

Transit Plus Advisory Council

June 17, 2025 Minutes

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

PRESENT: David Buck - Chair, Terry Hogans - Vice Chair, Mae Wingo, Nilda Rivera, Laurel Henschel, Rev. William Jackson, Kelley Santi, Anita Spight, Arlene Washington, Patricia Martin, Elois Reed, Laurel Henschel, Helen White, Janice Briggs-Simmon

ABSENT: None

GUESTS: Patrick O'Brien, Mark Ward – Transdev; Joe Pietrek – Via; Jeff Sponcia – MCDOT; Fran Musci, Paula Schultz, Megan Newman - Transit Plus; Kevin Meyers, Joe Scheunemann - Guests

CALL TO ORDER:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the May 20, 2025, meeting were unanimously approved. Motion by Mae Wingo, seconded by Terry Hogans.

COMMITTEES:

Provider Employee Recognition Committee: No update.

Membership Committee: No update.

Public Relations Committee: Per David Buck, there have not been many cases of COVID which is a positive sign. There was a case of the measles discovered in someone who recently flew on an airplane. Please be cautious if you travel. Whooping cough is also going around. Please be sure you're up to date on vaccines.

David Buck attended the Public Input Meeting provided by Independence First on June 14, 2025. David states he is surprised by what he heard, and it did not make him happy, but he understands where people are coming from. David states he's concerned that we have to do better, and states we will.

The Public Relations Committee will hold a meeting on July 15, 2025 at 1:00 PM.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

2026 BUDGET: Fran states that MCTS, including the paratransit program are facing a significant budget shortfall in 2026. She states that the budget is submitted to the county board for review and will go to the County Executive and his team next. The County Executive and his team will propose how the county funds are distributed. Fran states that MCTS and Transit Plus could be faced with making service cuts.

MOVE 2025: MCTS has concluded public listening sessions and submitted proposed changes to the County Board. Upon their approval, route changes will go into effect in the fall.

TRANSDEV UPDATE: Fran Musci states that Transit Plus continues to meet with Transdev at least

three times per week to balance efficiency and service. Transit Plus executive team, with guidance from our attorney, sent a letter to Transdev leadership regarding service improvements necessary to meet service standards as outlined in the contract.

SAME DAY RIDE PILOT UPDATE: Fran Musci states that May ridership totals 272 trips with 327 passengers. So far, through June 16th, there is a total of 199 trips and 249 riders.

Overall, Transit Plus is pleased with the increase in ridership. Transit Plus staff continue to monitor to manage capacity and minimize seat unavailables. Recently, there was a rider who requested a return trip 15 minutes before Same Day Pilot service ended. That passenger was told that there were no seats available because of demand. That passenger was able to call Transdev to get a ride home, so they were not stranded.

Transit Plus submitted a report to the County Board on the Pilot as they move forward with deciding budgets for 2026. In order to keep capacity in line with demand and to make sure allocated funds last until the end of 2025, possible service changes to the Pilot are being considered. One is to reduce the amount of service on weekends to shift hours to the more popular weekday hours. The other is to shift to an Independent Contractor driver model rather than direct employees of Via. The money saved by taking those actions would be used to provide more service on days that demand is higher.

Because of a projected budget shortfall, the Same Day Ride Program is not in the MCTS budget to continue into 2026. The County Board would have to identify and allocate additional funds to continue service through 2026.

Kelley Santi asked if she called for a ride through the Same Day Pilot, can she call Transdev for a ride home beyond the service hours for the Same Day Pilot. Fran Musci says that is not the way the program is set up. If you know about rides a day in advance, both trips should be scheduled through Transdev.

NEW BUSINESS:

SUMMERFEST 2025: Summerfest 2025 begins on Thursday June 19th, including fireworks in the evening. In addition, the Juneteenth parade ends at Summerfest. Transportation for Summerfest are the same as provided in 2024. MCTS will be busing attendees to Summerfest from park and ride locations at College Ave, Brown Deer and Hales Corners. The cost is \$12 per rider and \$6 for reduced fare. Connect One also services the park and ride at Watertown Plank and can be used to get the Couture which is a short walk to the north gate of Summerfest. Connect One fare is \$2 each trip or \$1 each trip for reduced fare. If you intend to ride to Summerfest on Transit Plus service, please call and make appointments early.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY: Transit Plus Customer Satisfaction Surveys will be collected from June 2nd – 29th. Notification of the survey was emailed to clients, a postcard was sent to those who do not have email, notification was set up on the phone message for Transit Plus and Transdev when clients call. The survey can be accessed online. If you cannot complete an online survey call Transit Plus to request accommodation. As of now, 283 responses have been received, and our goal was a total of 250. A drawing will be done for those who responded; there will be three winners who will receive a book of tickets and other MCTS / Transit Plus goodies.

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK DATABASE: Transit Plus management has been working with the MCTS IT team to build a customer feedback database that can be shared with our ride providers. Currently, all communications pertaining to customer feedback is handled through email with Transdev and can be cumbersome to manage. There will be an online form that is fillable for clients to submit feedback to Transit Plus online. The form also asks if the submitter would like an email response. Transit Plus is confident that this will help with customer responsiveness.

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT REPORT: Paula Schultz reports that the mobility management team is finishing group presentations to schools. This summer they intend to focus on doing presentations at senior centers. They have a couple training courses planned at the Department of Vocational Rehab. There are also some adult day programs and individuals who are scheduled for training.

Tomorrow Paula will assist with reviewing bus stop locations for the route changes proposed through Move 2025.

Next week, Paula will provide ADA training to new drivers. This group consists of 19 trainees. That will take place next Friday.

Paula says that there is no scheduled senior (free admission) day at Summerfest this year because they did not have a sponsor, although, there are days that people can get in for free. There is a day that non-perishable food items can be provided for free admission, and there is a veteran's day for free admission.

TRANSDEV REPORT: Transdev – Patrick O'Brien reports that they are prepared to handle rides to Summerfest. There is a designated pickup / drop-off location at the festival grounds. Drivers were given information as to how to manage these trips. Fran Musci adds that Transdev leadership staff participated in a train the trainer event provided by Center for Deaf Blind Persons. This will help their staff train new drivers about how to deal with riders who have dual sensory loss.

The new run cut will be effective June 29th. Transdev has posted the pick, and drivers are selecting their shifts now. This run cut is specifically centered around summer months and historical data. This pick will include more split shifts to provide better coverage during peak demand.

VIA REPORT: Joe Pietrek with Via says that his staff is working on balancing supply and demand. They are looking to hire a few more drivers to provide the additional coverage needed. He is pleased with the increase in demand over the last few months.

TRANSIT PLUS REPORT: Fran Musci reports the following service update:
May 2025: 33,972 rides. Pre-COVID numbers were around 36,000 per month. For April 2025: 34,352 rides were provided.

Month of April Complaint Summary:
Total complaints: 53

Highest categories:
Pickup / Dropoff Problem – 13
Ride Duration - 6
Late Appointment Dropoff - 5
Commendations: 8

OPEN DISCUSSION:

Mae Wingo asked for the phone number for the Same Day Pilot. Fran Musci responded with Via's phone number: 414-946-6318.

Arlene Washington asked, if someone is sick on the van, what happens? She reports that she was ready to board the van and was told by the driver that there was a person onboard who is ill. She chose not to ride on the van with the sick individual. She called Transdev to see about a different ride, but they told her there was none. She said that another resident had a ride later that day to the same destination and she was able to ride with them. Fran Musci responded by saying, this service is equivalent to fixed route and is public transportation. A rider may not know if an individual on the bus is sick.

Helen White says that riders call her to talk about their problems with their rides. She suggests that they call the office.

Joe Scheunemann asked why TPAC meetings cannot be held in the evening or on weekends. Fran Musci responded, TPAC time has been set because this is when Transit Plus staff is available to hold the meetings. Also, for committee members who need assistance with meals or caregiver needs, this is the best time for them as well. If guests cannot attend the meetings in person or virtually, the agendas are posted to the MCTS website prior to each meeting, and minutes are posted after they are approved the following month by the committee.

Kevin Meyers shared that he has reached out to various independent living centers throughout the country to find out how their advocacy teams work with transit agencies and transportation providers.

Helen White states that their job supports them attending the meetings, which is nice. Fran Musci says she appreciates all the volunteers who make it a point to attend meetings and to advocate for transportation. Terry Hogans says that the committee needs to focus on writing a letter to legislators.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Rev. Jackson, seconded by Kelley Santi. Unanimously approved.