



PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD

Advisory committee to the Mayor on public transit issues

Meeting Minutes

for the meeting on February 22, 2016

Members present:

Erik Gaikowski
Cherie Gerry
Brett Glirbas
Greg Johnson
Jeri Reed

Public in attendance:

Nikki Allcock
Melanie Bliss
Missy Braak
Joe Dvorak
Jen Geffie
Chad Powell

Members absent:

Philip Jacobson
Megan Myers

Staff present:

Dennis Erckfritz, Operations Manager
Amber Gibson, Planner II, SECOG
Randy Hartman, Assistant GM
Eric Meyerson, General Manager
Sam Trebilcock, Transportation Planner

Call to order

With a quorum present, Erik Gaikowski, Chair, called the Public Transit Advisory Board (PTAB) meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. and made introductory comments.

- 1. Brett Glirbas made a motion to add an agenda item under Old Business to update the Board on the paratransit rate increases. Jeri Reed seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.**
- 2. Approval of January 25, 2016, PTAB Meeting Minutes**
Greg Johnson made a motion to accept the January 25, 2016, PTAB meeting minutes. Jeri Reed seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously
- 3. Public input on non-agenda items:**
Melanie Bliss asked whether people that ride paratransit will have to carry change to pay for the difference between the face value of their pre-purchased tickets and the increased fare. Sam Trebilcock stated that it would be discussed as part of the agenda.
- 4. Public Hearing: Fixed Route Service Revision**
Erik Gaikowski announced that this was a public hearing for a fixed route service revision. Sam Trebilcock presented the fixed route service revision. The revision includes ending routes 21, 23, 24, and 25, which are tripper routes serving Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Washington High Schools, due to bus replacement costs and operational costs contributing to an unsustainable budget. The high schools will continue to be served by routes 5, 7, and 11. The school district will provide similar bus service through School Bus, Inc.

Melanie Bliss asked whether SAM would be receiving the same amount of funding if someone else is providing the service. Sam Trebilcock stated that there is projected to be a revenue loss of \$120,000, but the associated \$1.6 million bus purchase cost is unsustainable due to less federal funding. Sam added that this was one of the Transit Task Force's recommendations as there are increasing transit needs, less funding, and a need to prioritize.

Jeri Reed asked if the contract with SAM is a fixed fee or if they would receive less because they would be providing less service. Sam Trebilcock stated that it is a management fee and not a fee for services.

Brett Glirbas asked if we would lose grant money or paratransit service because of this. Sam Trebilcock stated that the transit budget has to be justified during each budget cycle.

Jeri Reed asked how this would fit into the school district's budget. Missy Braak stated that the anticipated cost is approximately \$110,000 and they will charge a fee to the students to help offset the cost.

Greg Johnson made a motion to close the public hearing and Cherrie Gerry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Brett Glirbas asked how the tripper route fares have been working. Sam Trebilcock stated that the students pay the same fares as everyone else. Sam also stated that staff is coordinating with the school district to develop a plan to make the transition easier for students.

Greg Johnson asked to confirm that students will have the same service and will be paying the same fee. Sam Trebilcock stated that yes that is what they are working toward.

Greg Johnson stated that this is about planning for five to ten years into the future and the City not wanting to increase taxes to pay for the expenses. Sam Trebilcock stated that the change is needed just to sustain services.

Brett Glirbas asked whether the school district is willing and able to provide the additional bus service. Missy Braak stated that yes, they have been having discussions and working on this for some time now.

Greg Johnson made a motion to approve the fixed route service revision as presented. The motion was seconded by Jeri Reed. The motion passed unanimously.

5. New Business:

a. PTAB Bylaws Revision

Sam Trebilcock stated that there are some potential revisions that could be made to the Bylaws, including the way that the terms are defined and that a subcommittee could be formed to recommend revisions to the Bylaws. Sam stated that revisions to the Bylaws would need to be approved by a 2/3 majority vote of PTAB. Brett Glirbas stated that he would like to add an item to the beginning of each agenda to approve the agendas. Brett also volunteered to serve on the subcommittee. This item was informational only.

b. Transit Management Contract

Sam Trebilcock reviewed the transit management history and stated that the purpose of the transit management contract is to hire a firm to provide the appropriate level of management expertise and a general manager for the transit system while the City maintains control, owns all assets, and provides financing. The existing contract ends at the end of this year and the City is required to send out an RFP. It is anticipated that the RFP will be released in March and a review team will make a recommendation to City Council by this fall. Jeri Reed volunteered to be on the selection team. This item was informational only.

c. Annual Operations Report

Amber Gibson provided a report on the ridership statistics for Sioux Area Metro for 2015. She explained that the Annual Operations Report was compiled based on the data in the monthly operations reports that are presented to the Board and provides a comparison of the data throughout the 12 months of the year and the previous two to four years. This item was informational only.

6. Old Business:

a. Transit Development Plan

Sam Trebilcock stated that he is working with Eric Meyerson to update the Transit Development Plan which will include potential changes to maintain service and improve efficiencies. Sam stated that they are using the Transit Task Force recommendations as a starting point, with updates and potential additional recommendations. PTAB is considered the working group for this Plan and will have something to review for the next meeting. Greg Johnson suggested that the meeting be started earlier if more time is required. This item was informational only.

b. Paratransit Rate Update

Sam Trebilcock stated that City Council approved the increased paratransit fare last Tuesday and that staff plans to make them effective on April 4th. Any tickets that were purchase previously will be worth their face value and the difference would have to be paid. Discussion followed on potential alternatives to avoid requiring that paratransit riders carry cash, such as trading in tickets. Sam stated that staff will look at this further. Brett Glirbas made a motion to make a recommendation to staff to wait until June 1st to make the paratransit fare increase effective. Jeri Reed seconded the motion. Greg Johnson suggested that staff be given an opportunity to address the original concern with stickers or another appropriate solution. The motion was approved with a vote of three yes votes and two no votes.

7. Reports:

a. January Operations Report

Eric Meyerson reviewed the January Operations Report. Eric stated that fixed-route ridership was down 9.75% and paratransit ridership was up 6.11%, compared to January 2015. Eric stated that each 5% increase in paratransit ridership translates to another vehicle on the road and additional expenses, which may prohibit expansion of the fixed route system. This item was informational only.

8. Adjournment:

Brett Glirbas made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Greg Johnson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.