

PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD
SEPTEMBER 12, 2013, 5:30 PM
CITY HALL ASSEMBLY CONFERENCE ROOM, SUITE 155

PTAB PRESENT:

Sally Spieker
Andrew Ooms
Jed Smith
Tim Sullivan
Carlette Mack

STAFF:

Sandy Hansen
Christine Sondej

Guests:

Shirley Smith
James Brodie
Buck A. Bloomer
Sam Moore
Chuck Boeher
Todd Logan

Absent:

Kevin Jackson
Jay Dulany
Patrick Reinhart

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:32pm by Chairperson Sally Spieker.

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

After roll call and introduction, a quorum was present.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Tim moved to approve September agenda. Carlette seconded. September agenda was approved as submitted unanimously.

IV. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Carlette moved to approve minutes for August. Jed seconded. The minutes for August 8, 2013 were approved as submitted unanimously.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. 2014 Operating Budget – Proposed \$183,000 savings from non-labor funds

Christine stated that the operating budget savings for non-labor is \$183,000 as requested by each Municipal Department of a .08% reduction by the Mayor. A public hearing on the budget is anticipated to be scheduled in October or early November. Christine suggested a PTAB resolution at that time outlining their position.

Tim Sullivan asked about the specific cost saving. Christine responded that the savings came from fuel and other various small amounts that are budgeted and not always utilized. Christine stated that a handout was provided at the last meeting that she can provide.

b. 2014 Capital Budget- requested \$525,000 for 2014 bonds as match to federal funds

Christine highlighted the transit request for funds to cover match for funding of capital projects such as bus stop improvements.

c. Proposed Fare Adjustments for 2014 – No action is requested at this time

Christine talked about the proposal of a fare increase to the Mayor with the hopes of the revenue generated to fund bus service. The fare increase proposed at this time for the 2014 budget reflects the same increase proposed for the 2013 budget.

Consensus of the PTAB members was that increased service would be expected if the fares were increased. Sally suggested that a work session with the Mayor regarding the budget would be beneficial. She asked that Christine coordinate with Lance the work session with PTAB. Christine agreed.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Media Contact – Guidance for PTAB

Christine relayed information in Lance's absence to the PTAB members regarding media inquiries. She stated that Lance inquired downtown about policies in place regarding board members speaking to the media and at this time, there are none. Lance recommends speaking to the media as an individual if you choose, versus as the voice of the board unless it is agreed upon by the entire board. Lance also suggests if members are not comfortable giving a statement as an individual, to refer them to Transit staff.

Carlette inquired about voting a member of PTAB to be the spokesperson. Sally was a suggestion. Discussion ensued about the comfort level of each member giving a statement to the media.

Jed suggested asking the reporter for their contact information and get back with them after thinking about the answers to the questions requested.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

a. Triennial Review

Christine stated that Transit submitted a document questionnaire to FTA for the triennial review. A contractor for the FTA is expected to tour the facilities and request additional information on October 10, 11, 2013. She stated that PTAB meets on October 10 and that the FTA contractor may be interested in attending the meeting. Board members inquired about the purpose of the in person visit and what was expected.

Christine affirmed that the FTA conducts an audit to assure that federal money we receive through the 5307 grant follows the transit laws and guidelines appropriately.

Sally inquired about the questionnaire that was submitted. She was interested in the questions that were requested and asked if board members could review it prior to their arrival. Christine stated that it would be a large document although if members were interested, she would provide it.

b. Service Change , Monday August 19, 2013

Christine outlined the changes implemented during the recent schedule change on August 19, 2013. She reported that with new staff, it went well and that Judy Tymick, Customer Service Manager reported that phone calls to customer service have been few and mostly regarding the locations of new bus stops.

c. Ridership Report / Fuel Status

Christine provided a handout of the fuel costs to date and the status of the cost savings based on the fuel budget projections.

August Ridership report is delayed however it will be available for the next meeting.

d. Presentation to Eagle River Rotary – Aug 22, Director's provided overview of Transit

Christine informed the Board that Lance Wilber gave an informational presentation at the Eagle River Rotary Club on August 22. Members asked general questions regarding time by bus to downtown from Eagle River, Airport service, and other information regarding the transit budget process.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

a. Shirley Smith expressed her frustration with calling the rideline for assistance waiting a long time for assistance. She stated that some bus drivers are rude and not helpful to visitors or individuals that request the ramp be deployed. Ms. Smith requested that more shelters be available on Dimond Boulevard by Burlington Coat Factory as she becomes tired after crossing the road. Shirley expressed that she enjoys the bus and most drivers are very pleasant. She requests that senior fares stay the same.

b. Sam Moore inquired about the Google Transit option for better trip scheduling.

Christine replied that we have had challenges implementing google transit and we hope to resolve the issues. Christine said that she would find out more information on the status and get in touch with Sam Moore.

Mr. Moore suggested that a promotion of the smart card would encourage individuals to go paper free and decrease boarding time

c. Chuck Boeher expressed disappointment that the Route #8 was realigned and no longer travels past his home as a convenience for his wife to use People Mover to travel to work at Conoco Phillips. He understands that Staedem hill has been challenging in the winter however, he believes that using Edward would be a solution. He knows other seniors that use People Mover in his neighborhood that would also be impacted by the change. He also feels that the current bus stops at Boniface and 6th Ave are not safe for individuals crossing the street.

Christine acknowledged that the recent change affected individuals that use our service in the Donna Drive area however, the safety issues on Staedem hill overshadowed buses traveling through the neighborhood. She reported that a few concerns regarding the lack of adequate turn radius for

buses at the Edward/E6th Ave intersection, the increased running time, and the presence of school age children for Ptarmigan Elementary on Edward Street were included in the decision process.

Mr. Boeher insisted that there was a solution and since the bus had been traveling through the neighborhood for many years, it should continue.

Tim Sullivan suggested that we schedule the route to travel through Donna twice a day to accommodate Mr. Boeher and his wife.

Christine said that she was not aware of other routes doing that however, she would propose the suggestion to Lance.

IX. BOARD COMMENT

Sally recommended PTAB meet with the mayor to discuss the budget due to the positive results from the meeting last year. She is hopeful that more members would be able to attend this year.

Tim stated that he used Public Transit in Portland, Oregon in August and he was impressed with the trains and bus service there.

Andrew agreed that the Portland service is good and he would be visiting next month.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12pm

Next Meeting Date-

October 10, 2013, City Hall, Assembly Conference Room 155

Tentative Meeting items:

- a. PTAB regular meeting: October 10, 2013 (Budget resolution/ FTA visit?)
- b. PTAB regular meeting: November 14, 2013 (TBD)
- c. PTAB regular meeting : December 12, 2013