

PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD

Advisory committee to the Mayor on public transit issues

Meeting Minutes for the meeting on April 23, 2012

Members present:

Greg Johnson
Jim Madsen
Deb Nelson
Jean Crowe
Megan Myers

Public in attendance:

Charles Santee
Chad Powell
Joe Dvorak

Members absent:

Chris Schlitz
Julie Johnson Dresbach

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
Nancy Surprenant, SDDOT

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 March 26, 2012, PTAB Meeting Minutes**

Deb Nelson made a motion to accept the February 27, 2011, PTAB meeting minutes as written. Jean Crowe seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

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

Charles Santee commented that he thinks there should be an added curb cut at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind. Mr. Santee also commented that he thought it was confusing that routes 3 and 11 run on the same route in the Walmart area in Meadows on the River. Karen Walton responded that this practice is fairly common throughout the country and the busses indicate which route they are running and if people don't know which bus it is, they should ask the bus drivers.

3. **Old Business:**

a. **Transit Operation Study Update**

Sam Trebilcock referred to a memo on the grid analysis provided by the project's consultant, URS Corporation. The memo analyzed four different grid alternatives. All grid alternatives were not able to cover as much service area as the existing transit route system. Also, the grid alternatives would typically require transfers that would average 15 minutes in length causing transit riders delays in their ride time. Based upon this analysis, the consultant is recommending that the grid system is not feasible for the current service area within existing resources. The consultant and staff are recommending that the study should now look at other methods to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of transit service. Also, the study will look at alternatives for the future of the transit service including enhancing service in the current transit service area and expanding services to new growth areas. Greg Johnson commented that he believes that protecting the core service area is very important and any way to improve that service should be a priority. Also, Mr. Johnson thought that SAM should be looking in the future at ways to work with some of the outlying communities such as Harrisburg and Tea to see if there would be interest in enhancing transit services for commuters. Jim Madsen asked if the study will look at ways to improve current services. Also, Mr. Madsen asked if the study will address the possibility for evening and Sunday service. This item was informational.

4. **New Business:**

a. **Cost and Benefits of Public Transit in South Dakota**

Nancy Surprenant from the South Dakota Department of Transportation provided a report to the board. The analysis of the costs and benefits included all public transportation providers in the State. The study found that more than 3 million transit trips are made annually in South Dakota. Every 10 jobs in public transit create 3 additional jobs in supporting industries. Also, every dollar spent on public transit in the state generated \$1.90 in economic activity. Greg Johnson thanked Ms. Surprenant for providing this information to PTAB. This item was informational.

5. **Reports:**

a. **March Operations Report**

Karen Walton presented a report on the March operations at SAM. She said that fixed route ridership was up 1.5%, compared to March of last year, for the fixed route system even though there was one less service day than last year. Walton and Tierza Lanham discussed how the new Occupational Therapist is assisting with review of Paratransit riders' eligibility. Walton and Dennis Erckfritz discussed how SAM and Lutheran Social Services have developed a partnership where SAM is helping train new immigrants how to ride the bus and Lutheran Social Services is educating SAM employees this month about the process of transitioning new immigrants to our community. Walton also discussed a new partnership with Achieve to share driver training services to help strengthen both programs. This item was informational.

b. **Transit Marketing Committee Report**

Walton asked if anyone has heard the most recent radio ads with PTAB member Chris Schlitz featured. Walton asked if Megan Myers would be willing to be featured in a similar ad. Ms. Myers agreed to help with the radio ad. The Dog Days of Summer program will begin again to help provide rides to young students during summer vacation. SAM staff completed a presentation to the Center for Active



Generations this past month. Also, Walton said that the process to rebrand the paratransit system has begun with flyers sent to social service agencies requesting suggestions for new names. So far 23 suggestions have been submitted. This item was informational.

6. **Other Business:** Sam Trebilcock reported that at the May PTAB meeting there will be a report on the Paratransit review and appeal process. Also, Trebilcock asked if the Board would mind if future meetings were scheduled at the Downtown Library.

Adjournment

Greg Johnson adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.