

Public Transit Advisory Board
May 12, 2016, 5:30pm-7:00pm
MAYOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM SUITE#830

PTAB PRESENT:

Carlette Mack
David Levy
Jed Smith
Samuel Moore
Felix Rivera
Kevin Jackson
Andrew Ooms

EXCUSED:

Britta Hamre
Jay Dulany

STAFF:

Bart Rudolph
Will Brown
Collin Hodges
Michelle Felix
Ryan Yelle
Susan Shiffer

CITIZENS PRESENT:

Shirley Smith
Delfin Brodie
Debi Stone
Melinda Gant
Brynn Wagner
Chris Wagner
Hans Thompson
Joe Pichler

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm 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

Mr. Levy made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Carlette seconded the motion. The agenda was approved unanimously.

V. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Rivera moved to approve the minutes from April 14, 2016. Mr. Jackson seconded the motion.

Public Comment – Melinda Gant of ACDA noticed an inaccuracy regarding the lease terms of the future Downtown Transit Center in the April 14th minutes. The inaccuracy was stricken from the minutes.

The minutes were approved unanimously as amended.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

- a. Hans Thompson – Mr. Thompson from “Code for Anchorage” announced that real-time bus tracking is now available through Google Trip Planner. Mr. Thompson has been working on implementing this initiative for some time and is pleased that it has been released.

VII. BUSINESS ITEMS

There were no business items at this meeting.

VIII. BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. Planning Committee – Nothing to report.
- b. Marketing Committee – Nothing to report.
- c. Finance/Administration – Nothing to report.

Mr. Rudolph asked the board members about sub-committee meeting schedules during the summer months. The board determined the sub-committees will be meeting on an “as needed” basis over the summer months.

IX. INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. UAA – “Increasing People Mover Ridership Among Jobholders in Anchorage, AK” – UAA Undergrad researchers Brynn Wagner, Christyn Luu, and Caitlin Taylor presented the findings from a year long research project the group conducted to find ways to incentivize riding public transportation in Anchorage. Based on the results of the surveys they conducted, as well as through comparisons of similar transit systems throughout the country, it was found that an increase of service hours, simplification of route structure, increased route frequency, and a better utilization of user friendly transit apps would help incentivize job holders to use public transportation.
- b. AnchorRIDES & Vanpool System Updates – Susan Shiffer provided the board with a detailed overview of the status of both the AnchorRIDES and Vanpool programs. AnchorRIDES will be acquiring new vehicles to incrementally replace the existing fleet.

Public Comment – Joe Pichler – Mr. Pichler would like to see an increase in the number of wheelchair accessible taxis and additional AnchorRIDES vehicles. Mr. Pichler expressed his frustration with the current lack of available transportation methods for those using wheelchairs.

A new Vanpool contract was awarded to Enterprise Rideshare with an effective start date of June 1, 2016.

Special Recognition of Debi Stone from VRide – Ms. Shiffer and the board expressed their gratitude for the work Debi has done for the Municipality as the Vanpool contractor for the past 11 years.

- c. Downtown Transit Center Update – Ms. Felix and Mr. Rudolph gave an update on the progress of the developing plans for the Downtown Transit Center to the board. Final plans for the Transit Facility have been put on hold until the “Anchorage Talks Transit” project is completed.

Mr. Rudolph explained to the board that the Department of Public Transportation is submitting an application to seek 5339 funds from the Federal Transit Administration to help reduce the amount of local funds needed to renovate the Downtown Transit Center. Mr. Rudolph provided a draft letter of support for the application to the board.

Mr. Moore made a motion to approve the letter of support. Mr. Ooms seconded the motion.

Ms. Mack and Mr. Levy sought clarification on how accepting these funds would limit People Mover's ability to find a new transit hub in the downtown area. Mr. Rudolph explained that the grant and current application are written specifically for the remodel of the current Downtown Transit Center, and if People Mover were to move to another location, they would not accept the funds.

Chairman Smith put the motion to a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

- d. Anchorage Talks Transit – Mr. Hodges briefed the board on the public engagement meetings that took place on May 5th and May 7th. Mr. Hodges was very pleased with the turnout at each event and the high level of public input he received.

Chairman Smith commended Mr. Hodges on his work organizing and facilitating these events and was very pleased with the turnout and public dialogue that occurred at both meetings. Mr. Levy echoed the Chairman's comments.

- e. April 2016 Ridership Report – Mr. Yelle provided copies of the April 2016 Ridership Report to the board. Mr. Yelle noted that average Sunday ridership is up nearly 3% as compared to last year.
- f. Staff Reports – Mr. Rudolph provided the board with a brief overview of the Public Transportation Department's Triennial Review process. Mr. Rudolph told board members he will be distributing the findings report to them as it becomes available.

X. BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Jackson – Mr. Jackson was curious about the timeline on the 5339 funds the PTD would be accepting or denying. Mr. Rudolph responded by stating that he does not feel that any action would be taken within the next three months.

Mr. Rivera – Mr. Rivera shared the same comment as Mr. Jackson, stating that it was also important that the board stay involved in the progress of the Downtown Transit Center.

Mr. Levy – Mr. Levy concurred with Mr. Jackson and Mr. Rivera, but would like to see some concrete plans for the Downtown Transit Center put in place by the next PTAB meeting in fall.

Ms. Mack – Ms. Mack is not in favor of the Downtown Transit Center relocating.

Mr. Moore – Mr. Moore stressed the importance that every stakeholder know that the Transit Center needs to be located in the densest, most walkable part of the city.

Mr. Ooms – Mr. Ooms did not have any additional comments beyond what was already previously stated during the meeting.

Chairman Smith – Chairman Smith expressed his excitement for the Spenard Corridor Strategic Plan and would like to see the continued engagement of board members as the Anchorage Talks Transit project continues.

XI. NEXT PTAB MEETING DATE

Next Meeting Date: September 8th, 2016

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Moore made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Mack seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:53pm.