

## PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD

*Advisory committee to the Mayor on public transit issues*

### Meeting Minutes for the meeting on March 26, 2012

**Members present:**

Greg Johnson  
Jim Madsen  
Deb Nelson  
Chris Schiltz  
Jean Crowe  
Julie Johnson Dresbach  
Megan Myers

**Public in attendance:**

Charles Santee  
Chad Powell  
Joe Dvorak  
Dawn Srska

**Members absent:**

None

**Staff present:**

Karen Walton, General Manager  
Dennis Erckfritz, Operations Manager  
Randy Hartman, Assistant General Manager  
Tierza Lanham, Paratransit Manager  
Sam Trebilcock, Transportation Planner  
Bill McCarty, Maintenance Manager

**Call to order**

Greg Johnson, Chair, called the Public Transit Advisory Board (PTAB) meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. and made introductory comments.

1. **Approval of February 27, 2012, PTAB Meeting Minutes**

Chris Schiltz made a motion to accept the February 27, 2011, PTAB meeting minutes as written. Jim Madsen seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

2. **Public input on non-agenda items:**

Charles Santee commented on how Route 3 and 10 have had changes that have included added stops and asked why the changes have not been announced to the public. Randy Hartman and Karen Walton said that added stops have not been announced in the past to the public. Announcement to the public does occur when stops have been taken away or moved. Charles also asked why there was not a news release for the detour routes during the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Staff indicated that in the future, a news release will go out for such disruptions in service.

Joe Dvorak from DakotAbilities asked the board why there have been so many people reclassified as conditional status for paratransit services? Karen Walton stated that

because the ridership is getting so high on paratransit, SAM staff has been looking at the classification of paratransit riders much more closely to determine if they might be able to ride the fixed-route system under current ADA rules. Karen also indicated that there is a process to appeal the decision and if it is found that the rider should be riding Paratransit, the rider's status then will remain unchanged. Joe Dvorak asked that staff please use caution in this effort because the reclassification and the appeal process of many of these people can cause undue stress. Greg Johnson asked that the PTAB Board hear about the appeal process. Dawn Srska said that forcing people from paratransit to the fixed-route busses will actually encourage paratransit riders to use Wheelchair Express (a private company) as a protest. Julie Johnson Dresbach asked why she didn't know about this and wondered if we have changed the Paratransit eligibility process? Karen Walton said that the eligibility process has not changed, but only is being enforced more closely to the ADA process. Jean Crowe said it is certainly hard to balance the operational efficiencies of the system and the needs of the disabled rider. Jim Madsen asked – how close is Paratransit to denying people rides? Karen Walton indicated that Paratransit is not at that point yet.

3. **Old Business:**

a. **Transit Operation Study Update**

Sam Trebilcock provided the Board with a handout of information from the consultant on the study to determine whether a grid system would work for the fixed-route system in Sioux Falls. The consultant and staff have concluded that a grid-only system would not provide the same coverage of services for fixed-route and would be a step backward for SAM ridership. However, the consultant will continue to review options on a hybrid of the current hub and spoke system and grid system. Route alternatives will be looked at for current resources and also for future growth and additional resources. A draft report is planned to be completed for the May PTAB meetings. This item was informational.

b. **Route 6 Pilot Project Mid-Term Report**

Dennis Erckfritz provided a status report about the change to Route 6 to accommodate the inmates at the Minnehaha County Work Release Center. Dennis indicated that the number of people utilizing the new bus stops on the north side of Russell Street in the morning and afternoon are basically the same as the old bus stop locations on the south side of Russell Street. Karen Walton said that the route is still on-time with the new stop locations, but not with much time to spare. This item is informational and another report will be provided at the end of the pilot project later this year.

4. **New Business:**

a. **Electronic Agenda and Packets**

Sam Trebilcock asked how well it worked for the PTAB board members to receive the electronic agenda and packet with the March meeting. It was the consensus of the board that it worked very well to receive the agenda and minutes. There was some concern that some board members do not have access to color printers to print operational reports. Also, board members asked if they could bring their computers or IPADs and access the internet. Sam said that the Old Council Chambers does have access to wireless internet. Sam also said that a projector and screen could be set-up for the meetings to show all PTAB members and citizens the information that is covered during PTAB meetings. The board did not take official action on this issue at this time. Sam said that he will continue to send out

PTAB meeting information electronically and through the mail. Sam will then work on methods to improve the city's website, operational reports, and electronic presentation options.

5. **Reports:**

a. **February Operations Report**

Karen Walton presented a report on the January operations at SAM. She said that fixed route ridership is up 16%. Also, route changes seemed to have increased ridership on routes during Saturday service. Karen also discussed efforts to reach out to other organizations for transit training such as Lutheran Social Services. This item was informational.

b. **Transit Marketing Committee Report**

Karen Walton shared information on the transit marketing committee's activities during February 2012. Chris Schiltz is featured in a SAM testimonial ad that is on the radio right now. Social service agencies will soon be receiving flyers about how they can participate in the rebranding of the paratransit system. Also, Karen said that the Dog Days of Summer program will be starting up again this summer to offer school age kids rides for \$25 for the entire summer. This item was informational.

6. **Other Business:** No other business was reported.

**Adjournment**

Greg Johnson adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.