

PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD

DECEMBER 12, 2013, 5:30 PM

CITY HALL ASSEMBLY CONFERENCE ROOM, SUITE 155

PTAB PRESENT:

Sally Spieker
Andrew Ooms
Jed Smith
Patrick Reinhart
Carlette Mack

STAFF:

Sandy Hansen
Lance Wilber
Christine Sondej
Jody Karcz

Guests:

Shirley Smith
Dennis Handy
Sam Moore
Jeff Manfull
David Levy
Jennifer Harrison
James Starzec

Absent:

Kevin Jackson
Tim Sullivan
Jay Dulany

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:35pm by Chairperson Sally Spieker.

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

After roll call and introduction, a quorum was present.

III. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as submitted unanimously.

V. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Carlette moved to approve minutes for October. Patrick seconded. The minutes for October 10, 2013 were approved as submitted unanimously.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. None

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a. Discussion for Chair re-appointment 2014

Lance asked that members think about a new Chair with more discussion and voting for the January meeting.

b. Meeting with Mat-Su Transportation Committee

Lance stated that he talked with Mat-Su regarding meeting with PTAB more than once a year.

Sally asked if they were interested in a specific topic to discuss.

Lance said “no” however he speculates that they could be interested in the cost per ride for trips in Anchorage for comparison.

After some discussion, a general consensus to retain the original schedule to meet once a year with Mat-Su was reached however Jed suggested that he would attend their meetings if an agenda with topics of interest were known in advance.

Lance agreed to forward a list to PTAB members of topics for the Mat-Su board for interested members to attend. Lance suggested that they inform the Mat-Su board prior to attendance.

James Starzec inquired about a Regional plan for Mat-Su and Anchorage as it could be an advantage in securing funds in the Legislative funding.

Lance stated that Anchorage/Mat-Su did not have a Regional plan due to the lack of funding.

VIII. STAFF REPORTS

a. Implementation of Fare Increase

Lance provided a Transit outline listing the tasks assignments in the Transit Department for the fare increase implementation. He expressed that a lot of work goes into implementing a fare increase and coordinate a smooth transition for the public and staff prior to January 1, 2014.

b. Proposed New Service & Adjustments

Lance stated that new service changes in 2014 are being evaluated by Christine/Planning and Jody/Operations with tentative implementation in June 2014. He said that part of the projected revenue will be used to increase service on Route # 75 and PTAB will be able to provide their input in April 2014.

Dennis Handy asked if there were any other changes in the plan.

Lance stated that transit is in the beginning stages to evaluate changes for 2014.

James asked about People Mover discussing the bus time dilemma with Tikahtnu retailers.

Lance stated that he contacted Developers regarding shuttles service and the purchase of their shelter however no response was received.

Carlette offered to assist Lance with contacting CIRI (owners of the land) to expedite his inquiries.

c. Bus Operations / Service (suspending service in winter conditions)

Jody, Operations & Maintenance Superintendent, spoke about the recent decision to suspend service on December 5, 2013 (and November 22) during icy road conditions. She stressed that it is not an easy decision and many factors are considered before making the call. Jody stated that Transit uses the weather service to alert them of possible icy/hazardous conditions the night before forecasted. Jody explained that she and other supervisors drive bus routes at 3:00am that historically present the worst conditions for People Mover buses. She said that while bus drivers are on the road, they report any issues to dispatch initially and as conditions change supply updates.

Jed asked about Street maintenance giving Transit priority for snow removal or sanding in M.O.A.

Jody stated that she has contacts with the Municipal Street Maintenance for snow plowing and sanding on Anchorage maintained streets to ease the trouble spots on bus routes. She mentioned that State maintained streets (D.O.T.) are more of a challenge although Transit has contacts with them also. Jody feels that Municipal and State Street maintenance are very responsive to requests from Transit. People Mover has a road enhancement crew that we rely on for bus stops and plowing when needed.

d. Ridership Report & Bikes on Buses / Fuel Status

Lance talked about the handout of the latest ridership report ending November 2013. He pointed out that we are down from last year although there are many factors for the decline. Lance mentioned that gasoline prices and weather is a factor every year.

Jed had asked about providing a bike usage report to detail Anchorage bikes on buses. Sandy Hansen provided year to date report outlining bike usage by route and direction per month. The numbers provided are strictly obtained by drivers entering a key on the farebox to indicate an individual is utilizing the bike rack and not automatic and as a result, could be higher. Sandy agreed to provide an updated report for bikes on buses as needed.

Lance stated that fuel costs are good and on budget.

e. Performance Measures Update

Lance provided a Performance Measure update for the 3rd quarter 2013. He stated that People Mover is steady at 80% on time including the bad weather and other factors involved.

Patrick asked about the AnchorRIDES trip denial numbers.

Lance said that he would verify the numbers with Susan Shiffer, contract administrator and contact Patrick with the results.

Sam Moore asked about the compliance report expected from the FTA Triennial audit.

Christine Sondej, Planning Manager, stated that she has not received it however it should be provided by next month. Preliminary results indicate that Anchorage Transit had small grants that were outstanding.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a.* Shirley Smith stated that she cannot afford the fare increase and asked that prices do not go up. She expressed that she is on a very tight budget and an increase cost will prevent her from travel without assistance. Shirley expressed frustration with all fees and costs rising in Anchorage (not just bus fares) and feared she may leave the state due to the cost of living.

- b.* David Levy stated that Governor Parnell released the budget including 1 million for Public Transportation as a whole for the State to be shared. He highlighted the Annual Transit Conference in Juneau as Jody Karcz received an award for 30 years of service in Transportation. David also reminded the group that the taxi ordinance was adopted. David provided a copy of the Annual AMC report with a profile of Jed Smith.
- c.* Jeff Manfull expressed that he was glad to see the refresh update of 1 minute for bustracker is appreciated.
- d.* Jennifer Harrison said that she was pleased with the information in social media regarding the suspended service and she believed People Mover did well.

X. BOARD COMMENT

- a.* Carlette inquired about the board having an executive session meeting.

Lance stated that an executive session could be put together and he agreed to provide more information to put it together.

b. Patrick stated that he could not attend the January meeting. He asked if AnchorRIDES would provide an update as a speaker in the future.

c. Jed thanked Jody for talking about the policy for weather mishaps. He stated that Anchorage as a winter city, residents need to know that the buses are safe and reliable.

d. Sally said that she rides the bus a lot. She encounters nice drivers and she acknowledges that driving a bus can be a difficult job.

e. Andrew reiterated that he rides the bus frequently and he agrees that the service suspension on December 5, 2013 went well.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:08pm

Next Meeting Date-

January 9, 2014, City Hall, Assembly Conference Room 155

Tentative Meeting items:

- a.* PTAB regular meeting: January 9, 2014 (TBD)
- b.* PTAB regular meeting : February 13, 2014