



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, October 25, 2010

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

1. PROPER MEETING NOTIFICATION

The meeting was properly noticed.

Staff: Crystal Martin, Ann Gullickson, Ann Schroeder

Present: 5 -
Chris Schmidt; Kenneth M. Streit; Lorry Bond; Mary E. Jacobs and Carl D.
DuRocher

Absent: 2 -
Jeanne M. Tregoning and Michael A. Huckaby

Excused: 2 -
Susan M. De Vos and Ida W. Nathan

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Streit moved approval of the minutes; Alder Schmidt seconded. Ms. Bond abstained. The motioned carried.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

5. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS UNDER THE ETHICS CODE

Ms. Martin said the City Attorney updated staff on some changes to the ethics code. Action was not taken on this at the last Council meeting. However, if this change is instituted, we will see this item on every agenda. It provides time for members to disclose any tangential relationship to an item on the agenda that would not be expected to influence their vote or to give notice of recusal regarding an item to which they have a more substantial relationship.

6. [20286](#) Approval of Subcommittee Meeting Dates for 2011
a. Four Proposals (1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th Mondays)

Attachments: [2011 ADATS Tentative Meeting Schedule.pdf](#)
[2011 ADATS Tentative Meeting Schedule 1st Monday.pdf](#)
[2011 ADATS Tentative Meeting Schedule 2nd Monday.pdf](#)
[2011 ADATS Tentative Meeting Schedule 3rd Monday.pdf](#)

If we continue meeting on the 4th Monday of the month, there are four dates with a conflict in 2011. On the third Monday there is the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. Mr. DuRocher said with the timing of daylight savings, sunset will be after our meeting is already over, so the third Monday might not really conflict with Passover. There was discussion that it might not be appropriate to hold a meeting that evening anyway due to travel time and other considerations. Mr. DuRocher said also Ms. De Vos mentioned in an email that she was not available the 1st or 2nd Mondays of the month. We could open it up to other nights of the week, but that gets very sticky with varying schedules. Mr. Streit moved that the ADA Transit Subcommittee meet on the third Monday of each month during 2011; Ms. Jacobs seconded. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

7. [20287](#) Contractor Implementation 2011 - Abby Vans
a. Mark Jones, President, Abby Vans

Mark Jones is President and Owner of Abby Vans, which is based in Neillsville. He is very pleased to be a contractor with Metro Transit. It is a very good fit for their organization. They are currently finalizing financing, vehicle acquisition, driver procedures and policies. Staff met with Karl Schulte who does sensitivity training for drivers. Mr. Jones and his wife (Abby Vans' driver trainer) will attend Mr. Schulte's training. Mrs. Jones would like to become a trainer for that class.

Mr. DuRocher asked how they plan to deploy vehicles and whether there would be a local garage. Mr. Jones said full time drivers will keep their vehicle at their home. They will track the vehicles through an on-board tracking system. Drivers do like to be able to start from home. They hope all drivers will be local. They usually have to start with some base drivers because they are training the new drivers.

Mr. DuRocher said Abby Vans is a new contractor in the mix. Approximately 2/3 of eligible riders are ambulatory. Sedans are often perceived by the public as being more efficient to use for ambulatory riders rather than oversize vehicles. Mr. Jones said most of their vehicles will not be accessible because at this time Abby Vans will start with ambulatory-only service. They will obtain some accessible vehicles, but most will not be. Mr. Jones said they are planning to have 25% of the vehicles accessible, but the RFP only requires accessible vehicles if a customer requires such accommodation. They are doing that to see if they can grow that part of their business. Ms. Martin said for a start, Abby Vans will be doing most of the work that Badger Cab had been doing. There are two large statewide human service projects that could impact the need for services, so over the course of the contract, changes brought on

by a statewide Medicaid brokerage system or the implementation of the Family Care program in Dane County could impact ridership and the need for contractor service.

Mr. Jones said Abby Vans bid on both ambulatory and non-ambulatory service, but they are starting with the Badger Cab work. That is what they are preparing for. Ms. Martin said there is no exemption for Abby Vans providing wheelchair accessible vehicles. This is going to be a transitional period, and Metro wants that to go smoothly before we make any more changes. The contract will start January 1, 2011.

Ms. Martin had some questions that she had collected from other meetings and subcommittee members:

In one of Metro's other transitions, drivers were trained with GPS systems rather than maps, and that wasn't the most efficient. How will Abby Vans go about it? Mr. Jones said Abby Vans drivers will either be from this area or have been driving for them a long period of time and will come here and get to know the area. Dispatching will be done through RouteMatch software. Drivers can be given those turn directions from the software. It doesn't mean those directions can't be changed, but it uses the speed limits and traffic flows, etc. They will start slowly and make sure not to overbook each driver. With the onboard computers, they can tell when someone is behind schedule. Drivers are given maps, but they also use GPS programs. One of the next features Abby Vans hopes to get is a turn-by-turn program with RouteMatch. Mr. DuRocher said drivers used to keep copies of street guides. Ms. Martin said she would show Mr. Jones an example when they have a meeting.

Will there be a local phone number? Mr. Jones said they would prefer not to have one. They could if there is some challenge with their 800 number. Their 800 number goes into their Neillsville location. They have found routing from a local number to the 800 number causes more static on the phone line.

Will callers always get a live person to answer? He said that people can choose to leave a message but are never automatically sent directly to the answering system. Callers can stay on the line to get a live person.

Will there be a dedicated dispatcher for this area? There will be a primary dispatcher, but they will cross train to cover for sick days and vacations. Also, one person could not do all the dispatching. They are not hiring someone from Madison to dispatch; they are using the dispatch staff they have. Ms. Gullickson said often we refer to buildings by their name rather than the address. Mr. Jones said there will be a learning curve. They have drivers who regularly come to Madison and have been doing so for years. They are not totally unfamiliar with the area. There will be a learning curve, but there will be consistency with the primary dispatchers. In the beginning, they overstaff to try to cover that learning curve.

Mr. DuRocher asked what days and hours Abby Vans will provide service. Mr. Jones said all times, including evenings and weekends. Many times the Metro customer service phone line is not staffed, so will they have someone answering phones during all the times vehicles are on the road? Yes, they will have phone staff during all service hours.

Will there be local road supervision during all hours? Yes, they will have someone supervise during all service hours. Occasionally they will also be providing service, but that won't be their primary purpose.

Abby Vans will be using 2010 and 2011 Dodge Caravans. They have a lot of history operating those vehicles and with the maintenance and fuel economy.

Mr. Streit gave Mr. Jones a Ride Guide listing popular destinations. Those could be programmed into their software. Mr. Jones said they are meeting with Metro staff, and the primary topic is beginning to get that sort of data to enter into their system. Ms. Martin said the first meeting is Tuesday 11/9/10 to meet with customer service staff. Staff has started to send Abby Vans daily copies of what the work looks like currently. They will also be meeting with Metro's Information Systems Coordinator to talk about the data end. After that, there will be a follow up meeting to make sure things go as smoothly as possible.

Ms. Jacobs asked if the driver will see the manifest with the comments because many of her clients have special instructions. They will be able to see those comments. Mr. DuRocher asked about the known issue brought up at a previous meeting where all comments show riders as visually impaired and using a service dog. Ms. Martin said that is an issue only with directly operated service, and that is being dealt with by an upcoming software upgrade.

Abby Vans operates service in 26 areas across the state, including Wausau, Eau Claire, LaCrosse, and Jackson. They provide paratransit service in Wausau and the rural paratransit service in LaCrosse, not the city portion. They have provided paratransit service to Eau Claire in the past, so they are familiar with contracts of this size.

8. [19380](#)

Creating new Section 10.28(4) and renumbering current Section 10.28(3) to (4) of the Madison General Ordinances to define "sidewalk" to include bus stops.

Attachments: [Registration Forms - Oppose 9-21-10.pdf](#)

Recommend to Place on File.

Mr. DuRocher thanked Alder Schmidt for taking this on. At the Council meeting when this was on the agenda, there was the expression of a lot of strong community resistance. So the matter was referred back to the ADA Transit Subcommittee. Given the difficulty in terms of public resistance to recommend back to the Council to make this happen, ADATS could recommend to Council to place this on file. Or given the fact that Susan De Vos sort of originated this issue with her concern about clearing bus stops, we could refer this issue to our November meeting. But that could go beyond the time we have to make a recommendation to Council.

Alder Schmidt said he is going to deal with some budget issues that could address the snow removal issue to some extent. It might not be as complete as we'd like, but the way the ordinance was written, only those bus stops with pads would be have to be cleared. The budget amendment would add 8 people

to Streets who would go on 3rd shift (a new shift for Streets.) Their task primarily would be to clear bus stops. We'd have to develop a priority list that would be done within 3 days after any snow fall and within 5 days after a storm. (There would be more time for major storms.) A team of two people can clear approximately 25 bus stops per day. Alder Schmidt said he has no idea how the Board of Estimates is going to handle this proposal. The request is for 8 people and some equipment for a total of \$660,000. If the program starts on September 1st instead of January 1st (because we wouldn't be able to get people in place for this winter anyway) then the cost would decrease to \$221,000. If the proposal is for 8 people, we can decrease it to 4 if necessary. These employees would also have plenty to do the rest of the year. There is a backlog of stump removal among other things. If we have to take down ash trees, we'll be even more behind. Alder Schmidt recommended trying to go through with the budget amendment rather than the snow removal ordinance because the ordinance was not popular. But the advantage was that then it was more popular to address the issue as a budget amendment. We'll see how that plays. Because the budget is so tight, we might not be able to get as much as we'd like. But at least this can be a start and make bus stop snow removal a priority that gets factored in as we go forward. Mr. DuRocher said when setting a budget, basic services like those streets provide should be a higher priority, so he fully supports that direction. He was a little surprised to see so much resistance to the ordinance

Alder Schmidt moved that we recommend to Council to place the ordinance on file; Ms. Jacobs seconded. Alder Schmidt said alternatives were mentioned, such as payback on property taxes if people agreed to shovel the bus stops. It would be resource heavy and also might be a legal issue. It makes sense to put resources toward hiring staff to get this done. The motioned passed by voice vote/other.

9. [20288](#)

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

a. Mr. DuRocher said the primary item of interest was taking action on the paratransit contractors. At the TPC, Alder Schmidt asked about the supplemental questionnaire, which was the significant difference on scoring. Also, there is no clear timeline on the stroller policy enforcement. Staff has been meeting with groups like the YWCA and the Salvation Army and holding public meetings in the past two weeks. Metro is trying to reach out to mothers to educate them as to why we think taking kids out of strollers on the bus is safer. This will probably go back to the TPC after the first of the year. If there is a change in enforcement, we'd like to do that when the weather is getting warmer rather than colder. Ms. Bond said she is already seeing some drivers asking people to fold strollers and walkers. Ms. Gullickson said that is a long-standing policy, but we are talking about a more consistent enforcement. There are car cards and other written materials that talk about this policy

already, but enforcement is not consistent.

b. Commission on People with Disabilities – This group did not meet last month due to the elevator being out of service.

c. Dane County Specialized Transportation Committee – They approved a New Freedom grant for a mobility manager for Dane County. They talked about budget, which is mostly status quo.

d. Transportation Planning Board (MPO) – Alder Schmidt said they passed the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). Several major road projects in the next five years are getting pushed further out. The draft environmental impact statement for the Verona Road project is available. That is an interest of Ms. De Vos because she would like to see bus rapid transit (BRT) lanes in this upgrade instead of in a future upgrade.

e. Other Community Meetings – No one reported on other community meetings.

f. Report from the Chair – There was no report from the chair.

g. Staff Report – There was no staff report.

h. Paratransit Indicators – We are up-to-date on paratransit indicators.

10. [20289](#) Other Transit Related Announcements: Note on Future Agenda Item

Tim Sobota will attend the November meeting to talk about bus stop locations. Dave Lowe from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) will also attend in November to talk about human service projects.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Streit moved to adjourn; Ms. Jacobs seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 PM.