

PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD &

MSB- Transportation Advisory Board (Joint Meeting)

MAY 10, 2012, 5:30 PM

EAGLE RIVER TOWN CENTER, 12001 BUSINESS BOULEVARD, SUITE 170

ANCHORAGE PTAB PRESENT:

Sally Spieker
Jed Smith
Jay Dulany
Patrick Reinhart
Tim Sullivan
Dianne Blumer

Absent:

Justin Kirkelie
Carol Wren

Mat – Susitna Borough TAB:

Beth Fread
Debbie Passmore
Don Carney
Ken Walsh
LaMarr Anderson
Brad Sworts
Jim Rowland

STAFF:

Jody Karcz
Sandy Hansen
Jamie Acton

SPEAKER GUESTS:

ROBBIE WUITSCHICK –VALLEY MOVER
Jennifer Tew- Valley Mover

Guests:

Crissy Ditmore -VPSI
Mike Foster
Todd Logan
Rosemary Vavrin
Charolett Robinson- Mascot
Naomi Nelson- Mascot

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Chairperson Sally Spieker.

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

After roll call, a quorum was present.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion for approval of the agenda was made. The agenda was approved as submitted.

IV. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes for April 12, 2012 was approved as submitted unanimously.

V. REPORTS

a. Valley Mover Presentation

Robbie Wuitschick presented a power point presentation outlining Valley Mover and their transportation history beginning in 2010 by Mokie and Roberta Tew. Valley Mover purchased old forty foot People Mover buses to start their business. Valley Mover provides travel in the Mat-Su Valley for Job Corp, Wounded Warriors, Veteran's groups and commuters to/from Anchorage daily.

A recent survey conducted by Valley Mover shows that 35% of their riders also utilize Mascot and People Mover services. Robbie stated that most of their riders are UAA Students. She stated that Valley Mover plans to increase the schedule to include later trips due to UAA Students' needs and later class times. The long term goals of Valley Mover is to reduce fare costs, coordinate with other transportation systems and build a transit facility similar to Anchorage utilizing federal grants. Robbie stated that the proposed area for the Transit Center is the old Department of Transportation Railroad yard.

Tim Sullivan asked about the service area in the Valley. Robbie stated that Valley Mover travels to Mile 50 of the Parks Highway utilizing the Park and Ride at Trunk Road which meets Mascot riders for connections to Anchorage.

b. Share-A-Ride Program

Jody Karcz introduced herself and she stated that she was a car pool coordinator years ago. The Mat-Su travel was started with 10 vans and now that has grown to 60 + vans to accommodate the needs for van pools including 3 from Girdwood.

Crissy Dittmore is the coordinator contracted with VPSI. Crissy stated that there is a website for matching trips through a database. She stated that a waitlist may be required before a van is available based on numbers and need.

Jody estimated that 250,000 single occupancy trips have been taken off the road which reflects the success of the program.

c. Regional Transit Authority – Status Report by MOA and MSB staff

Brad Sworts and Jody Karcz talked about EECBDG Grant Funds that were used to contract RLS to develop a Regional Transit Authority Plan in Anchorage. The plan draws off many past studies and includes the Highway to Highway plan recommendations, Rail Studies, Van Pools and the long range plan of increased service based on expansion of need in Anchorage. A Regional Transit Authority would require Legislation and funding based on the RLS Study and a staff of two individuals to coordinate grants and funnel dollars to the appropriate communities.

d. The Role of Alaska Mobility Coalition

Jody talked about The Alaska Mobility Coalition, David Levy as Director, and their efforts to bring together Alaska transit communities such as Fairbanks, Ketchikan, Juneau, and Anchorage to advocate for local match funding dollars in a coordinated effort. The Alaska Mobility Coalition asked her to mention an Easter Seals conference in the Mat-Su being held at the Menard Sports Complex September 11th & 12th. Jody encouraged all to join the Alaska Mobility Coalition and to attend the conference.

e. Anchorage's long range plan- Glenn Highway Commuter & Transit Recommendations

Jody provided handouts with highlights of the 2035 Metropolitan Plan. She outlined the recommendations to offer a HO (High Occupancy) vehicle lane on the Glenn Highway. Anchorage has approved the plan with some changes. Jody stated that the plan suggested a South Anchorage commuter route and continued Eagle River service.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rosemary Vavrin, a transit customer of Valley Mover, Mascot and People Mover said that she was glad to see a coordination effort amongst the transit systems. She said she has an annual pass for

People Mover as a senior citizen and she requested a bus pass that would be universal for all transit agencies to ease the burden on customers.

Todd Logan thanked Valley Mover for the presentation and he stated that he has great hope for their continued success. He reminded the board that talks about increases in the budget and funding has to happen before August 2012 to ensure funding.

Sally Spieker and Patrick Reinhart stated that the Anchorage PTAB sub-committee had plans to meet regarding the budget in the future.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a. None

VIII. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

a. General discussion centered around the Knik Bridge Project and the impact that would have on commuters.

Ken Walsh stated that the commuting numbers are going to increase. The State of Alaska Correction facility being built in the west end of Wasilla will increase the numbers to 400,000 in years to come.

Mike Foster stated that the DOT projects 65,000 vehicles would travel the Glenn Highway in 2 years and the population will increase to 190,000 in the Valley. The construction for the Knik Bridge is scheduled to start in 2014, however funding did not pass the House of Representatives this year. The Parks Highway is scheduled to be upgraded to 6 lanes. He stated that it is hard to see the future however, if the plan is not in place now, it will be too late once the population has boomed.

Beth Fread stated that the commuter time frame in the morning is from 4am to 7am which has increase from 30 years ago. She expressed her concern for the future if an alternative is not found for the increased vehicle traffic utilizing the Glenn Highway.

IX. BOARD COMMENTS

Jed Smith encouraged all in attendance to connect together a strong system between the Valley and Anchorage. We are all in this together he said.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50pm

Next Meeting Date-

August 9, 2012, We will convene at 5:30pm, City Hall room 155.

Tentative Meeting items:

a. Additional Joint meeting MOA/PTAB and MSB/TAB to be determined