



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Meeting Minutes - Approved TRANSIT AND PARKING COMMISSION

*PLEASE NOTE: This meeting can be viewed in a live webcast of Madison City Channel at
www.madisoncitychannel.com.*

Wednesday, September 14, 2011

5:00 PM

Room 260, Madison Municipal Building
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
(After 6 PM, use Doty St. entrance.)

A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM.

Present: 7 -

Ald. Bridget R. Maniaci; Chris Schmidt; David E. Tolmie; Gary L. Poulson;
Susan M. Schmitz; Kenneth M. Streit and Margaret Bergamini

Absent: 1 -

Amanda F. White

Excused: 1 -

Ald. Lisa Subeck

Please note: Bergamini has been nominated to a member position and Ken Golden has been nominated to the First Alternate position, with both to be confirmed shortly. There remains one vacancy on the Commission for the position of Second Alternate. Golden was in attendance, and without objection, Poulson invited him to join the table. Maniaci arrived at 5:15 PM during the Parking Report.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Streit, seconded by Schmidt, to Approve the Minutes of the August 10, 2011 meeting. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

C. ORGANIZATIONAL ITEMS

C.1. [23845](#) Proposed 2012 Transit and Parking Commission Meeting Schedule - TPC 09.14.11

A motion was made by Bergamini, seconded by Schmidt, to Approve the 2012 meeting schedule as presented. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

C.2. **Appointments to other committees: Fill vacancies on Parking Council for People with Disabilities and Contracted Service Oversight Subcommittee; and other committees as needed.**

Golden offered to serve on the Contracted Service Oversight Subcommittee. Poulson said he would talk to absent members about filling the TPC vacancy on the Parking Council for People with Disabilities. Depending on their responses, Streit said he could be contacted last.

D. PUBLIC APPEARANCES - None.

E. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS - None.

F. TRANSIT AND PARKING MONTHLY REPORTS

F.1. [23841](#) Parking: August 2011 Activity Report, July Revenue/Expense & Occupancy Reports, and 2012 Capital Budget & Wingra Cost Analysis - TPC 09.14.11

Referring to the Wingra Lot Operating Revenue/Expense Comparison, Parking Operations Manager Bill Knobeloch discussed the issues related to creating and maintaining parking lots in peripheral neighborhoods.

- He received many requests for lots like Wingra, and had always said no because such lots lost lots of money.
- The top portion of the Wingra analysis showed the current rev/exp without capital costs, since the Lot had been purchased a long time ago.
- The bottom part showed what the rev/exp would be if Parking had to buy the land and develop it now.
- Most requests he got would involve purchasing land, removing structure(s) on it, developing the lot, installing meters (at a cost of \$720 each), and operating it (inc. collection, lighting, enforcement, snow plowing, etc.)
- In 2010, Wingra had lost \$16.5K (less than previous years due to rate hikes). But if this had been a new lot which involved purchasing and developing the land, the cost would have resulted in a loss of \$60.
- A current request involved the Mullins Project across from the Blue Moon (on Old University Avenue), on land already owned by the City. Two other requests were for lots in two aldermanic districts on the East Side.
- Requests usually came from developers, business groups, alders or the Mayor.
- These lots lost money because of low rates, low occupancy and low compliance. People didn't use the Wingra Lot much; and when they did, they didn't feed the meters due in part to lack of enforcement.
- The cost structure was such that these lots were expensive; for example, snow plows had to be transported to clear the lots, as much as three times/day during a snowfall.

Knobeloch said he would bring similar info about the costs of building and operating a ramp, for which he received requests as well. People thought they were doing the Utility a favor to allow it to open a new facility and make money. But when the Utility lost as much as \$28-33K/year on a really small facility like Wingra, it wasn't hard to imagine the impact of other new lots/ramps on Parking's bottom line. These requests came at a time when cost analyses showed that as Parking replaced its two or three very old ramps (GE, State St Cap, Lake St) with new underground ramps (at \$31K/stall), the Utility would run out of money. And in order to add small lots like Wingra, downtown parkers would have to pay more, to subsidize them. As for a new ramp on E. Washington, no one could build it and break even without TIF money or some other support. Such projects presented a big challenge. Knobeloch wanted to make the Commission aware of what was going on with these requests. Referring to the situation with the Atwood meters, Poulson said the Commission might want to revisit the whole scheme of street meters and lots on the periphery. Knobeloch noted that Parking had sold its lot on Atwood to United Way because it couldn't make ends meet there.

[Please note: Maniaci arrived at this point in the meeting.] In discussing the Mullins Project, Streit wondered if the land could be leased to the developer, who could then maintain it, clear snow, etc. Knobloch said that this was what they were trying to do there: to work out a trade whereby the developer could run an access road through City land in exchange for keeping the lot open to the general public along with his customers. He said the only way to make ends meet in that location otherwise would be to rent monthly parking to hospital workers. Not surprisingly, neighborhood shops wanted hourly parking for their customers.

Golden suggested that it might be useful to think about lots like this in a larger context, to consider the impact of available parking on the success/failure of nearby businesses and associated City property taxes. He recalled how the Fiore Companies had leased the land on Old University (then called "Eve's Triangle") and maintained it as a break-even situation, independent of the Parking Utility. He allowed that it would probably be harder to work out such arrangements with neighborhood businesses retroactively, as for example on Monroe Street. But it was worth exploring to see if some sort of formula could be worked out with the business association to help make up the deficit at Wingra Lot, esp. if the choice came down to keeping it open. Golden thought that besides saying no and explaining how as an enterprise, these lots lost money, Parking could be an assistance to business associations and neighborhoods just as it was for the downtown. Not to make money but to break-even, these lots could be viewed in a different light; i.e., as part of a mission to provide parking in all parts of the city where needed, to revitalize or maintain the vitality of neighborhood business districts.

Along those lines, Knobloch said that Parking had asked different developers if they would partner with the Utility to develop Wingra Lot (like Keller had at Monroe Commons, which also didn't break even because of low rates and lack of enforcement). He had spoken at length with two developers and the Library, and said if someone would partner with the Utility at Wingra, that would be good.

Bergamini wondered how Mullins had incorporated parking into their original proposal, and why they were now saying they needed this additional parking. Regarding the requests for other projects inc. the ramp on E. Washington, Bergamini wondered how much of this was perceived need rather a real need, and how this was meshing with the rewrite of the zoning code and the reduction in the requirement for parking for some types of facilities. If we already knew some of these facilities would not have full occupancy, and that they would be losers for the businesses unless the spots yielded more retail sales or a lot of extra monthly rent, she thought these would be perfect test cases for determining what certain developments really needed in terms number of stalls and types of parking, and how long it would take to pay the investment off.

Schmidt asked about 1,400 parking spaces in the new Gov East. With 600 spaces being City parking, and the rest of the spaces divided up for a hotel and other partners, he wondered if the City had an agreement to avoid having the City compete for customers with private partners in the same structure. Knobloch said that no one knew who, besides the hotel, the other partners would be. The hotel was requesting only 150-200 stalls, not even one

stall/room; and they were counting on the City's parking for extra stalls. So the situation in the new Gov East was the other way around. The City could control competition in a structure it shared if private partners were to receive public money. The City had tried to do this before (across the street from Gov East), with not a lot of success because the agreement was separate and not connected to the TIF agreement. Knobloch felt this should be written into the TIF agreement if there was TIF support.

Knobloch said they didn't know whether there would be 1,400 stalls; this depended on the development. There were others who might share in that parking; discussions were going on. Financing the excess capacity was the risky part of the development. No one, including Parking, was ready to take that risk. Parking was willing to fund 600 stalls, and the hotel approx. 200 stalls, which still left 600 stalls (at \$31.5 K each) unaccounted for. Schmidt remarked that the extra stalls made more sense when there was train funding.

Since Parking currently had no bond covenants, Golden asked if the Utility could (with impunity) expand its monthly leasing program. Knobloch said Parking expected to bond up again soon. Golden said the leased portion seemed to be bringing in double the revenues of daily parkers at Overture and State St Cap, and wondered if these facilities could be leased up beyond what the Bond Council would normally permit. Then once bonded again, he wondered whether after-the-fact, Parking would be allowed to move into compliance, or whether the lease-holders would have to leave immediately.

Knobloch noted that when he asked, the City Attorney's Office said they would need to seek a formal opinion from the Bond Council about this. The Bond Council had already allowed Parking to lease as many spots as they wanted on a monthly basis. Some cities rented entire facilities to monthlies that typically had 20-25% no-shows, which were filled by daily parkers. However, some of Parking's facilities, including Gov East, currently had vacancies for monthlies, probably due to the price point of the last rate increase.

Schmidt/Tolmie made a motion to receive the report. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

F.2. [23856](#)

Metro: YTD Paratransit Performance Indicators and Financial Performance Report thru July, 2011 - TPC 09.14.11

Metro General Manager Chuck Kamp made the following comments:

- Ridership YTD through July on fixed routes was up 7.4%.
- Productivity was up 6.4%.
- Paratransit ridership was down slightly 1-2%.
- The last payment for diesel fuel on a floating contract had been \$3.05/gallon vs. the \$2.37/gallon budgeted.
- Though fuel costs were \$362K overbudget, Metro had savings in other categories and higher than projected fare revenues due to increased ridership.
- As a result, Metro still had a slight amount to the good to build the contingency reserves.
- But by the end of the year, this would not be the case because of fuel cost overruns.
- Metro would continue to do its best to keep things balanced.

Tolmie/Maniaci made a motion to receive the report. The motion passed by

voice vote/other.

G. NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

- G.1. [23844](#) Metro: Informational presentation regarding Bus Size Study - TPC 09.14.11

Kamp reminded members of the Metro Long-Range Plan adopted in 2008, in which Item 8 recommended doing a review of how Metro selected its bus sizes, looking at a range of smaller and larger buses. Currently Metro's buses were all 40-foot buses (exc. for its paratransit vehicles). Though the Plan called for this study to be done as part of Transit Development Plan (TDP), it had to be delayed due to staffing issues at the MPO, which had been focusing on a regional transit plan. It had seemed unlikely that the study would be done.

But then WisDOT alerted Metro of some planning funds that were available for things like the TDP, and Metro sought funding and submitted a budget estimate and scope of work, which was approved by DOT. Kamp expected a resolution to implement this. He had started discussions with Chair Poulson and the Mayor's Office about setting up a steering committee to oversee and guide this. Also, in the spirit of transparency, because Metro was struggling with overcrowding, Kamp said he had a bias against short buses at this time and Metro would be pushing for articulated buses. But the study would look at all bus sizes. David Trowbridge had agreed to provide his assistance in giving this an arm-length's review to look at the issues fairly. More information would follow.

Poulson said the make-up of the steering committee was not yet known, but a few TPC members would be part of it. Kamp was asked what percentage of the cost of operating a bus was labor. Kamp said the total cost per hour (with capital and everything inc. depreciation) was \$135. On the operating side, it was probably two-thirds driver hours.

- G.2. [23881](#) Metro 2012 Budget Update: Input on Operating Budget Request - TPC 09.14.11

In discussing the 2012 Metro budget, Kamp said he appreciated the City process for looking at all 20-30 City departments and some of the broad-based "hits" Metro and others were taking; and based on this info, the City made across-the-board adjustments before giving each department its 5% target.

- Metro's State transit operating assistance was cut by 10%, from \$18 million to \$16.2 million.
- The City's projected cost of fuel in 2012 was \$3.37/gallon, which would affect Fleet Services and Metro.
- Metro was preparing a document for Middleton, Fitchburg, Verona, and all of its partners.
- After making some corrections (reflected in the "September" materials attached), Metro's tax levy goal for the City of Madison was \$9,756,000. Because of the City's methodology and because this year's 2011 tax levy was \$8,291,000, partners had been informed of the increased tax levy goal for next year.
- Metro was proposing a mix of services and fares to reach its 5% goal.
- Metro had hoped to reach the target all through fares, since their sense was that, along with maximizing ridership, keeping service on the street was the highest priority. They were looking for input from the Commission, BOE and

the Council in this regard.

- Metro proposed to increase fare revenues by reducing fare discounts (on 10-ride tickets, 31-day passes, etc.). After working on this, they found this helped, but didn't go all the way to the 5%.
- They then looked at eliminating six holidays because ridership on those holidays was very low. Also, they looked at eliminating Route 10, which was painful since they had just added it in 2009. But their guideline there was that there were alternatives for where Route 10 traveled (inc. Routes 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6), so most of the ridership from Route 10 would be maintained.
- The final piece for reaching the 5% goal was to trim Sunday evening service, to be closer to holiday services now; i.e., by trimming 3-4 hours in the evening when ridership was the lowest.

The Mayor's Office had asked that Metro get input from the Commission, if hypothetically, \$100,000 could be added to Metro's budget, along with increments up to \$500,000. Noting that the possibility of amendments to add money back into Metro's budget was not as good as other years, Poulson asked what Metro's priority would be, if an extra \$100K could be added. Referring to the hand-out, "Impact of Fare and Service Changes", Kamp said none of the service/fare changes shown were as low as a \$100K. The only thing they could do with \$100K would be to adjust some fare reductions. But with \$200K, they could look at putting Sunday service back in. If more money could be added, Metro would concentrate on services with the most positive impact on ridership first.

Regarding guidance from other partners, Metro had given them the numbers, which had been discussed at CSOS and follow-up conversations. Being in an odd period of feast or famine, Fitchburg was looking at additional service, but might have to cut next year; Verona/Epic was looking at additional service; Middleton was looking at additional Sunday service to Willy St. Co-op, with possible cuts in other service. Though not looking at 5% cuts, Metro had gotten the idea that partners would need to discuss some cut scenarios, though Metro had no specifics at this point.

In order to identify what amount and which items the 5% target was based on, Kamp said he could first say what it was not. It was not 5% of Metro's \$50 million annual operating budget, nor was it 5% of the \$8.29 million of the City's tax levy. Because the City was helping to absorb State aid cuts and fuel cost increases, and because of pluses/minuses like employees contributing to their retirement and anticipated wage negotiations, the number was a bit higher than the current tax levy; and the 5% was subtracted from that. It included the many different changes related to interdepartmental charges and human resource changes. For example, Metro had received a request for an additional \$10K from IT, which was included in the budget (after reaching the 5% goal).

Finance Manager Wayne Block said that the budget projections contained any increase in costs that Metro expected to occur. The 2012 budget essentially reflected the status quo, except for the fare and service changes required to reach the reduction in City funding. The remainder of the budget anticipated that what was happening now would continue to happen in 2012. In terms of how staffing was budgeted, the City assumed that all positions would be filled, and then took 2% off of that amount to account for savings due to retirements and the resulting vacancies (usually of some duration).

Commission members provided feedback.

- Poulson was more concerned with saving service than with fare discounts. Someone riding the bus on a holiday probably had to ride the bus on a holiday, and he hated to start carving out days when Metro didn't provide service at all. Adding back Sunday service would be his second priority. And with alternative routes, Route 10 would be his third priority.
- Streit recommended surveying some of the more heavily used Sunday routes to see who was riding the bus during the time in question. He thought many were probably transit-dependent. More information like this would be helpful.
- Golden said the proposal for Sundays and holidays took service from something to nothing. He wondered if there might be something in between. Perhaps Metro could do something analogous to commuter service; to find out when and on which routes most people rode on holidays, in order to develop some sort of skeletal, survival service. For example, someone who normally took a holiday bus at 10:30 could maybe take the bus at 9:00 instead. It would be better to have some service rather than having no service at all, if some money could be saved and other issues (such as driver scheduling) could be worked out, to make this feasible.

Kamp said that improved data reports (showing ridership and time of day) could be used to look at any patterns on holidays, to see if there were peaks when perhaps more limited but targeted service could address a good portion of the need.

Bergamini wondered if the idea of running shorter buses on holiday/Sunday nights could be incorporated into the scope of work of the bus size study, which would get to the heart of concerns about running big buses on routes with low ridership. This wouldn't change matters in 2012. She noted how the possibility of cutting holiday/Sunday service had been under discussion for several years.

Looking at the influence of the Campus schedule, Streit wondered if Metro could run an exercise to greatly reduce the number of extra buses on Campus over the summer months to see what would happen; maybe eliminating some of the X buses could be traded for retaining Sunday/holiday service.

H. REPORTS OF OTHER COMMITTEES - for information only
(Most recent meeting minutes attached, if available)

[07828](#)

ADA Transit Subcommittee
Contracted Service Oversight Subcommittee
Parking Council for People with Disabilities
Long-Range Transportation Planning Commission
State Street Design Project Oversight Committee
Joint Southeast Campus Area Committee
Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (MPO)

No action was needed on these items.

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

I.1. General announcements by Chair (Verbal announcements, for information only)

Following up on Maniaci's suggestion from a previous meeting, Poulson said that the topic of the Transportation Plan would be on the October agenda. Maniaci said that staff was figuring out how to do this, and she wanted the Commission to provide some input at the front end, re: structuring it, getting feedback and public process, and whether the TPC, a special committee or work group would oversee it. She was interested in what the City was purchasing, esp. the scope of services. The project could be sunk if the scope went too wide/narrow; and the TPC could be helpful in this regard. She wanted to know what we could already bring to the table (from previous planning), and what we would need.

Schmitz agreed that the scope of services would be critical. As a member of the RTA, she was aware that most of the outlying communities had really good plans, esp. Fitchburg and Middleton, which could be plugged right into this new plan.

Kamp was having a meeting with those involved, and would invite someone to the next meeting.

I.2. Commission member items for future agendas

In reflecting on street parking, snowplowing and parking permits, Maniaci noted that Parking charged just \$21 for the permits, which were being oversold. At some future meeting, she would be interested in looking at where new developments had occurred since the last rate change, the density of certain areas of the downtown, and the marketing that was being done. Bergamini said that some of these issues had been discussed at the time of the last parking rate increase; Poulson noted that the next round of parking rate changes would be coming up in June.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Schmidt, seconded by Schmitz, to Adjourn at 6:02 PM. The motion passed by voice vote/other.