vice-Chair), David Buck, Grace Graves, Laurel Henschel, Danita Jackson, Marcia Perkins, Mae Wingo

ABSENT: Gerald Balezentis, Annie Johnson, Nilima Mehra, Jeanette Williams

GUESTS: Kevin Meyers – Transit Plus client; Jonathan Liegeios – American United; Morgan Mc Clelland - First Transit; Tracy Harrington – Transit Express; Jeff Sponcia – MCTS Planning Department, Fran Musci, Chris Fox and Lisa Walters - Transit Plus

CALL TO ORDER:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the April 20, 2021 meeting were approved.

COMMITTEES:

Driver/Reservationist Recognition Committee: no report.

Membership Committee: no report.

Public Relations Committee: David Buck reported that mask mandates are still in place on the Federal level. David urged everyone to keep their masks on for now. A MCTS Next presentation will be given today. He is continuing to give updates to the National Federation for the Blind's Milwaukee Chapter.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Lobby Remodeling: Fran Musci reported that the lobby remodeling project is complete and looks nice. The receptionist area is now behind a window. However, the MCTS Administration building is closed until further notice from the County.

Federal Mask Mandate: Fran Musci reported that the federal mask mandate for paratransit and fixed route is in place until September 13, 2021 unless there is a further notification. Fixed route buses may now carry 20 people.

NEW BUSINESS:

MCTS Next: Jeff Sponcia of MCTS' Planning Department provided a presentation on Phase 2 of MCTS Next which will be implemented on Sunday, June 6, 2021. The goal of the redesign project is to meet the community's modern needs and to improve the rider experience by providing more frequent service, shorter travel times and expanded access. We want to

attract more riders, enhance racial equity, better job access, and become more fiscally sustainable. High frequency service buses will come every 15 minutes. Some service will be shifted away from low frequency routes. Service will be concentrated in a mix of residential and commercial development. To shorten travel times, underused bus stops or stops too close together will be moved. Layover time will be increased for drivers at the end of routes. MCTS has been working on this since 2018 and have received hundreds of comments and have refined three different versions of the redesign in the last three years. The County Board approved the MCTS Next plan last fall to be implemented in March, June, and August of this year. At the end of August there will be new routes and more service including 16 high frequency routes, 6 of which are new. This will be a game changer for everyone. For more information go to Ride MCTS.com/NEXT

MCTS Customer Satisfaction Survey: Fran Musci reported that the survey will take place in June. Postcards will be sent out with info to a link on our website and a telephone number to call for Transit Plus staff to help someone complete the survey. We want to hear what riders have to say whether they ride all the time or periodically. We also want to compare ourselves with other transit systems who are also doing the survey.

Document Management Project: Fran Musci reported that Transit Plus is moving toward creating an online application. However, we will still accept paper applications by mail. We will also be scanning files into an electronic system.

Transit Plus Remodeling Project: Fran Musci reported that the lobby project is finished, but the Transit Plus office has yet to undergo its remodeling. The bidding for the project ends in May, and a contractor will be chosen in June. Supplies need to be obtained before construction can start. The Transit Plus office could be closed longer than other MCTS offices.

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT REPORT: Chris Fox reported that the team has been busy. They have provided two public outreach presentations, one in person for the first time since March 2020. There will be 9 new drivers in ADA Sensitivity training next week. They are receiving travel training referrals. Ridership is increasing on fixed route. MCTS Next outreach materials were sent out to any Transit Plus clients who rode routes over the last two years that are changing. Post cards are also being sent to taxi riders. A new ADA training video will be filmed this summer and a photo shoot will be conducted this summer to update our marketing materials. Let us know if anyone would like to volunteer to participate.

CARRIER REPORTS:

American United: Jonathan Liegeios reported that summer is coming and lead times are getting better as school is wrapping up for the year. They are checking to be sure the air conditioning is working on the vehicles. They are updating their dispatch system so there will be different text messaging and GPS tracking. They are also updating the rider app with new technology. The City is relaxing its COVID regulations, but American United is encouraging their drivers to keep wearing masks.

Transit Express: Tracy Harrington reported that they have a couple of new drivers in behind the wheel training. They also have another training class in session and other starting June 1st. It is a very difficult hiring environment right now. The rides are coming back faster than

employees. There have been long ride times and late rides. This is not the way they want it to be. Hope more people will get vaccinated. `

First Transit: Morgan McClelland reported that First Transit is also having challenges keeping their driver count up. Ridership is increasing. They had delays in getting people licensed but this has improved. They have some new drivers going into service Wednesday and Thursday of this week and more drivers coming up behind. With more drivers they will have improved on-time, better schedules and better social distance.

TRANSIT PLUS: Fran Musci reported that ridership is up 60% of pre-COVID levels. We will also be providing a BRT presentation soon. The budget for 2022 has been submitted. With the June 6th MCTS Next changes, the paratransit buffer will extend a little into Menomonee Falls and service will become available to the Woodmans and Aldi in Menomonee Falls. The new buffer area does not go as far as Appleton Avenue however.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

ADJOURNMENT