

Public Transit Advisory Board
May 10, 2018, 5:30 pm
ASSEMBLY CONFERENCE ROOM (#155), CITY HALL

PTAB PRESENT:

CITIZENS PRESENT:

Samuel Moore	Karen Carsen	Randy P.	Michael Loftis	Jilanne Inglis
Andrew Ooms	Nancy Ordway	Jane and James	Buck Bloomer	Leigh McDaniel
Doug Miller	Jerry Lee Greschke	Alice Criswell	Savannah Francis	Lily Joe
Gretchen Wehmhoff	Desire Hotch	Helen Kolbeck	Holly Spoth-Torres	Wendy Williams
Freddie Olin	Alice H. Seller	Chanlle J.	Manuel Vazago	Joshua Williams
STAFF:	Linda Larsen	Alan B. Rice	Carl Kancir	Samuel Williams
Abul Hassan	Laurie B. Wood	G Paz	B. Wilkey	Ezekiel Williams
Bart Rudolph	Holly Montes	Flora Avessuk	Yolanda Blackwell	Jeremiah W.
Will Brown	Cy Montes	Jonelle Johnson	Patricia Bedminster	Ishmael Praelo
Kurt Hermes	Jared Pece	Curtis Nicholai	Michael Eastham	Joseph Praelo
GUESTS:	David Freedman	Laurie B. Wood	Desiree C Hotch	Carl Kancir
Charles Jerul	Pat M. Olsen	Wendy and Samuel William	Ashmad and Joseph Prado	Sonja K. Ellis

I. CALL TO ORDER

Gretchen Wehmoff called the meeting to order. **Samuel Moore** nominated himself to serve as meeting Chair. **Doug Miller** seconded. There was unanimous consent. The meeting was called to order by **Chair Samuel Moore** at 5:30 PM.

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

After roll call a quorum was **present**. Britta Hamre had an excused absence.

III. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

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

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The meeting agenda was approved.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

Carl Kancir said thank you to a driver for acting calmly and professionally when it rear ended a bus. His frustration is that the bus routes (emphasis on route 13) used to work for all of Anchorage and now the focus is on Mountain View and eliminated two stops that were in the path of the senior center and served a lot of neighborhoods. He wishes to work with the board because of his knowledge and decision making on what bus stops should be added and removed for buses to reach all of Anchorage.

Sharon Stocaul said all bus routes had been eliminated except Mountain View and the upper corner. She questioned why her neighborhood couldn't get essential services. She expressed frustration that they were told by the city that their neighborhoods do not matter and that they deserve better.

Unnamed Woman 1 read an email sent by the chairman saying the department is working for citizen satisfaction. She expressed frustrations that they do not have that and that Spenard is bigger than Mountain View and questioned why there is not a bus system there anymore. She said that if the target of helping Mountain View is because they are lower income neighborhoods, it should also be applied to Spenard because there are older people, disabled people and people that have to work and need a bus. She told two stories, one of her disabled son that used and loved the bus system a lot and of a woman who had to walk far distances to bus stops with challenges in her way like the homeless and moose.

Pat M. Olsen said that she is very old and wore out her knee and has to walk 20 minutes to catch the bus. She stated that she was one of their best customers and overall loved the service except for those who can't walk on the full Wisconsin. She then suggested if there was a way of knowing how many people were using the bus to the airport to one in the morning then cutting some of that out to only two routes.

Sonja K. Ellis said that she and her grandchildren pay taxes too, therefore, they should have service too.

Charles Jurel said he used to catch the bus close to his home in his neighborhood but that it no longer runs there so he has to walk 20 minutes to get to a bus. He stated that the bus no longer goes to the hospital anymore so he must go downtown and transfer from Spenard to number 20. He expressed concerns with high cost of alternative options like taxis and old age making walking difficult.

VI. BUSINESS / INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Item 6a – July Service Change

Bart Rudolph introduced the new transit planner, Christine Schuette. He began with information regarding on-time buses. He stated the 21 and the 31 routes have some of the worst on time performance which is why they are looking to change those routes. He said that the 11 route is ok and will also be changing to reduce confusion. Route 11 will be cut into two routes.

b. Item 6b – Public Comments (closed May 7)

Bart Rudolph said that the public comments were closed May 7 and directed the committee to the list that shows how they got the word out about advertising the public comment period and how they were taking comments. He then directed the room to the second packet that was the comments they received. Five comments were received about the 11 and 41 routes and they were in favor of the change. Two options were proposed on the 21 route and all commenters chose option 1. There were eight negative comments about no longer going downtown. Two positive comments were received for the 31 route, and "a couple of negative ones" about it no longer going to downtown. Additional comments not on the main public comments included routes 36 and 60 and a signed petition.

Bart Rudolph answered a question that routes, such as route 10 that appear to not have a “set” schedule actually do. This information will be published starting July 2.

c. Item 6c – Ridership Data

Bart Rudolph said that Andrew requested ridership data and this was provided.

Andrew Ooms asked clarification on what to do about cutting service to downtown. **Bart Rudolph** responded that part of the problem is that running time assigned is not enough to complete the route. The solution is to either cut the routes or get another bus; and unfortunately it isn’t financially possible to add another bus at this time.

Andrew Ooms asked if the ridership data from 2017 was comparable to this year. It was answered that there is no ridership data from 2017 that is comparable since the system changed. The ridership data will be comparable after the change between the old system and the new system.

d. Item 6d – Muni ADA and/or State DOT&PF Update

Jilanne M. Inglis, Municipal ADA Coordinator said she has no updates. She said she has her cards on the tables if people have questions dealing with the public infrastructure. She addressed the board saying that most of the calls she receives are about rides and routes and in the winter are about lack of snow removal preventing them from getting to their bus stops.

Gretchen Wehmhoff asked when the last time the board was updated with an AnchorRIDES update. **Bart Rudolph** responded that there are between 69 and 71 vans in service. **Larry Gibson** responded that there are between 450-650 trips a day and about 10,000 a month not taking into consideration cancellations.

e. Item 6e – New Members

Doug Miller said that he was at the last meeting. He stated he has ridden the busses in Anchorage and at least five other cities. He said that he was curious why he did not see announcements for this meeting on many of the buses. **Staff** responded that the board learned they were inadvertently taken down. He said there is a mailing list and social media that also helped get the information out.

Freddie Olen said he grew up in Anchorage and sold his car in March and is happily riding buses. He was appointed by the assembly last month.

Andrew Ooms asked where the summary was for the schedule changes and when the final decision will be made. **Bart Rudolph** responded that final decision is May 11.

f. Item 6f – Board Comments

Samuel Moore said that the changes are to better utilize the bigger buses in town and use the smaller buses as a circulator. He believes it is intended to improve being on time and the ridership. He said over the last few years it has been emphasized that there are more transfers and less walking. **Andrew Ooms** said that the changes are unfortunate but he understands the reasoning for reliable bus services and many other aspects.

Gretchen Wehmhoff said the concept of \$1.4 million for the continued study for the Knik Arm Crossing is money not coming to our own community for other, better public transit needs. She suggests citizens

contact their legislatures so it will not pass. She said she wants to reiterate they should work on getting service to the route 36 area and that they we should have a role in the train system connecting the Valley to Anchorage ensuring good connectivity from the train stop to their homes and places of work.

Andrew Ooms said thank you to Christine Schuette and Bart Rudolph. He said he and his kids have had positive experiences on the buses including that morning. His kids like the 31 although it won't be going by their house anymore so they won't ride it as much and appreciates the differences between the big and the small buses.

Doug Miller said the Wisconsin routes are a puzzle and the ridership before the changes were not very strong and that he understands it is hard not to have a route there and they will do everything they can to reinstate some service there but there is not a lot of people riding there.

Andrew Ooms moved to consider a statement from the board to approve or disapprove of the July 2nd service chnages. For discussion, it appears people would appreciate such a statement. He said he proposes a statement in favor of the service change as recommended in particular with option 1 of route 21 reflecting public support while acknowledging the necessary but unfortunate reductions from the 21 and 31 routes to downtown.

Doug Miller seconded the motion. **Samuel Moore** said he objected to avoid wordsmithing and that it is not necessary in the first place. **Gretchen Wehmoff** supported saying that they approve this change. Director **Abul Hassan** acknowledged that the feedback was largely that a route needs to go downtown, but regretfully said we can't fund it. **Andrew Ooms** asked if the routes to downtown could be reduced to once an hour instead of every half hour and still provide that connectivity? **Staff** responded that it didn't keep with the intent of the new service system that emphasizes frequency. The new system, however, does make the transfers to get downtown better. **Doug Miller** asked if historically the Board issues approval or disapproval for service changes. **Andrew Ooms** pressed again that he thinks it is important because of the magnitude of the service changes and the impact to citizens.

The motion carried unanimously.

NEXT PTAB MEETING DATE

Next Meeting Date: September 13, 2018 - 5:30pm-7:00pm (Location TBD)

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Gretchen Wehmoff motioned to adjourn. **Doug Miller** seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.