

PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD

Advisory committee to the Mayor on public transit issues

Meeting Minutes for the meeting on July 26, 2010

Members present:

Kate Heligas
Julie Johnson Dresbach
Greg Johnson
Jim Madsen

Members absent:

Thad Mooney
Deb Nelson
Chris Schiltz

Public in attendance:

Joyce Weber
Chad Powell

Staff present:

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

Call to order

Kate Heligas, Chair, called the Public Transit Advisory Board meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. and made introductory comments.

1. **Approval of June 28, 2010, PTAB Meeting Minutes**

Greg Johnson made a motion to accept the June 28, 2010 PTAB meeting minutes as written. Jim Madsen seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

2. **Public Hearing** – None

3. **Public Input on Non-agenda Items** - None

4. **New Business:**

a. **June Monthly Report**

Karen Walton presented the June Monthly Report emphasizing the increase in ridership. She also mentioned that First Transit, Inc. had the Sioux Area Metro project audited. The audit report listed a few minor issues to address and will be reviewed with the City in the very near future. Karen said she recently presented to the Vocational Rehab group on transit and its services. They were excited to hear of the new fare boxes. Dennis Erckfritz updated the members on the start-up

of the new fare boxes today and that things were going extremely well. Bill McCarty stated that any mechanical issues with the fare boxes have been very minor. This item was informational.

b. Long Range Transportation Plan Transit Project Selection

Debra Gaikowski brought before the members, an opportunity for them to provide input on transit projects for the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan. Potential projects were grouped into the categories of Operations and Services, Capital and Equipment Purchases, and Facility Improvements. After some discussion, the category of Information Technology was also added.

To assist the members, maps were handed out of the Transit Routes, 2035 Population Projections, and MPO Area and Growth Management Areas. Julie Johnson Dresbach made the suggestion to include transportation services between rural and urban systems during high commute times and for the disabled living alone. If usage of the express routes were good, Greg Johnson stated that this could be a revenue generator for the system. Greg also mentioned adding more Park-and-Rides and provided the example of using the University of Sioux Falls parking lot at 69th Street & Cliff Avenue since it is empty a good majority of the time.

Julie also suggested the use of shuttle buses (smaller vehicles) for the commuter routes to rural areas. Transit could charge a higher fare for these services than regular service or the communities could contribute financially to the transit system. Karen Walton brought up the idea of a transit authority which would authorize taxes specifically for transit but Kate Heligas was against the idea and felt the general public would be as well.

Julie mentioned that she would like to see restroom facilities available at all new park-and-ride facilities so there are not issues as there are at the Southwest Transfer Center. Additional transfer stations may be needed too. Debra mentioned a study of the current system may be in order to determine whether the system should stay as a hub-and-spoke style system or if it should be converted to a grid system basically eliminating the need for transfer stations.

Greg referred to the Transit Research Study results that were presented to the board in June. He felt transit service to the employers within the study that stated transit services need to be improved should be a focus of the transit system. He also mentioned the great customer service already provided by the drivers is a plus for the system. The excellent safety record was highlighted as well.

IT technologies mentioned include Smart Cards, a system to determine where riders get on and off, informational bus stop signs, and vending machines.

Greg mentioned the idea of focusing on the School District and the young riders which have the potential to be future riders of the transit system. Karen felt there is a good share of riders from that demographic already and our focus really needs to be on the 20 – 30 age-group. This item was informational.





5. **Other Business:**

Chad Powell told the group that DakotAbilities is resurfacing the parking lot at their facility on the south end so paratransit buses will not be able to enter.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.