



# City of Madison

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
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## Meeting Minutes - Draft TRANSIT AND PARKING COMMISSION

\* STROLLER  
POLICY DISCUSSION  
ON NEXT PAGE.

PLEASE NOTE: This meeting can be viewed in a live webcast of Madison City Channel at  
[www.madisoncitychannel.com](http://www.madisoncitychannel.com).

Tuesday, July 13, 2010

5:00 PM

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

Please note: Items are reported in Agenda order.

### A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM.

Present: 9 -

Gary L. Poulson; Susan M. Schmitz; Kenneth M. Streit; Margaret Bergamini; Chris Schmidt; Jed Sanborn; David E. Tolmie; Amanda F. White and Duane F. Hinz

Absent: 1 -

Brian L. Solomon

Please note: Sanborn arrived at 5:13 PM, during Agenda Item E.1., the Parking Report. Also, there is one vacancy on the Commission.

### B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Streit, seconded by Tolmie, to Approve the Minutes of the June 8, 2010 meeting. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

### C. ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

#### C.1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Poulson asked for nominations. Streit/Schmitz nominated Poulson for Chair and White for Vice-Chair. Poulson asked three times if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, Hinz/Schmidt made a motion to close nominations and hold the election. Poulson was elected Chair and White was elected Vice-Chair by voice vote/other.

#### C.2. Appointments to other committees, as needed (inc. Taxi Appeals Committee)

Poulson asked for volunteers to serve on the three-member Taxi Appeals subcommittee, which was needed to hear a current appeal. Schmidt agreed to fill the alder position, and Streit and Bergamini (Chair appointee) agreed to fill the remaining two member slots.

#### C.3. 19167

Proposed addition to TPC Rules and Procedures: Section II (L) - Bonds - TPC 07.13.10



authorizing the Mayor and the City Clerk to execute the associated grant agreement with USDOT and the associated 13 (c) agreement with Teamsters Local No. 695.

A motion was made by Streit, seconded by Hinz, to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

F.6. 18947

Authorizing the Transit General Manager to file an application for a Section 5307, public transit capital, capital maintenance and capital planning grant with U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) and authorizing the Mayor and the City Clerk to execute the associated grant agreement with USDOT and the associated 13(c) agreement with Teamsters Local No. 695.

A motion was made by Streit, seconded by Hinz, to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

→ START HERE ←

G. 6:00 PM - PUBLIC HEARING: To hear public comment on proposed change to enforcement of Madison Metro's current Stroller Policy

19150

Madison Metro's proposal for Stroller Policy enforcement, customer survey and feedback- TPC 07.13.10

Kamp said that Metro's Customer Service and Safety Committee had tried over the past year to address the issue of the stroller policy, which was both a customer service and safety issue. Though a tough issue, Metro was coming forward with a proposal that addressed things from a safety standpoint. Metro had received 200+ comments and surveys and had held meetings with drivers including those with the best customer service recognition about the stroller policy. Rather than asking for action immediately, Metro would come back to the Commission in a few months for a recommendation regarding enforcement of the policy. During that time, Metro would work with community centers, non-profits and others to more fully develop community awareness and an implementation plan related to strollers and grocery carts that could fit and be stowed correctly on the bus.

The CS & Safety Committee had looked at the recommendations of Metro's insurance company, Transit Mutual Insurance Company of Wisconsin, which insured 20 transit systems around Wisconsin. TMICW had a strong, two-fold recommendation: No large, bulk items like strollers, grocery carts and luggage should be left in the aisle; and children should be removed from the stroller.

Metro staff then showed a 3-minute video from their website (linked to U-Tube), which outlined the policy and its goals, and discussed proper stowage of strollers and other large carry-ons . [To view the video, use this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHorfD9sM8U&feature=channel.>]

Then a short video of a recent bus accident in Oshkosh was shown. [To view the video, use this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Xj3xAKIbm8.>] Kamp said the video demonstrated why the insurance company felt that a child should be held by an adult, to shield them from more serious injuries. Kamp concluded by saying Metro was faced with the difficult challenge of balancing both customer service and safety with regard to this issue. Poulson then invited hearing registrants to the table.

Carl Durocher, 1441 Williamson Street, 53703, registered neither in

support/opposition. He noted the 20th anniversary of ADA and the strides made in Madison re: accessibility on mainline buses and paratransit service. He discussed federal and local definitions for "standard" wheelchairs, which set a precedent for size and dimensions of what was allowed and worked on a bus. Durocher supported a policy that gave drivers discretion depending on available space. A too-restrictive policy could have unintended consequences. He liked the plan to take time to prepare people for implementation. Social service agencies that worked with families and vendors could look at options for smaller, collapsible strollers more suitable for transit use. Durocher noted among the charts of survey responses that 100% of respondents in wheelchairs had experienced a conflict with strollers/other large items in the securement area and had been obstructed in the aisles.

Royce Williams, 2437 Fox Avenue, 53711, spoke in opposition to strict policy enforcement. A senior who rode the bus frequently often to link up with intercity buses, Williams was appalled that the policy and the new train station were unveiled at the same time. If a person had the wrong piece of luggage or a bus was too crowded, an intercity traveler might not be able to board the bus and could miss their link-up. With hundreds of train passengers and expanded air service, Metro needed to address this issue. He thought driver flexibility and discretion was important. Being a grandfather, he thought it would be ridiculous for parents to have to unload both their children and sometimes their groceries, esp. if a bus had enough space to accommodate. People needed to be flexible. Perhaps future buses could have more fold-up seats.

Laurie Wertmer, 847 Williamson #9, 53703, supported folding up strollers. While sensitive to young, transit-dependent families, as a daily bus rider, she had often seen healthy/mobile parents block 5-6 seats near the front of the bus with large strollers, preventing riders with mobility problems or frail elderly from using the reserved seats there. The disabled/elderly had to move further back into the bus to find an open seat, made more difficult by not being able to reach the overhead hand-holds. She had rarely seen a parent with stroller open up one of the empty seats around them to offer to those physically challenged. Wertmer agreed that flexibility was needed. Many people didn't know that front seats could be put up to place the stroller and unblock the aisle; drivers could help with this. A civility campaign was needed. She hoped that the buses would have a place where train travelers could put their luggage, and where transit-dependent grocery shoppers could put their full carts.

Please note: At 6:25 PM, at this point in the meeting, Schmitz excused herself from the meeting, and was not present when action on New Business Items was taken later in the meeting.

Kari Ehrhardt, 4817 Sheboygan Avenue #206, 53705, spoke in opposition. Ehrhardt had relied solely on Metro Transit since coming to Madison four years ago, and sometimes needed to bring aboard a grocery cart or luggage, and wondered if she would be allowed to continue to do this. More importantly, as a shelter worker at Salvation Army, she knew well the impact of this proposal on low-income passengers with children who needed to board the bus with strollers, and had the following concerns and suggestions:

- Parents with more than one child would have a nearly impossible time trying to fold a stroller while still maintaining control of their children.
- The policy mandated fold-up strollers only, which would require some

families to purchase one; for those needing double strollers, a cost of \$300+ would be a bigger challenge.

- Both these factors could make it impractical or impossible to ride the bus, causing social isolation and exacerbating mental health conditions among low-income families who counted on Metro Transit.
- The front area of the bus should be made available to all people in the community with mobility needs, inc. disabled, elderly, as well as those with strollers, grocery carts or luggage; and if disabled/elderly boarded and needed this space, then the others (with carry-ons) should be required to move back (the policy adopted by Ottawa after a similar public discussion).
- The needs of all in the community could be met if passengers did the right thing and cooperated, without resorting to an unduly harsh policy that would deter certain members of the community from riding the bus.

Agreeing that space was in short supply and should be shared, Bergamini asked how the issue could be resolved in a practical way vs. rule-making way. Ehrhardt thought perhaps a public subsidy or vouchers for proper foldable strollers would help defray costs.

Cathy Casper, 2114 Red Arrow Trail, 53713, registered in support. She felt that the biggest barrier to enforcement were drivers, who didn't put seats up/down and didn't make sure the front seats were available to elderly/disabled. She was on a bus where a woman absolutely refused to move her stroller from the aisle, and though other riders couldn't get past, the driver refused to enforce the rules. The police didn't help with enforcement either. She felt that large items should be allowed on buses, but not block the aisles. She was concerned about the elderly poor who used grocery carts on the buses to get to food pantries. Casper thought wheelchairs and walkers should have top priority for the front seats; and strollers should be parked out of the aisle. If there wasn't enough room, maybe supervisors could give rides to people with strollers, esp. in bad weather. Along with drivers being flexible, perhaps space on buses could be made more flexible, with more fold-up seats.

Nataliya Akulenko, 1459 E. Main #209, 53703, registered in opposition. She used buses exclusively and liked public transportation. She felt enforcement of the policy would be unfair to people like her, a mother with a toddler and baby, who used the buses to go grocery shopping or to appointments. How could this parent fold up a stroller and hold two young children and bags? Many such riders took buses because they needed to. Good for the environment, these riders should be encouraged to use buses vs. cars. Akulenko herself tried to fold up her stroller, but sometimes she didn't when her child was sleeping (to avoid disturbing other riders with a cranky child). Discretion and courtesy were needed. Unfolded strollers should not be prohibited. Also, trying to move a folded stroller and carry children and bags when a bus was moving was dangerous. Folded strollers did easily not fit between seats. Front seats could be folded up to make room for strollers. She grew up in bus systems where parents with children were given priority along with disabled and elderly. Many parents like her tried to take as little space as possible.

Rosemary Lee, 111 W. Wilson, 53703, registered in support. A stroller and baggage policy "with teeth" was urgently needed. Drivers were not the sole problem; more often, riders were. She had had a very bad experience with this issue: Upon boarding the bus, she encountered two large strollers, one on each side. With six inches left in the middle, she had had to walk step-by-step

sideways. She feared children in strollers could get hurt if people fell on them. Current practices represented a safety hazard. If other cities could enforce a (folded) stroller policy, Madison could. All the drivers must be required to enforce it. With more important things to do, police shouldn't be called.

Lori DeGayner, 540 W. Olin Avenue #228, 53715, registered in support. DeGayner had noticed a decline in the way people responded to bus drivers. Bus drivers seemed afraid of some passengers, who sometimes got belligerent. Recently, a passenger with a stroller wanted an elderly person with a walker and an arm brace to get up and move. The driver handled the situation well. The person folded up her stroller and moved back, but she complained about it loudly, essentially harassing the elderly woman. DeGayner had seen 10 seats taken up with strollers and bags. DeGayner was worried about babies in arms and lurching buses, which could kill a kid. She had seen buses take off before people with mobility problems could sit down, often because riders in the front wouldn't let them sit down. This practice was very dangerous and needed to stop; safety was more important than schedules. Also she knew of a woman with cancer and gait problems who often had to ask young folks up front to move. Rarely did drivers intervene, probably because they were afraid of the kids, who sometimes were verbally abusive or threatened violence. Harassment needed to stop; perhaps "bouncers" were needed to make people behave, so drivers could be allowed to drive. She had used buses to move, and hoped large items would continue to be allowed when space was available.

Tom Earley, 1625 Madison, 5371, registered in opposition. For 22 years, Earley had ridden the bus every week with eight day care children. He liked the bus system and thought highly of the bus drivers; they knew the kids' names, and after being asked once, they lowered the bus and waited for everyone to get seated before moving on. A rider just had to talk to the drivers. He used one umbrella stroller for a smaller child (under 2), because he wanted her down low and really couldn't hold her while tending the other seven children. He and his kids moved whenever a disabled/elderly person needed space; they came before his kids. If a bus was too crowded, he and the kids would wait for the next bus. Earley wanted drivers to be given flexibility; people could work things out. This was not such a big issue; but it would be if the rules were enforced, and he and his kids couldn't ride the bus downtown anymore. Some of his grown kids still used the bus. He thought the current system worked.

Deb Brennum, 3609 Sargent Street, 53714, registered in opposition. As a Metro driver, Brennum was in support of her passengers. She thought it a great challenge for a mother with two children and groceries to bring everything on the bus without the stroller; and likewise for the driver to have to wait until things were disassembled and everyone got situated. Brennum thought everyone needed to be flexible; it couldn't all come down to the drivers as some thought. Drivers were in a really challenging position. It needed to be up to the driver's discretion to step in and help out with situations also. In her 12 years, she hadn't encountered many problems; except for one instance, when she asked riders to adjust, they did. Riders laden with children and packages were also disabled in a way. Everyone – drivers, passengers and children – needed to work together. Flexibility was called for. She had driven both full and empty buses, and a blanket statement that all stroller should be folded up wasn't always necessary, esp. when a bus was mostly empty. Busy routes and tight schedules already created time constraints, which would be worsened if drivers had to wait for strollers and children to get situated. Brennum

wondered whether a mother holding a child in each arm was really safer than leaving them in a stroller; she thought this should be reviewed. When asked, Brennum said that helping passengers didn't violate work rules; unlike herself, some drivers were just more leery of doing so. She also reported that in her experience, most riders looked out for each other and worked together; there were only a few rare individuals who didn't.

Julie Allen, 314 S. Owen Drive, 53705, registered in opposition. A committed bus rider who had used buses all her life in various places, Allen worked at the UW and had four children, whom she took by bus to/from day care. As previously suggested, flexibility was central to the issue. She was shocked when the stroller policy was posted on the buses last year, and thought Metro's video misrepresented the situation. As a parent with a stroller, she had never harassed anyone about a seat. She used the smallest possible strollers; when needed, an umbrella for her 3-year old, and a slightly bigger stroller for her 5-month old, who couldn't sit up. In certain situations, it was impossible to easily fold a stroller and stow it away. Allen also didn't think it was safer to take her children out their strollers; they were better off restrained than lurching around. A friend with one-year old twin boys and no other means of transportation simply could not fold up her stroller and hold onto both children, much less hold onto to anything else. It didn't make sense to universally apply the policy to so many different situations. She thought the policy regressive and should be moving in the direction of European buses, which were designed with special spaces for strollers; or a space could be designated for strollers, which could be relinquished to wheelchairs. This would be safer for everyone. While strollers in the aisle were a hazard, it was a nightmare for parents to try juggle their strollers and kids esp. in bad weather, and didn't serve anyone's interests. Allen felt that parents could be educated about the best strollers to use, and how to travel lightly; other riders could be educated about the challenges faced by parents; and drivers could be more helpful as well. Allen felt the situation was much less malicious than represented; some parents were understandably desperate. She didn't think refusing service to parents with strollers was a good solution; what would those without other transportation do, esp. in the winter? Allen thought Madisonians of good will could come up with a solution that didn't penalize people with children who wanted to ride the bus. She hated to think riders would stop using the bus and start using cars because of a blanket enforcement policy. When asked, Allen wasn't sure that designating a maximum stroller size would be as helpful as educating people about the best choices.

Debbly Lynn Aldrich, 3707 Morning Road #A, 53704, registered in opposition. Her husband used a fold-up grocery cart. He worked hard to keep it out of the way and accommodate others. Aldrich was concerned about a policy where they would always be required to fold up their cart and take everything out of it. She felt that people needed to be considerate when using a space on the bus. Her husband had a weight restriction, and needed to put their groceries in the cart. He also used the cart like a walker. Aldrich recommended being practical: Sometimes it wasn't necessary to take everything out of the cart; a space for the cart could be found instead. Current practice shouldn't change just because some people weren't considerate. She asked that people consider riders who had to use the bus with a cart. Aldrich also thought drivers should report every time they had to turn down a wheelchair because the spots were full, to determine how often this was happening. Wheelchairs should be given

first priority. She saw the issue from both sides, as a person in a wheelchair and as rider who needed to use a cart. She thought agencies could help guide parents who used the bus to opt for suitable fold-up strollers, that could be easily folded when necessary.

Joni Groskrautz, 415 North Lawn, 53704, commented as follows: A long-time bus rider, she remembered when her son was little and she was asked to fold up his stroller. Recently, she experienced two riders with strollers who acted like they had priority over all other fare-paying riders, even though they didn't have to pay fares for their children. She was actually told to get up and move by one young man with a double-wide stroller.

Angela Bennett, 2610 Myrtle Street, 53704, registered in opposition, and submitted the following written comments: As a bus rider, I have not observed difficulties. I like the flexible use of wheelchair securement space for: 1st priority, those in wheelchairs, elderly and disabled; 2nd priority, those with strollers and grocery carts that do not block the aisle. I would suggest flexibility esp. during off-peak hours when useable space is available. I am concerned that selective enforcement of the policy may give rise to race-based complaints, since many of those I've seen using Metro space with (designated for) wheelchairs are people of color.

Allison Grant, 1325 Drake Street #2, 53715, registered neither in support/opposition. Having a 20-month old child and appreciating the difficulty of trying to fold up a stroller, she also understood concerns about strollers that blocked the aisles esp. on crowded buses. While it would be ideal for everyone to use an umbrella stroller, sometimes this wasn't possible. Grant wanted everyone to treat parents with children with respect, just like disabled deserved respect. It took parents more time to board and get settled into seats with their kids. Drivers could wait until everyone was seated before moving, and could help with the strollers. If strollers could easily be folded, that would be good; but if they were loaded with other things, then it wouldn't be so easy. Sometimes, there was no room on crowded buses for folded or unfolded strollers. Grant wasn't sure what the solution was.

Poulson concluded the hearing by saying that Metro would consider all the testimony and feedback, and come back to the Commission in a few months with recommendations re: implementation of the policy. The meeting then returned to Agenda Item F.1.

**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  
Ad Hoc Committee to Develop Parking Strategic Plan  
Low Income Bus Pass Program Committee  
Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (MPO)

No action was needed on these items.