

PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD

Advisory committee to the Mayor on public transit issues

Meeting Minutes

for the meeting on April 28, 2014

Members present:

Minnie Bell
Philip Jacobson
Greg Johnson
Erik Gaikowski
Deb Nelson

Staff present:

Dennis Erckfritz, Operations Manager
Amber Gibson, Planner II, SECOG
Randy Hartman, Assistant GM
Tierza Lanham, Paratransit Manager
Bill McCarty, Maintenance Manager
Eric Meyerson, General Manager
Sam Trebilcock, Transportation Planner

PTAB Members absent:

Jean Crowe
Megan Myers

Public in attendance:

Joe Dvorak
Charlene Harbert
Terry Paulsen
Chad Powell
Charles Santee
Julie Schoolmeester
Nancy Wilde

Call to order

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

1. Approval of March 24, 2014, PTAB Meeting Minutes

Greg Johnson made a motion to accept the March 24, 2014, PTAB meeting minutes. Philip Jacobson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Public input on non-agenda items:

Charles Santee asked whether the new concrete pads at the bus stops would be cleared of snow. Sam Trebilcock stated that SAM is working on an improved process for the upcoming winter season.

Charles Santee expressed concern about the fewer time points listed on the new fixed route schedules and stated that the SAM website had not been completely updated with the fixed route changes. He also inquired about keeping intoxicated people out of the bus shelters. Sam Trebilcock stated that he would look into these items.

Charles Santee asked about the bus stop that used to be at 18th Street and Menlo Avenue. Randy Hartman stated that it had been moved to 18th Street and Grange Avenue.

Joe Dvorak asked why the online reservation system for paratransit has been eliminated. Sam Trebilcock indicated that it was due to the prohibitive financial and

time burden of maintaining the system. Joe indicated that it takes additional time for Dakotabilities to call in to make the reservations.

Charlene Harbert expressed concern regarding the discontinuation of the evening demand service because those living outside the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile area no longer have paratransit service after 7:00 p.m. Charlene stated that another option is needed for evening and weekend hours and suggested charging more for that service. Sam Trebilcock stated that this same concern has been expressed by others and that the Transit Task Force is taking a look at the issue while trying to provide the best service to the most people.

3. Old Business:

a. Bus Stop Sign Progress

Sam Trebilcock showed the Board a mock-up of the new bus stop signs. Approximately 500 signs have been ordered for approximately 400 bus stops. The installation is planned to begin in June and completed by August. This item was informational only.

b. Route and Service Changes

Sam Trebilcock stated that the route and service changes went into effect on April 14th. Eric Meyerson stated that the schedules of six of the routes were adjusted due to timing and are performing much better. Eric also stated that there are more trips on routes eight and 19 and five of the routes are running two hours later. Sam added that the evening routes and the extension on route 19 are already getting good ridership. Charles Santee stated that the schedule change was causing him to miss his transfer when he gets on the inbound bus at 11th Street and Prairie Avenue around noon. Randy Hartman stated that he would look into this. This item was informational only.

c. Transit Task Force Update

Sam Trebilcock stated that the Transit Task Force process is starting to wrap up and that the financial impacts of the recommended activities are being reviewed. Sam reviewed a handout showing four financial scenarios including the current trend with the transit budget going into the red in 2016, a scenario with paratransit savings and fare increases delaying the deficit to 2021, a scenario with no paratransit service outside of the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile area and fare increases delaying the deficit to 2023, and a scenario with paratransit savings, no paratransit service outside of the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile area, fare increases, and additional routes leading to a deficit in 2020. Sam also reviewed a draft proposal of fare increases recommended by a work group of the Task Force. The proposal includes an increase of the adult fare to \$1.50, the monthly pass to \$30, and paratransit outside the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile service area to \$6. Sam stated that a work group is also looking into having an outside non-profit provider service the outside the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile service area. Greg Johnson stated that it would be useful to see a comparison of revenue sources in other communities. This item was informational only.

d. Transit Coordination Activities

Amber Gibson reviewed the status of the 5310 grant program, volunteer driver program, and transportation services directory booklet and informed the Board that the Transportation Coordination Committee would be meeting again May 30th to continue discussing these work activities. Sam Trebilcock added that one of the work groups is also working on travel training including an update to the instructional video. This item was informational only.

4. Reports:

a. March Operations Report

Eric Meyerson provided a report on the ridership statistics of Sioux Area Metro for March. In March, fixed-route ridership was down 1.95% compared to March 2013. Eric noted that ridership is down on the school tripper routes, but up on nine routes, so ridership has improved overall. Eric also stated that paratransit ridership is down 4.43% compared to March 2013 and down 4.65% year to date, which has allowed SAM to have a spare paratransit bus parked. This item was informational only.

b. Transit Marketing Committee

Randy Hartman informed the Board that the Marketing Committee met early this month. Discussion included ways to market the fixed route system including radio advertisements, travel training, the use of Google Transit, a presentation to the Downtown Sioux Falls resident's group, and the new bus stop signs to be installed later this year. Randy also stated that there was an increase in ridership on Earth Day when SAM offered free rides on the fixed route. This item was informational only.

5. Adjournment

Erik Gaikowski made a motion to adjourn and Greg Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and Deb Nelson adjourned the meeting at 4:37 p.m.