



## PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD

*Advisory committee to the Mayor on public transit issues*

Meeting Minutes

for the meeting on July 1, 2015

### **Members present:**

Erik Gaikowski  
Brett Glirbas  
Philip Jacobson  
Greg Johnson (In at 3:48 PM)  
Megan Myers  
Jeri Reed

### **Public in attendance:**

Melanie Bliss  
Joe Dvorak  
Don Glirbas  
Chad Powell  
Joe Sneve  
Dawn Srstka  
Jeff Wilka

### **Members absent:**

None

### **Staff present:**

Jean Crowe, Planner, SECOG  
Dennis Erckfritz, Operations Manager  
Randy Hartman, Assistant GM  
Tierza Lanham, Paratransit Manager  
Tina Lemieux, Human Relations Assistant  
Bill McCarty, Maintenance Manager  
Eric Meyerson, General Manager  
Sam Trebilcock, Transportation Planner

### **Call to order**

With a quorum present, Erik Gaikowski, Chair, called the Public Transit Advisory Board (PTAB) meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. and made introductory comments.

### **1. Public input on non-agenda items:**

Brett Glirbas asked what the Mayor's CIP includes for transit. Sam Trebilcock indicated that he will include a presentation in next month's agenda to discuss with the Board. Philip Jacobson made a motion to include the Transit CIP on the agenda for the next PTAB meeting, and Brett Glirbas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Brett Glirbas asked why information that he requested was not included in the agenda packet to review before the meeting. Sam Trebilcock said he planned to discuss the information during the upcoming presentation, but PTAB could defer the fare ordinance for the next meeting to allow time to review.

Dawn Srstka stated that a new driver did not stop at the designated stop at 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Phillips Avenue. Sam Trebilcock will check into this. Greg Johnson arrived at this time.

### **2. Approval of May 18, 2015, PTAB Meeting Minutes**

Megan Myers made a motion to accept the May 18, 2015, PTAB meeting minutes. Jeri Reed seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **3. Public Hearing: Proposed Transit Fare Revisions Ordinance**

Chair Erik Gaikowski announced that this was a public hearing for the Proposed Transit Fare Revisions Ordinance. Sam Trebilcock reviewed the proposed fare revisions. Sam stated that fares have not changed since 1996 and with federal funding cuts, Sioux Area Metro needs to continue working toward a long-term sustainable plan for the future. The Transit Task Force recommendations include a commitment to maintain affordable services, along with increased fares to help allow for expanded fixed route over the next decade. The proposal includes an increase for single rides for adults on fixed route from \$1.00 to \$1.50, and paratransit rides from \$2.00 to \$3.00. A monthly fixed route pass would increase from \$25.00 to \$30.00. Increased rates would provide additional revenue of \$110,000 to \$150,000.

Erik Gaikowski asked for public input.

Brett Glirbas suggested a monthly pass for paratransit.

Jeff Wilka has been riding paratransit for 25 years and fixed route before that. He disagrees with a fare increase because he and others are on a fixed income.

Joe Dvorak expressed concern that increasing paratransit fares by \$1.00 seemed discriminatory to people who rode this service when the fixed route system was only increasing by 50 cents. He said that the increase for paratransit is significant while free rides are being offered to others.

Melanie Bliss lives near route five and is a 30 year resident of Sioux Falls. She stated that the City of Sioux Falls discriminates against our most fragile citizens who largely live in supportive housing. She also indicated that it is not fair to shrink paratransit services and increase rates for those citizens least able to pay.

Jeri Reed asked how much income is generated from monthly pass compared to a single ride. Sam Trebilcock said monthly passes make up 80-90% of the fare revenue. Jeri Reed expressed concern that raising rates would be an added burden and decreasing paratransit ridership to 25% would reduce ridership to nothing.

Brett Glirbas asked who was on the Transit Task Force Committee rode the bus. Sam Trebilcock explained the committee was made up of people and agency representation who advocate for transit riders and persons with disabilities. At least one member of the Committee rode the fixed route system and represented persons who are visually impaired. Brett said that he uses transit to get to work and an increase in fares may prevent people from being able to use transit for this purpose.

Erik Gaikowski asked about providing monthly passes for paratransit. Eric Meyerson said that a monthly pass could not be sustained due to current budget.

Greg Johnson stated that no action has been taken on previous recommendations. He expressed concern regarding the transit system's infrastructure and sustainability. He also pointed out that PTAB does not handle the budget.

Brett Glirbas asked why there is a line item in the budget for a new bus wash but not for the new bus routes recommended by the Transit Task Force. Sam Trebilcock indicated that buses need to be maintained and taking care of them adds to the life of the bus and that any funding for bus routes would be included in the operations budget.

Megan Myers stated that public transportation is not a federal funding priority and the recommendation needs to go to City Council. This issue will continue to keep coming back, and as a board there is only so much we can do.

Jeri Reed stated that the increase will fall on people who have the least ability to pay including persons with disabilities and seniors.

Brett Glirbas made a motion to reject the proposed revisions and keep the current transit rates. Jeri Reed seconded the motion. The motion was defeated with a vote of two yes votes and three no votes.

Jeri Reed made motion to recommend approval of the proposed fare changes with the exception that the paratransit rate stays the same. Brett Glirbas seconded the motion. Greg Johnson proposed an amendment to the motion to respectfully request that City Council make up the shortcoming of revenue that will result from not increasing the paratransit fare. The amended motion to recommend approval of the proposed fare changes, with the exception of the paratransit rate, and recommendation that City Council increase the transit budget to make up the difference in revenue that the increased paratransit rates would have produced, was approved with a vote of four yes votes and one no vote.

#### **4. New Business:**

##### **a. Summer Pilot Project for Children**

Sam Trebilcock provided information about the Dog Days of Summer Program recently approved by City Council after a citizen request. He indicated that it is for anyone 18 years of age and younger, it is free of charge, and the "Dog Tags" are valid until September 7, 2015. After that time, the Program will be evaluated and the results will be shared with PTAB and City Council. Megan Myers stated that PTAB should have been given the opportunity to provide input on the Dog Days of Summer Program prior to it being approved by City Council. This was informational only.

#### **5. Old Business and Reports:**

Jeri Reed made a motion to defer the Augustana College Pilot Project Update, Ridership Committee Report, and May Operations Report until the next meeting. Megan Myers seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **6. Adjournment:**

Brett Glirbas made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Jeri Reed seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and Erik Gaikowski adjourned the meeting at 5:45.