

## **Transit Plus Advisory Council**

### **December 16, 2025 Minutes**

**PLACE:** Milwaukee County Transit System Administration Building, 1942 N. 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Large Conference Room & via Microsoft Teams Meeting

**PRESENT:** Terry Hogans - Vice Chair, Nilda Rivera, Laurel Henschel, Kelley Santi, Arlene Washington, Patricia Martin, Mae Wingo, Elois Reed

**EXCUSED:** David Buck - Chair

**ABSENT:** Janice Briggs-Simmon, Anita Spight, Helen White

**GUESTS:** Patrick O'Brien - Transdev; Fran Musci, Paula Schultz, Megan Newman - Transit Plus; Jeff Sponcia – MCDOT; Kevin Meyers, Rita Bruce, Charles Peterson, Lisa Peterson - Guests

### **CALL TO ORDER**

**ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING MEMBER REV. JACKSON:** Arlene Washington announced the passing of TPAC member Reverend William Jackson. He passed away on December 1, 2025.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes for the November 18, 2025 meeting were unanimously approved. Motion by Nilda Rivera, seconded by Arlene Washington.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Account-based Fare Update:** Transit Plus managers delivered all handheld devices to Transdev. Transit Plus staff is focusing on card printing in preparation for the open house events where WisGo cards will be distributed. Riders in long term care programs will continue to receive tickets for medical and day program trips until later in 2026. Tickets will continue to be accepted on vans as fare payment until further notice. Customer service is receiving an increase in phone calls with questions about the details of WisGo. The Same Day Ride Pilot has no change in fare payment. Clients must continue to use a credit card or cash for payment for Same Day Pilot Rides with Via. Cash will also continue to be accepted on the paratransit van service.

**MCTS Budget Update:** Previously announced, MCTS projected a deficit of \$14 Million in 2026. Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors issued a \$4.7 M budget amendment for both fixed route and paratransit same day rides. Routes scheduled for full elimination will continue but at a limited peak-time service. There will be frequency reductions across many routes in system. Routes that had proposed segment eliminations will occur in March of 2026. Service will be adjusted throughout the year to attempt to meet demand. MCTS will be holding public information meetings in the first quarter of 2026 to explain what changes are taking place. 2027 Projected budget gap is currently \$18-20 million at the reduced service levels put forth in 2026.

MCTS allocated \$750K for operations and administration of the Same Day Pilot. Transit Plus is working with Via and stakeholders to determine the service that can be provided within that budget.

As part of the budget amendment, additional language added to the Paratransit Department budget narrative: “While Milwaukee County remains committed to delivering high-quality service, concerns have been raised that paratransit van service has not consistently met expectations. MCTS, in collaboration with the Department of Transportation, and with input from paratransit riders and from advocacy organizations, shall evaluate current operations and recommend strategies to improve the rider experience, focusing on reliability, accessibility, timeliness, and overall customer satisfaction. A report with findings and proposed solutions shall be presented to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors by the July 2026 meeting cycle.”

**Transdev Update** – Transdev is still trying to hire enough drivers to meet demand. They are taking volunteers to work overtime for afternoons, evenings and weekends until new drivers can be hired and trained to fill those shifts. MCTS and Transdev’s attorneys continue to negotiate an acceptable resolution to our ongoing issues.

**Same Day Pilot Update** – October ridership reaches a new record of 439 trips for 560 total passengers.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

**MCDOT UPDATE FOR TPAC:** Milwaukee County Department of Transportation hired a new director. Joe Lamers was named the MCDOT Director earlier in December. Joe most recently was the Director of the Milwaukee County Office of Strategy, Budget and Performance. MCTS staff members have worked closely with Joe over the years in preparing our annual budgets, but he is still learning about many aspects of MCDOT and Transit. MCDOT staff is considering restructuring TPAC to make our advisory committee as optimized and effective as possible. MCDOT is asking that all TPAC members continue as usual for the next 6-12 months while this process is underway. John Rodgers is returning to Deputy Director position.

**DISCUSSION ON SAME DAY PILOT:** As mentioned, MCTS budgeted \$750,000 to operate and administer a same day option for paratransit clients. This is a reduction in budget which means that the service will have to be re-evaluated and service will be trimmed. An amendment to the contract with Via is in progress. Transit Plus staff is working on data analysis for service in 2026 and present options for discussion to stakeholders in January 2026.

## **TRANSIT PLUS REPORT:**

October 2025

- Ridership: 32,131 rides provided on paratransit.
- On time performance: 91.21% This is an increase from 88.59% in September.

The goal is 93%.

- **Productivity:** Lower than contracted passengers per service hour (PPSH) and increased ridership are leading to projected paratransit budget overages in 2025. The productivity target is 1.70 passengers per service hour as stated in the contract. YTD average productivity is 1.49%.
- **Client Feedback:** 97 complaints: On -time 32, Ride Duration 21, and. There were 8 staff commendations. \*\*\*These figures updated from what was reported in the December TPAC meeting due to an error recognized after the meeting concluded.

## **COMMITTEES:**

**Provider Employee Recognition Committee:** No updates.

**Membership Committee:** No updates.

**Public Relations Committee:** The committee is scheduled to meet prior to the January meeting. Terry Hogans suggests that all TPAC members attend rather than just those appointed to this committee.

**MOBILITY MANAGEMENT REPORT:** The Mobility Management team is scheduling training for January. The team continues to focus on preparing for the rollout of WisGo on Transit Plus.

## **CARRIER REPORT:**

**Transdev:** Patrick O'Brein asks that clients be sure that their ramps and sidewalks are cleared. He says that drivers are expected to do door to door service but in the case that walkways are covered in snow and ice, it makes this task difficult and, in some cases, prevents the driver from assisting clients to the van.

Patrick states that Transdev plans for approx. 10% driver call offs during the winter months. Recently, Transdev has experience upwards of 20 – 22% call offs. There are currently 10 drivers who are awaiting background checks. The Transdev staff is working diligently on hiring drivers to improve on time performance and appointment drop-offs.

**Via:** No one present from Via.

## **OPEN DISCUSSION:**

Kevin Meyers asked if all clients will receive a new WisGo card. Megan Newman responded, yes, all clients will receive a card, but we will be distributing at open house events before mailing the remaining cards to clients. Kevin asked if the documents issued explaining the program will be available in large print or braille. Megan responded, yes, upon request Transit Plus will meet those accommodations.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion made by Terry Hogans, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kelly Santi. Motion carries unanimously.

**NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday, January 20, 2026