

Public Transit Advisory Board
March 10, 2016, 5:30pm-7:00pm
MAYOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM SUITE#830

PTAB PRESENT:

Jay Dulany
David Levy
Jed Smith
Samuel Moore
Felix Rivera
Kevin Jackson

STAFF:

Ryan Yelle
Michelle Felix
Bart Rudolph
Will Brown
Collin Hodges

Excused:

Andrew Ooms
Carlette Mack

Citizens Present:

Rebecca Barker
Lenora Morford
Bryan Hill

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:31pm by Chairman Jed Smith.

II. ROLL CALL, INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS, STAFF, AND GUESTS

After roll call and introduction of guests, quorum was present.

III. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

An announcement was made to those attending by Chairman Smith that there will be a public comment period in which those wishing to make comments will be allowed two minutes.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Planning Manager Bart Rudolph made a request to amend the agenda by removing items 9a & 9b. Mr. Rudolph stated that the speaker was not present due to illness, and that he would like to move those items to the April 14th meeting. Mr. Dulany moved to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Levy seconded the motion. The agenda was passed unanimously.

V. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Moore moved to approve the minutes from February 11, 2016. Mr. Levy seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

There were no public comments during this time.

VII. BUSINESS ITEMS

- a. Downtown Transit Center Update from ACDA – Melinda Gant from the Anchorage Community Development Authority (ACDA) provided board members with an update to the developing plans for the Downtown Transit Center remodel. Ms. Gant explained that ACDA is currently working with RIM Architects to determine the scale of the project and what underlying issues there may be with the aging mechanical and electrical infrastructure of the building. ACDA has contracted with a commercial real estate broker from Jack White Real Estate to assist in finding appropriate tenants to occupy the

renovated space. ACDA would like to see a small grocery/pharmacy type business move into one of the available spaces to help satisfy the need for an additional grocer in the downtown area. Ms. Gant informed the board that notices have been given to current tenants at the Downtown Transit Center that ACDA will not be renewing their leases. Two tenants have already chosen to relocate by the end of March.

People Mover staff are working with ACDA to determine a temporary location for the Downtown Transit Center while the existing building is being remodeled. There will be a survey going out to those who currently use the transit center and those who may use it in the future to assist in determining both the short and long term functions of the building.

Mr. Moore commented that he has noticed issues with the A/V equipment at the transit center and would like that problem to be resolved. Ms. Gant said that ACDA is aware of those issues and that they are working towards a solution.

Over the course of the next few months, ACDA will be working with downtown business owners to address any of their needs or concerns with the remodel. Construction is anticipated to start the spring of 2017.

Mr. Rudolph explained that due to the remodel, People Mover's lease payments will likely drastically increase. Because lease payments will be determined by sq.ft; staff is trying to decide an appropriate sized footprint to house offices, customer service counters, and a passenger waiting area.

Chairman Smith asked if staff had determined how many people are boarding the bus at the Downtown Transit Center at certain times of the day. Mr. Rudolph responded by stating that this type of analysis has been completed and handed over to ACDA. The amount of people that the waiting area will accommodate is still being determined.

Mr. Levy was curious about the travel training and assessment center location in the new facility. Ms. Felix responded by stating that the travel training and assessment center would most likely be housed behind customer service within the same footprint.

Mr. Moore commended ACDA for their speed on this project.

Mr. Dulany stressed the importance of designing the building for a winter city to ensure user comfort and accessibility.

- b. Bus Stop Amenity Distribution Guidelines – Mr. Yelle provided an overview of the draft version of the Public Transportation Bus Stop Amenity Distribution Guidelines to the board. He explained that a need for these guidelines has been identified due to the high amount of amenity requests coming from the public, and the growing costs for maintaining existing amenities.

Mr. Levy asked Mr. Yelle if there are solid numbers for the cost to maintain bus stop amenities. Mr. Yelle responded by stating that solid numbers are difficult to quantify at this time, and maintenance costs are based on estimates. Mr. Yelle also stated there are only three PTD personnel to maintain the nearly 1100 active bus stops in the Municipality.

Mr. Rivera was curious about how many amenities are currently in storage and how the replacement cycle is established for amenities. Mr. Yelle explained that the majority of amenities for existing stops may be swapped around with other stops. However, when a stop is being rebuilt, brand new or refurbished amenities are installed.

Chairman Smith asked how many pending requests are currently being processed by PTD staff. Mr. Yelle responding by saying that with our current system, it is hard to estimate a weekly or monthly number because requests are submitted through three separate divisions at times; and those divisions do not always communicate with one another regarding amenity requests.

Chairman Smith would like to see more businesses take ownership of bus stops within close proximity of their properties by participating in the “Adopt-a-Stop” program or by volunteering to purchase amenities to be installed at the stop.

Mr. Rivera provided a brief overview of efforts underway by the Mayor’s Office to encourage more businesses to get involved with the “Adopt-a-Stop” program. Mr. Felix asked how the maintenance costs of an adopted stop compare to the costs of a non-adopted stop. Mr. Rudolph replied by stating that site enhancement personnel will not put forth an effort to maintain an adopted stop unless something is in drastic need of attention. However, PTD staff has had to take back adopted stops in the past due to neglect.

Mr. Levy would like to see some cost estimates associated with bus stop maintenance. Mr. Rudolph stated that PTD staff could supply the board with some documentation on cost estimates.

Public Comment – A group of AmeriCorps volunteers, Simone, Anna, Emily and Mike (last names were not provided) gave a brief overview of their duties, experiences, and grievances while using the People Mover system. This group is in contact with the Mayor’s office in an effort to obtain a discounted rate on monthly bus passes and was curious if the board could assist them. This group would also like reduced headway times and more frequent buses.

Mr. Levy made a motion to encourage board support for the AmeriCorps program and requested a second before elucidating his intentions. Mr. Dulany seconded the motion. Mr. Levy would like the board to request municipal funds (Mr. Levy estimated \$10,000) be allocated to the AmeriCorps program. Mr. Levy strongly feels that this investment will pay back due to the high level of service that the AmeriCorps program provides for the community.

VIII. BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a.* Planning Committee – Mr. Jackson provided an overview of the first meeting of the Planning sub-committee. During this meeting the members discussed stakeholders in the public transportation system and also the transit propensity study that Mr. Hodges conducted.
- b.* Marketing Committee – Ms. Felix provided details on the first meeting of the Marketing sub-committee. The meeting was mostly informational, with Ms. Mack and Ms. Felix discussing previous marketing efforts and which direction they would like to take the committee.

- c. Finance/Administration – Mr. Levy provided an overview of the first meeting of the Finance/Administration sub-committee. Mr. Levy would like to explore current and potential funding options for the public transportation system and how those options compare to other transit agencies nationwide.

IX. INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. February 2016 Ridership Report - Mr. Yelle provided the board with an analysis of ridership from February 1st-29th. Mr. Levy was curious about trends when comparing ridership from previous years. Mr. Yelle informed members to reference the analysis project he provided to PTAB members during the December 2015 meeting. Chairman Smith would like to see how ridership numbers were impacted when the latest fareboxes were installed.
- b. Anchorage Talks Transit Update – Mr. Hodges briefed the board on current efforts underway with Anchorage Talks Transit. Jarrett Walker & Associates has prepared a draft “Choices Report” for PTD staff to review. Once this report is made final, it will be made available for public comment. The public kick-off event will be held on May 5th in the Anchorage Museum Atrium, and the May 7th stakeholder conference will be held at Covenant House.
- c. Board Vacancy Appointment Status – Mr. Rivera informed the board that the Mayor’s office has chosen a candidate. This candidate’s approval will be on the Assembly’s March 22nd agenda.
- d. Staff Reports – Mr. Rudolph provided a brief scope on the upcoming service change and the direction PTD staff is taking to achieve greater system efficiency.

X. BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Jackson expressed his gratitude to the members of the board and PTD staff for their hard work and dedication to public transportation.

Mr. Moore encouraged board members to get involved with the AMATS Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee.

Mr. Rivera would like to assist PTD staff increase ridership from APU.

Mr. Dulany was curious if PTAB members will be meeting with any transportation representatives in the Mat-Su. Chairman Smith said that PTAB members typically have a meeting with Mat-Su members during the month of May.

Chairman Smith echoed Mr. Moore’s comments regarding PTAB members involvement with AMATS. Chairman Smith also wanted to make board members aware of the new “Transit App” that is available to the public, as well as the new grassroots “Vision Zero” project in Anchorage.

XI. NEXT PTAB MEETING DATE

Next Meeting Date: April 14, 2016

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Moore made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Levy seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:58pm.