



# City of Madison

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

## Meeting Minutes - Approved CONTRACTED SERVICE OVERSIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE

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Thursday, March 13, 2008

12:00 PM

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Room LL-110 (Madison Municipal Building)

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

**Staff:** Dave Eveland, Chuck Kamp, Ann Schroeder

**Guests:** Renee Bremer, Bill Schaefer

The meeting was called to order at 12:15.

**Present:** 4 -

Carl D. Durocher; Andrew Potts; Bruce K. Sylvester and Margaret Bergamini

**Absent:** 4 -

Jed Sanborn; Rick Rose; Mark M. Opitz and Rob Kennedy

**Excused:** 3 -

Rindert Kiemel, Jr.; Shawn M. Murphy and Howard E. Teal

**Non Voting:** 1 -

Ahnaray Bizjak

### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

DuRocher moved approval of the minutes as written; Bergamini seconded. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

### 4. [09445](#) New Members

**Attachments:** [CSOS Membership Update.pdf](#)

The membership ordinance regarding this committee was recently changed to include representation from Madison Area Technical College (MATC) and Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD). Renee Bremer from MMSD was present. Staff will follow up with the Mayor's office about when the appointments will be official.

5. [09448](#) Technology Updates - Dave Eveland

Metro's focus for this coming year is trying to get information out to the public, as well as safety/camera issues. One major effort will be determining the exact type of on-board cameras for Metro Transit. Metro will have cameras on over 200 buses. Staffing is important to monitor that the technology is working and to review any footage necessary. There will be over 1000 cameras. It was a learning process to find out how much time it would take to choose the system, install it, and pull requested video. Metro began installing cameras about two or three years ago. The new vendor has simplified the process and upgraded the quality. The camera buy go out for competitive bid. Metro wants to buy upgradable equipment depending on what capabilities might be beneficial later and affordable now.

Before the end of 2007, Metro had electronic message signs on the square. Those have been quite useful. Another promising area is getting information to the public via a Web-enabled device, most commonly a desktop or laptop. Metro will be upgrading the Continental system (formerly Siemens). The biggest change for customers is a Web-based real time bus locator system that works. Metro has one now that was never deployed because it was not functional. The new Continental system is a Google mash-up. It uses a Google Maps interface. They put the real time information on the Google map.

Another current project is working with a graduate geography class at UW that is doing the same thing as a class project. Both the Continental upgrade and the graduate project may be very useful. The student project will feature all the bus stops. April 11th is the target for Continental upgrade, so it will be ready before school in the fall. One problem with providing real time information to the public is that Metro might have to change internal procedures to make sure the real time information is accurate. Days when real time information is most useful to the public – for example during snowstorms – are days when data is most likely to be inaccurate. Drivers trying to stay on time may not be logged into the route/run correctly, so the bus is not displayed on the real time map. Metro is talking about what operational changes to make to get the most accurate information possible on the Website. There will be a text component as well. This makes it accessible for people using text readers. There is the potential for PDA/cell phone users to subscribe to text messages telling them the next bus to arrive at their stop by using the bus stop ID.

Shaefer asked whether the system would be able to show extra buses. Eveland said that is a drawback with the current system. One is required to pick a route and a stop. That's fine if the driver is logged in correctly, but extra buses don't show. That should be corrected in the upgrade. The UW graduate class project will correct that as well. Operationally, Metro needs to make sure that the radio supervisor talking to the driver ensures the driver is logged in correctly. Kamp said that he went to a meeting at the Wisconsin Council for the Blind and Visually Impaired and learned about a device used by visually impaired customers who will be able to use this data, once we make sure it has a high degree of reliability, to find out where the bus is.

More and more people are getting cell phones that have the ability to use this

technology. Other services are becoming available – text messaging ability to check on flights, etc. Metro is also working with Google to implement a Google-based trip planner.

Kamp said Eveland and staff are also working on projects in finance, maintenance, and other units. He feels Metro needs to make sure, especially if information technology (IT) projects go forward, that there is sufficient staffing. Bergamini said the UW supports that because they are interested in taking advantage of technology. She wondered about inter-departmental budget issues when interfacing with City IT. Eveland explained that back in the 1990s, Metro helped fund, through grant money, the system that the 911 center uses. Metro migrated to that and uses it too. Metro does have some inter-departmental charges through the radio shop for service-related items. There are no additional use charges. Currently being mandated at the federal level is a re-banding effort, which will require Metro to replace all radios by 2010 or 2011 that have not yet reached the end of their useful life. Metro will have to talk about that in the capital budget. Madison Police Department (MPD), fire, 911, and all neighboring jurisdictions are being affected, even across county lines. Interoperability between jurisdictions is being required as well as a change to digital, which is what requires Metro's change of equipment. The City is working with the County and other jurisdictions on that.

Kamp encouraged members to contract Metro with other questions or requests to bring Eveland or other staff back to present on any other issues of interest. The real time information is currently in testing on the city network only. However, the technology can be seen on the Columbus, Ohio transit Website. Eveland will provide a URL as soon as something is available. Champaign-Urbana also has real time information. People using that system can subscribe to text messaging.

6. [08689](#)

Status of Contracts

Metro is working on updating all of the unlimited ride pass contracts (ULRP). They have an ok for the UW employee pass contract and a verbal ok for the UW student pass contract. They've had a request from MATC to adjust their ULRP contract, so that's being revisited as it was for UW. Staff expects those to be moving along quickly. That has been the focus, especially with absence of a finance manager. The position has been advertised three times. Ruth Wohlers, a previous finance manager, is working as provisional finance manager for the audit. Another project for her is working on service partner contracts.

DuRocher asked if MATC is interested in capping ridership. Kamp said they felt the ridership in summer 2007 was artificially high. When using a 16% +/- formula for minimum and maximum ridership, they want to look at what the floor should be. Metro has agreed to look at that. Sylvester asked why they think it was high. Kamp said in the past they were less strict that passes were not valid if students did not attend classes in the summer. Cost is based on use of the pass; there is a price per ride.

DuRocher said he was sorry someone couldn't attend from the Town of Madison since this seems to be the forum for that issue. The Town possibly not being able to afford transit service will have a serious impact. The main bus stop that serves the Huber Center is in the Town of Madison. Huber inmates can't own cars, so

work release without bus service is problematic. Perhaps the town could impress upon the county or sheriffs office that this is critical for Huber. Then maybe county money could be used to help fund this service.

Kamp explained that the Town of Madison service cost is estimated at \$114,000. They said their budget could only afford \$85,000. There was a significant increase for the Town of Madison. The proposal for service changes will be brought to public hearing in April. The idea of approaching the county has been broached, so the Town of Madison, the City of Madison, and the county will be working together. Changes wouldn't be made until the end of August. Other options include the Town of Madison's contingency fund. DuRocher asked what other access points to the bus people would have if there were no stop by the Huber Center. Kamp believed people would probably have to walk close to a half mile.

7. [09446](#) Ad Hoc Committee Update

**Attachments:** [Final Recommendations Ridership.System priority paragraphs 2.25.08.pdf](#)  
[Ad Hoc Fund Cost Final recommendations 2.1.08.pdf](#)  
[Marketing Subcommittee Final Recommendations 2.13.08.pdf](#)

The group received a copy of each subcommittee's recommendations – increasing ridership/service improvement, cost management/funding and marketing. The full committee met a few weeks ago. A final draft report is being shared with committee members. The full committee meets again on Monday. Shortly after, the draft final report should be available to the public. Then public input meetings will be held in April. Staff submitted a top ten list of recommendations as well. The committee produced many helpful recommendations for long range planning and budgeting.

Bizjak asked if there was a recommendation about safety on the buses and how to manage that. DuRocher said that could be brought to the Monday meeting. In the increasing ridership/system improvement recommendations, one states "Metro must maintain its concern for rider and employee safety." Safety is one of the main reasons for implementing cameras on all buses. Bizjak said there is someone in Fitchburg who is adamant that Route 18 is unsafe. Kamp said Route 18 comes out of the West Transfer Point and South Transfer Point. Both transfer points have cameras. They are not constantly monitored, but it is possible to look back at video. Metro also wants to provide live feed ability to the MPD. Bergamini asked if there is a link from on-bus cameras to dispatch. Eveland said what Metro has right now is removable hard drives. There is the possibility of having more than four cameras per bus in the future. Metro is also looking at options for wireless connections. The technology to look at live feed from buses is very limited at this time. There is also a concern with staffing issues regarding monitoring real time activity on buses and at transfer points. A benefit to remote access would be if drivers had an alarm, then remote access would allow staff to look at specific bus because an alarm was tripped. But current staff can't monitor all buses at all times. Kamp said another issue is legal. Metro has a pilot with one middle school to provide discs on days when no incidents occur. Now the capability is incident based. Metro might look at broadening that for security and training reasons.

Schaefer asked whether staff has signed off on the Ad Hoc recommendations.

Some are troubling or conflicting such as pulling buses into shopping areas, and prioritizing low-income transit dependent areas. Kamp said it would be helpful to have Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) comment during the public input. Staff comment includes the following in the top ten recommendations:

- Regional Transit Authority (RTA)
- Dealing with space issue at garage short term and long term
- Review IS staffing
- Service improvements – periphery and core
- Increasing funding for marketing
- Greater capital investment in park and rides
- Paratransit funding with the advent of Family Care

DuRocher agreed that MPO comment on the final draft report would be welcome.

8. [09447](#) Ridership Productivity

Attachments: [Route Productivity Nov07.pdf](#)

Ridership and productivity are up. Metro has the second highest ridership since 1971. A 10- year trend of increasing ridership continues with ULRP programs and fuel increases probably being the two top reasons. Route 85 is the second highest ridership productivity. It was designed to lesson loads on Route 80. Both 80 and 85 are up a little. The report shows routes that are not at 60% of the average productivity. This report is the last in which Route 89 will be listed. That was the parking lot shuttle, and it has been discontinued.

9. [08290](#) Reports of Member Communities/Institutions

Sylvester (Verona) said there was not much to report. East Verona Avenue will be reconstructed this summer, but there will always be a lane open in each direction. When construction is done, they may talk to Tim Sobota at Metro about the eastern most bus stop. There is a new Farm and Fleet going in. Some think the bus stop should be further east. It looks like ridership is heading in the right direction. He is interested to see if that continues or when it will flatten out.

Bremer (MMSD) – She had nothing to share at this time.

Schaefer (MPO) – He had nothing to share at this time.

DuRocher (Transit and Parking Commission) – At the April 15th meeting, the public hearing on service changes is scheduled. There are a number of route enhancements that staff has designed that have to go through public hearing and are also contingent on funding. The Mayor has been involved in the discussion. This is the first time there has been a public hearing on service extension rather than cuts to plug a budget hole. The system is facing high fuel prices to maintain existing service.

There are also Federal Transit Authority regulations that go into effect in April that will affect the City of Madison more than other municipalities. Special event shuttles are not allowed to be provided by a federally subsidized transit system

like Metro if there are private vendors willing to provide the service, no matter the price. One possible workaround is to provide extra buses for regular routes and charge the regular price during events. Senior management at Metro is considering options.

Kamp said this issue has been brewing for a few years. The American Public Transit Association (APTA) had tried to work with private companies, but did not resolve the issues. What Metro does now at activities such as Rhythm & Booms is considered charter work. There are about two dozen bus companies signed up to do charter work. Metro could say it does charter work now and see if vendors object. Options will continue to be explored.

Bizjak (Fitchburg) said they are planning to do a citywide survey with Metro to explore possible service expansions – where service is wanted, if people would use it, if people want express service, etc. They want to put together a five-year long range plan and turn Metro service into a capital budget item. Fitchburg staff is meeting with Metro at the end of the month about the survey.

Bergamini (UW) said there is a lot of concern about the charter issue. It will be problematic for UW, and she's glad to hear they've contacted Rep. Baldwin's office. They are getting ready to do a special version of the onboard survey that is taking place system wide. It will start right after spring break. The UW is doing its budget, so that's what they've been focusing on.

Schaefer asked for any information about the survey. Kamp said he heard just a little about it before he left for Washington. It was just getting up and running, got over some glitches, and staff seemed happy about communication with the vendor. He will check for an update with Sharon Persich.

## 10. ADJOURNMENT

Bizjak moved to adjourn; Sylvester seconded. The meeting adjourned at 1:27 PM.