

## PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD

*Advisory committee to the Mayor on public transit issues*

### Meeting Minutes for the meeting on October 26, 2009

**Members present:**

Kate Heligas (Chair)  
Deb Nelson

**Members absent:**

Julie Briggs  
Rochelle Hart  
Julie Johnson Dresbach  
Thad Mooney  
Chris Schiltz

**Public in attendance:**

Chad Powell  
Charles Santee

**Staff present:**

Dennis Erckfritz, Operations Manager  
Debra Gaikowski, Transit Planner  
Karen Walton, General Manager

**Call to order**

Without quorum present, Kate Heligas, Chair, called the Public Transit Advisory Board meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. and made introductory comments.

**1. Approval of minutes from the September 28, 2009, PTAB Meeting**

Since there was not quorum, approval of the minutes was deferred until the November meeting.

**2. Public Input on Non-agenda Items:**

Charles Santee requested that, whenever possible, detour information be posted on the website and at the downtown Bus Stop at least one week in advance of the street closure. Charles also asked what Sioux Falls Transit's policy is when the buses are maxed out on wheelchairs on board and someone in a wheelchair is waiting at a stop. Karen Walton explained that she has recently given the directive to her staff to always call Paratransit to see if a bus is available to pick up the wheelchair rider and take them to their destination. However, she emphasized that there may be times when the paratransit buses are at capacity and not available. Charles had some concerns about the small amount of space to pass by another wheelchair already on the bus. Karen stated that we have no control over how the buses are designed. Charles mentioned some issues at a few bus stops which included a stop at 26<sup>th</sup> and Bahnson and 41<sup>st</sup> and Western. The situation at the stop on 26<sup>th</sup> is that there is no boulevard but rather it has sidewalk abutting the curb. When a wheelchair disembarks at this location, with the ramp extended, the passenger has to go on to the property of the homeowner. At the 41<sup>st</sup> & Western stop, he complained that a driver told a passenger to wheel over the grass when getting off.

Chad Powell asked if the tie-downs from the old buses will be used on the new buses which they will not. Chad also expressed concern that the paratransit drivers have a very difficult time tying down the

wheelchairs when the bus is near capacity with wheelchairs. Again, Karen stated the design of the buses is with the manufacturer and not with Sioux Falls Transit. Chad wondered, with the new name and logo changes coming up, whether the phone number will stay the same. Karen said it will.

**3. New business:**

**a. September Monthly Report**

Karen Walton discussed the report numbers for the month of September. Ridership was down slightly for the month but still up over 4% year-to-date.

**b. Marketing Report**

Debra Gaikowski discussed the upcoming transit marketing meeting later this week and that the new logo selection will be finalized. The Mayor will need to give final approval before releasing the name and logo. Debra also talked about a Lego League convention that Karen and Debra have been asked to speak at in November. The group is focusing on transportation. Debra also made the members aware of the bus with the Breast Cancer Awareness wrap that just came out last week.

**c. Pandemic Contingency Plan**

Karen reviewed the Pandemic Contingency Plan for Sioux Falls Transit and what steps are currently being taken to prevent the spread of the H1N1 flu virus and all viruses.

**4. Other Business:**

**a. 2010 PTAB Meeting Schedule**

Debra asked for any comments on next year's PTAB meeting schedule and reaffirmed that the meetings would take place at the same place and time as it did in 2009.

**b. Farebox Bid Results**

Debra stated that the bids for the 29 fixed-route fare boxes came in under the estimate so the City will pursue the purchase of 22 paratransit cash boxes. FTA has confirmed that this purchase will be acceptable under the stimulus grant.

**c. Recent Awards**

Karen mentioned that Sioux Falls Transit driver Dennis Berreth was recognized with a Hero's Award from the local office of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill for the suggestion to modify Route 11 to enable Route 12 to start up and serve the Avera Behavioral Health Center and Avera Heart Hospital. Sioux Falls Transit driver Steve Thompson was presented with an award from the Dakota Transit Association acknowledging his 31+ years of service without an accident. Competition included all fixed-route drivers in North and South Dakota.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.