



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved ADA TRANSIT SUBCOMMITTEE TO THE TRANSIT AND PARKING COMM

Monday, June 28, 2010

5:10 PM 5 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Room LL-130 (Madison
Municipal Building)

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Guests: Lorry Bond, Greg Morrison, Jenny Mortenson

Staff: Crystal Martin, Ann Gullickson, Ann Schroeder

Chair Brunette-Tregoning called the meeting to order at 5:13 PM.

Present: 7 -

Chris Schmidt; Jeanne M. Tregoning; Susan M. De Vos; Mary E. Jacobs;
Ida W. Nathan; Carl D. DuRocher and William J. Tangney

Absent: 2 -

Kenneth M. Streit and Michael A. Huckaby

2. [18966](#) Introductions

Introductions were made for incoming member Lorry Bond from the Committee for People with Disabilities. She has been interested in this subcommittee, so she was happy to volunteer when Mr. Tangney was looking for a replacement. She rides paratransit and fixed route when she can.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. DuRocher moved approval of the minutes as written; Mr. Tangney seconded. The motion carried by voice vote/other.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

5. [18962](#) Election of Officers

Ms. Brunette-Tregoning said she does not know from month to month whether she will be on the Subcommittee. She nominated Carl DuRocher for Chair. Mr. DuRocher said he would accept, but he wondered why the uncertainty with Ms. Brunette-Tregoning's membership. It is because her term expired, and she has

yet to be reappointed or replaced. Ms. Jacobs' term also expired. The rules allow people to serve when their term expires until someone is appointed in their place, so they are both in that position. Mr. DuRocher nominated Ms. Brunette-Tregoning for Chair. He pointed out that the Chair can advocate for reappointments. Ms. Brunette-Tregoning thanked Mr. DuRocher for the nomination, but declined. Mr. DuRocher was elected by voice vote/other.

Mr. DuRocher took over the meeting as chair. He said if Ms. Brunette-Tregoning is interested in continuing with the committee, he will advocate with staff and the Mayor's office for continued service. He would also do this for Ms. Jacobs. Her contributions to this committee are invaluable.

Nominations opened for Vice Chair. Mr. Tangney nominated Susan De Vos. Ms. De Vos declined. Ms. Brunette-Tregoning nominated Ms. Nathan. Ms. Nathan declined the nomination.

There was discussion as to whether Mr. Tangney could be re-elected or if Lorry Bond could be elected. Mr. Tangney could be re-elected but would have to be replaced the following month when his term is over. Ms. Bond could not be elected at this meeting, as her membership is not yet official.

Ms. Brunette-Tregoning nominated Ms. Jacobs for Vice Chair. Ms. Jacobs accepted. She was elected by voice vote/other.

6. [18963](#)

Transit Solutions, Jenny Mortensen

a. Ride Length Information and Discussion

At the last meeting, Ms. Nathan inquired about rides in the afternoon. She had experience that those rides were taking longer with Transit Solutions. She wanted to know more about that. Transit Solutions staff saw a copy of the minutes and were invited to talk about ride times. It can be helpful to go around the room and give your experience. Then Transit Solutions staff has a chance to collect questions and answer in the course of their discussion.

Mr. Morrison said they didn't have a formal presentation but wanted to respond to concerns. They could do a little better job with the post-rush hour jobs that happen around 4:00 PM and a little after. They think they do a pretty good job, but there is always room for improvement. They understand and know that at the end of the day, everyone wants to get home. A ride that is 15 or 20 minutes longer than usual is an inconvenience. Part of that problem is that there is a little bit of an overlap at the 4:00 hour from the rush hour. If they keep a little better eye on that, they can improve service during that time. Overlap means that the rush hour is 2:00 or 2:30 and by 4:00 PM there can be an impact from those rides from weather, traffic, a leave attended ride where no staff person was available, etc. The recent statistics that accompanied the minutes looked pretty good for most providers, but there is always room for improvement, and that is the tack they are going to take.

Ms. Mortenson said that they have a lot of drivers who go home at 3:30 PM because the peak is over. One thing they are going to do is keep a few drivers on staff a little later to help out with the overlap problem.

Ms. Jacobs said she hasn't had any recent experience but she had previous experience with late rides after 4:30 through Transit Solutions. The fewer-drivers situation explains that. One person said that the driver would go this way and that way, and it seemed like the route wasn't planned out very well. He was picked up on campus and then would go west when the person went home east. Her thought was that routes needed to be planned out a little more carefully. It could also be a shortage of drivers, or it could also be what Transit Solutions needed to do.

Ms. Nathan said her first experience with Transit Solutions was through Jewish Social Services, and with that it was fine because she understood that there were lots of people who needed to be picked up. But with the regular Transit Solutions service, her experience has not been good. They are generally late in the morning and beyond the 20 minute limit. She is usually going home around 4:00 PM and has to wait beyond the 20 minutes. The driver can't find her for pick up, and then she is en route an hour or an hour and a half. She generally feels sick when she gets home. The air conditioning does not work in the vehicle, so it would be cooler to just open the window. She usually ends up sitting toward the back because she uses a walker, and this spot is very unpleasant. Her main concern is the long wait and going all over Madison. She has a sense that the routes aren't thought about as going in one direction. The drivers say they complain, but they don't get anywhere. She hears that there are a lot of add-ons. The time on board is well beyond the hour that she thinks is the maximum. She is not keen on Transit Solutions because of various experiences. Depending on where the vehicle parks, she can't step up without a little step stool. The drivers don't always offer it as a routine thing; you have to ask for it. Some of the drivers are not happy about having to do it and some don't stand nearby while she uses the step stools and they are flimsy. The drivers should have these handy, and if someone is sitting in the front seat, that step up is high. That should be an automatic thing. And just as a preventative, the driver should stand nearby in case the passenger loses her balance. As part of their orientation, they should be told this.

Mr. DuRocher asked if the manifest followed for Metro Plus rides are pre-routed or if Transit Solutions has much input about how that is routed. Ms. Bond said her issue is outside the parameters of the time delay topic. She will wait and talk with them privately afterward. Ms. Nathan said perhaps it would benefit everyone. Members encouraged Ms. Bond to speak. Ms. Bond said using a walker presents a problem with Transit Solutions. She has requested accessible vans so she can use a ramp for a lift with her walker. Her doctor has also requires that she sit on her walker. She uses this as opposed to a wheelchair. She was told by Transit Solutions that people who use a walker must stand on a lift. But people who use a walker have a balance problem. She did file a formal complaint with the civil rights division because she felt it was a violation of her rights.

Mr. DuRocher said he would like to hear from Ms. Martin about what the criteria are for whether the ride is classified as a wheelchair ride or an ambulatory ride. Ms. Bond said she was not referring to a Metro paratransit ride. Ms. Martin said Transit Solutions has fulfilled the orders as Metro has requested them. It is Metro's responsibility to determine the space type and Transit Solutions has met those requests. For Ms. Nathan, something to keep in mind is that she lives in an area that is on the outskirts of the service area.

There is fixed route bus service that is commuter service. There is service available if a person is willing to travel in the morning and afternoon rush hours. Ms. Nathan is talking about the routes 56 and 57. In looking at Transit Solutions' overall statistics, it doesn't consider at the specific instances for trips that are harder to serve.

Ms. Brunette-Tregoning said she needs to give accolades to Transit Solutions. She doesn't take them in the afternoon because of the late rides. She takes them in the morning and they are on time, the drivers are friendly and the buses are the most comfortable. She is happy when she has Transit Solutions because those buses are the most solid.

Mr. DuRocher said he is confused by Ms. Bond's comment. If her problem rides are not Metro paratransit, what are they? Ms. Bond said Transit Solutions also provides rides for a different service for people with disabilities and older folks – daily trips and other things depending on the area. It costs \$2 round trip. Trips can be booked a couple days ahead of time. Ms. Nathan said she knew about these \$2 rides but only through Jewish Social Services. She didn't know you could call Transit Solutions directly and find out where they are going throughout the week.

Mr. Morrison said that service is called Group Access Service (GAS). Transit Solutions provides the service, but any advertising of it is out of their hands. Ms. Nathan could call Jewish Social Services directly for those trips. Ms. Nathan said according to Metro, the rush hour goes until 4:00 PM, but Transit Solutions said they release drivers at 3:30 PM. Will keeping just a couple be enough to cover the rush hour as Metro knows it? Mr. Morrison said Transit Solutions doesn't release a lot of people at 3:30 PM. Most people who come in have been out since early morning. They've noticed they either need to keep more people out or bring more people in.

Ms. Mortenson said "going all over the place" at 4:30 PM is partially due to having fewer drivers on the road and things like rerouting because of late trips or a flat tire. Perhaps that routing was not the original plan, but something has gone wrong. That is something to look into – having people stay or come in to deal with that time period.

Mr. Morrison hopes it is not like they are trying to justify anything. But they are in touch with Metro often during the day about extra rides, cancellations and other things. When you put it all together, it can be difficult. If they do get add-ons and cancellations, waiting for staff, that does have an impact. They try to work with all those things to provide very efficient service.

Ms. Mortenson said regarding step stools they pride themselves on training their drivers on assistance and safety first. In the future, if a problem happens with step stools, if Ms. Nathan could call in a complaint right away, they can follow up on that with the specific person. Mr. Morrison is the trainer and also does road observations. He has not seen that specific behavior or people would have heard about it, so please call in directly to Transit Solutions or register a complaint through Metro.

Ms. De Vos asked if there is an easy way to identify the driver. Ms. Mortenson said if the person calls the same day or even within the same week, they have a

list of all the rides, so they could easily track down the person. Ms. De Vos said a name would be good. Ms. Mortenson said drivers do wear name tags and vehicles have numbers.

Mr. DuRocher asked if Transit Solutions is given the bus runs or if they route it themselves. They do get several runs from Metro. They do sometimes have to piece things out. Standing rides are worked into a schedule in a spreadsheet. There are casual rides, about 100 a day, anyone, anytime, anyplace. Those get worked into the schedule where they can throughout the day with cancellations. Mr. Morrison said schedules are put together ahead of time so you can imagine there can be a lot of changes and changes that happen throughout the day as well due to the number of add-ons and cancelations.

Mr. Tangney said as a former driver, he is very sympathetic to add-ons and cancellations. As a driver and dispatcher, he didn't like it and didn't like doing it to passengers, but hopefully people can understand those things. Mr. Morrison said he is not trying to slam Metro. Metro has a big job. Metro and all the contractors are trying to do the best they can. Mr. Morrison made apologies for late and long rides. It's something no one wants to do, but it is something that unfortunately sometimes happens. They have plans to alleviate that.

Mr. DuRocher thanked Transit Solutions staff for their comments. Transit Solutions made a commitment to review the training issues with the step stool. They clarified some rides are paratransit and some are GAS. Ms. Bond's issue will be dealt with separately. Ms. Brunette-Tregoning underscored that Transit Solutions provides a more comfortable ride. There is another subcontractor out there who has vans that rattle because of fold up lifts. It's very noisy. Mr. DuRocher agreed that their equipment is always a pleasant ride. The suspension takes the bumps a little bit. So he wanted to add those positive comments.

Ms. Jacobs said she was initially focused on the topic at hand. But Transit Solutions has done a wonderful job with some of their routes. They have some really good drivers out there and work those routes very well. There was a client who had not used paratransit before Transit Solutions, and it turned out to be a very positive experience because of the driver.

Mr. DuRocher wanted to add one thing. A lot has to do with the source and destination of the trip. As Ms. Martin alluded to, Ms. Nathan's problem partially has to do with her more remote location. He doesn't seem to have as many issues as he hears about, perhaps because his trips often originate and end in the downtown corridor. It should never happen, but that is an added issue.

Ms. Nathan said she appreciated hearing Transit Solutions point of view. Mr. Morrison said he appreciated hearing everyone's point of view and thanked the group for inviting staff to the meeting. They will be working on things that need improving. He volunteered himself and Ms. Mortenson to attend a meeting if there is a need for a representative of transportation.

Ms. Martin said Transit Solutions had been very instrumental over the last several years in working to template rides, particularly ambulatory rides. They change amazingly often considering that they are for standing rides. Transit

Solutions has also helped work on some tough issues and transportation is going very smoothly. Sometimes when you solve one problem, you create another. The way paratransit is set up influences the way service is received.

7. [18964](#)

Triennial Review - Update on ADA Items

- a. Customer Service Hours on Sundays & Holidays Change July 1.
- b. Change in Free Fare Routes (the 80s series) and Impact on Paratransit Fares
- c. Public Notices: Ride Guide, Rider Alerts, Maps, Website

Attachments: [FINAL REPORT 2010 Triennial Review ADA Findings.pdf](#)

Ms. Martin said Metro has a triennial review every three years to make sure it is in compliance or to set forth new rules. Metro has been doing paratransit service the same since the last triennial review, but this review came up with some new findings.

They found that the Customer Service Center (CSC) hours on Sundays and holidays needed to more closely reflect our administrative service hours. Effective July 1, 2010 the CSC will open on Sundays and Holidays at 9:00 AM rather than noon.

The other issue that came up was in regard to the campus route 80s. In order to board many people at the same time, Metro stopped collecting fares on these campus routes. They are funded through the university and most of the riders are university staff and students, but this makes it look like a free fare bus. There are other routes coming in the same proximity that are paid routes. But because there is also paratransit service in the area of the route 80s "free fare" buses, there needs to be a change. The rule is that paratransit fares can only be double the adult fare – which is zero for the route 80s. Double zero is still zero. Metro met with the university about how they wanted to correct this issue. The two groups have established that the routes are supposed to be free for students, faculty and other people affiliated with the university (visitors, etc.). But those not affiliated with the university need to pay the regular fare. Metro be working on making that notice to the Federal Transit Administration about how the situation will be corrected. We don't have an implementation date other than that all the corrective actions have to be done by July 25th.

Ms. Jacobs asked if her agency supports someone who is an employee of the university whether that person gets free paratransit service. Ms. Martin said if that person has their UW pass, the UW is billed for that service. If she lets Metro know, the passenger will get free service with that pass.

Mr. DuRocher wanted clarification. No one pays on the route 80s, but it was only intended or designed for the University. Ms. Martin said it was decided to make it all free for everyone, but that was an uninformed decision because in addition to the UW people, it would create a paratransit free fare zone within ¼ of a mile of that service, so suddenly the University would be responsible for the fares for all trips in a larger area. The piece that was challenging wasn't the service on campus or people going to campus, but the routes extend so far

that the ¾ mile zone takes in so much area in downtown, that it would mean people traveling downtown who have nothing to do with the UW would be affected. That could be hundreds of rides. That wasn't ever the intention of the "free routes". Instead of having the route 80s just being free, which is how Metro has described those routes in our ride guide, they will now be described as free to university staff, students and visitors. We will need to periodically have drivers check IDs on these routes because people who are just members of the community and not travelling to the University need to pay.

Ms. De Vos said there is an 80 route to Eagle Heights. The main point she takes is the danger from using the word "free." Unlimited ride passes have been called "free." They are not free. University rides have been called free, they are not free. We need to tighten up our terminology and describe them in a way they are meant to be.

Ms. Nathan said when these new laws come into effect, shouldn't the buses have something posted in very large print, "to University people only, free". Ms Martin said this is something we are working through with the University.

Mr. DuRocher said if the intent of the route 80s is for the use of staff and students who already have the unlimited ride passes, then wouldn't the university want to consider just not continuing the route 80s program as a separate program? The routes are there to serve the University, and the staff and students have the swipe cards, so what is gained by having this route 80s agreement? Ms. De Vos said it is a lot faster not to have to swipe or show a card because people often don't have their pass ready. The "free" (we need a better word) is to speed up the boarding when there can be 25 people boarding at one stop. There was some question as to what kind of ID a visitor have to have if they were going to, for example, an evening lecture at the University.

Ms. Gullickson wanted to point out that Metro has had several meetings with representatives from the University and all the things that were brought up here were brought up at those meetings as pros and cons. Metro had a relatively short time to implement something. This could evolve into a different solution, but implementing this change will be virtually invisible to customers.

Mr. DuRocher asked the impact on the customer service budget by adding time every Sunday and holiday. Ms. Gullickson said some of it will be overtime, but some will be re-scheduling existing staff.

Mr. DuRocher said he has a bit of a negative reaction to the triennial review because nothing has changed since the last review. He thinks if there is to be extended staff needed, there should be a dispatch supervisor on duty any time there is service on the road. That seems to be more of an issue than booking rides and answering questions, which doesn't seem to be as critical.

8. [18965](#)

Reports

- a. Transit & Parking Commission
- b. Commission on People with Disabilities
- c. Dane County Specialized Transportation Committee
- d. Transportation Planning Board (MPO)
- e. Other Community Meetings

- f. Report from the Chair
- g. Staff Report
- h. Paratransit Performance Indicators

Attachments: [Para Indicators Apr10.pdf](#)
[Para Indicators May10.pdf](#)

Ms. Brunette-Tregoning asked to be excused; she could read the reports in the minutes. Alder Schmidt needed to leave as well. Mr. Tangney moved to refer the rest of the agenda to the next meeting. Mr. DuRocher said reports are standard, so they would be on the next agenda regardless. Ms. De Vos said she wouldn't be at the next meeting, so she had some questions. She was curious about the financial information on the paratransit indicators that has not been available. Ms. Martin said it would be available for the next month's report.

Alder Schmidt said the Council working group regarding snow removal is just finishing up their full report. They opted not to include the recommended ordinance changes in this report, so Alder Schmidt will be introducing it as a separate item.

9. [08706](#) Other Transit Related Announcements

Ms. Gullickson let people know about the upcoming public hearing about strollers and other carts on buses at the next Transit and Parking Commission meeting. There are pros and cons on both sides. Metro is getting a lot of feedback. This might be of interest to people using fixed route because the spot available for strollers and other items is in direct conflict with mobility devices. Ms. Nathan said it made a very big difference with her walker when the seats were flipped up and her walker was anchored.

Mr. DuRocher said the issue does pertain to this subcommittee. Perhaps this should have been on the agenda to get feedback. Maybe part of the rule should be you can't bring a double stroller on board when someone is not in it or maybe there should be size limits. We want to keep our aisles clear but also encourage and not discourage ridership. There are many issues here.

Ms. De Vos said that there are Regional Transit Authority meetings of the board and subcommittees.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Tangney moved to adjourn; Ms. Jacobs seconded. The motion passed by voice vote/other.