



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, May 20, 2013

5:15 PM 215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, (MMB), Room LL-130

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Staff: Crystal Martin, Ann Schroeder, Ann Gullickson

The meeting was called to order at 5:20 PM.

Present: 5 -

William J. Tangney; Jeanne M. Tregoning; Susan M. De Vos; Mary E. Jacobs and Carl D. DuRocher

Absent: 1 -

Lisa Subeck

1. PROPER MEETING NOTIFICATION

The meeting was properly noticed.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

This was not necessary because the new member was not present.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Tangney moved to approve the minutes; Ms. De Vos seconded. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

5. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

There were no disclosures or recusals.

6. [30217](#) In-Person Assessments - Pilot Program Report

Attachments: [Pilot In Person Assessments Results 04 13.pdf](#)

Ms. Martin said this was a very interesting pilot. It was nice to meet customers, and they enjoyed meeting Metro staff. Each assessment was either brand new or had applied in the past year. It was a chance for them to talk about their experience with the service, and go over the information sheet we send out with service tips. They appreciated it, and it helped us to set their expectations about what the service is and is not. Working with people who are there on a day-to-day basis rather than a person who fills out the application but won't be at the pick up/drop off site was helpful. We could explain to them what the service would be like. It was a much more positive experience for the customer. They had a resource they could ask questions of rather than just correspondence back and forth.

We had 105 people; 35 of them were brand new applicants, and the rest were from the previous year. It wasn't a big difference in the number of approvals/denials, but the types of eligibility changed quite a bit. One reason is we were able to be more accurate and talk with people rather than trying to figure out what the more prevalent condition was preventing them from getting on the bus or to the bus stop. For comparing unconditional approvals we used 2011 data which was an all paper process compared to this 2013 pilot. Unconditional approvals (which means taking all trips on paratransit) decreased from 80% to 35%. That is a big change to be able to identify people who can take at least some fixed route trips. Conditional eligibility increased. For example someone with night blindness would be eligible only at night. Ms. De Vos asked how you determine when someone needs to take fixed route versus paratransit service. Ms. Martin said during the in-person assessment, we asked how they got to the appointment. If they took the bus alone to the appointment, that is a pretty good indication that they can take the fixed route bus sometimes. If the conditional eligibility is that they can only ride paratransit after dark, then an 8:00 PM appointment in winter would mean they are eligible, but a Noon appointment they would not be. They might not want to take fixed route, but they wouldn't be eligible to take paratransit. Ms. Martin said if there is a bus stop within two blocks of the person's house, and they can navigate that amount of distance, they would need to take fixed route. Ms. De Vos said that is the problem with a proposal to remove bus stops. I know a lot of people who have bad knees or something and take fixed route but can't walk a couple of extra blocks. Ms. Martin said that can be a problem but it's not something we addressed in our pilot.

Things we can assess and determine in the interview process are how far did they walk, were they comfortable with that, were they out of breath. Just the physical presentation of someone can help us know what to ask. Mr. Tangney asked in general how people got to the assessment site. Ms. Martin said different ways, but most people came with someone – either a care giver or a parent. Fifty-one percent of the total participants opted not to come at all. Ms. De Vos said she remembered a long time ago getting an assessment, and they expected me to get there without a paratransit ride. Did you offer people a paratransit ride? Ms. Martin said yes; that was part of the deal.

Several people said they would appear at a later date. Three of the 5 did. Reasons for delaying included that it was not a convenient time, they didn't understand the request, and some people weren't well enough to come down and participate. Twenty percent of customers who made arrangements to come down cancelled and opted not to. Some offered why, some didn't. Seventy-two percent of brand new applicants showed up compared to only 35% of applicants from the last year. Looking over the applications and who they were and where they lived, the only thing staff can say with certainty is that the folks who didn't come were in assisted living or nursing home situations. Metro paratransit is part of these facilities' intake process when patients go into assisted living/nursing home. They are required to have a transportation plan on file whether they intend to use Metro paratransit or not. Ms. De Vos said so the cost of them being part of the system is periodic contacts but not taking rides. Ms. Martin said people who don't frequently use service tend to use it at a critical time when it really counts – when a family member can't provide a ride for a critical medical appointment or holiday visit. Then they have no experience with the Metro paratransit system. That is an extra burden on the system and problematic customer service situations arise for critical trips.

Some people were taking trips but opted out of doing an in-person assessment after multiple phone calls. Now they are not eligible, and we haven't heard from them. We had quite a different experience between the paper and in-person processes in terms of people coming, not coming, number certified and types of certification. During 8 weeks of the pilot we identified 8 people who would be good candidates for travel training and will refer them for travel training with Dane County. We gave them conditional approval and then will check back after travel training. In the last five years, we had not identified anyone for travel training. We had people who would self-select, but not someone we identified. That was a big difference, too.

Interpreting results and projecting into the future can be tricky. The fact that we were able to do things like increasing conditional eligibility, having people opt out, and identifying people for travel training was valuable. We had one appeal during the process. It was helpful to see our appeals did not increase from the paper process. We were more accurate, which saved people the time of having to send in more documentation. We learned a lot about setting up the environment for this – space to move around, close to a bus stop, etc. We had an office at the Villager Mall, close to the South Transfer Point, a library, Dane County Human Services office, and Madison College, so it was a frequently traveled location with accessible amenities. But it also had a fairly long hallway to the office. It was tax season and there were chairs for people waiting, so there was a place for people to sit if they got tired on the walk to the office. That was a happenstance, but we learned that would be good. We would need to have a big enough space to set up the Madison box test and explain that to people, a large enough room to be able to maneuver their power wheelchair, and a comfortable sheltered environment to wait for their return ride. There were a lot of details that made a difference in the interview process and make people comfortable. It was valuable to see how people were able to read the signs and navigate to where we were.

Some less practical things were that we didn't have access to files, Trapeze, or internet for example to look up a certain conditions or how far someone lives

from a bus stop. Ms. De Vos said there are ways with VPN that you can get into your files. Ms. Martin said some things we could get into but not others. For example, sometimes it would have been nice to look at paper applications of existing files. Also, there was a difference between scheduling appointment times versus allowing drop-ins. We were lucky not to get too many people waiting at once, but people like privacy. It was lucky there were the chairs in the hallway. The first 2 or 3 weeks not many people came, but by the end of 8 weeks it hard to keep up with the flow of assessments and our regular work. We found out we would not be able to do this on a long term basis without some help. Even if we can identify 10 people in the course of a year for travel training, those savings build up not just for the individual, but compounded from year to year. Ms. De Vos said no argument, but it can be tricky. Ms. Martin agreed. Weather was also a factor early on.

Ms. De Vos asked how much of the records are electronic versus paper. Ms. Martin said every single applicant, denied, eligible or deceased, has an original paper application and then any correspondence, no show warnings, behavior, suspension letters, medical information, appeals, passes from other pass programs, funding, etc are in paper files. In their electronic file is pertinent information for delivering service such as home address, mobility device or ambulatory information, door to door, leave attended etc. Ms. De Vos said there are about 4000 users. Ms. Martin said we are down to 3600 who are currently eligible; of those about 1300 are taking trips. Ms. De Vos asked if New York or Chicago has a similar system. Ms. Martin said Milwaukee has 35,000 eligible people. Ms. De Vos said I'm just reflecting that all my health care records used to be paper and now they've gone over to computerized everything. Her sister works for Social Security, and it's all becoming electronic. It could be a transition kind of situation.

We'd like to purse staffing for in-person assessments because there could be a benefit to Metro. A Staff position could be a challenge in the budget process. Ms. De Vos asked if they'd want a different location. Ms. Martin said that wasn't part of the pilot. But as we look at the budget, we'll evaluate that. Mr. DuRocher said there was experience in the past with contracted evaluators. But it seems there is a question if there is a possibility of doing it where staff always is.

Ms. De Vos said she was thinking that it was good to compute what the savings would be. But if a lot of people wouldn't be taking rides anyway, then you throw that out and say that's not a valid estimate. Ms. Martin said when she did a cost projection, because that's what people will want, she's very conservative, so this is not a pie in the sky estimate. It's on the low end of conservative. Ms. Martin said all of Ms. DeVos' concerns are valid. The cost of mainline compared to paratransit is very different. Ms. De Vos said I'm accustomed to that argument, and I think it's a very good one. But it's also something you have to be able to defend. Ms. Martin said in terms of the overall transportation structure for specialized transportation, clearly assisted living is using Metro for their transportation plans. If they had to come to in-person assessment, they'd have to develop additional transportation services. That, in turn, would help develop potential contractors, so that's a goal, too.

Mr. Tangney asked if there might be a volunteer, like a reception person, who

could help by getting people settled. Ms. Martin said that could be a labor issue. Generally the person comes with a care giver, and it can be difficult to get the care giver to refrain from answering for the person. But that is something to think about. Sometimes people are more independent without the care giver, sometimes the care giver adds helpful information. Ms. De Vos asked if applicants actually perform tasks. Ms. Martin said we had signs on the wall with a stop sign and bus stop signs to see if people could identify the stop and also some quiz information for Milwaukee County Transit so it's not just a matter of someone knowing Madison. People were asked to identify buses in a series, in motion, at night, etc. Quite a few skills tests we performed. Ms. De Vos said it made quite an impression on her when a person with a visual impairment was talking about using paratransit. I thought he sounded like a perfect person for mainline, so I asked him why he used paratransit. He said transferring. It wasn't riding the bus, but transferring to the right bus after that.

Ms. De Vos asked we do want to pursue this and if so, should we should make a recommendation to the TPC? Without knowing the actual cost, that sounds good. You gave figures, but it's very difficult to assess them. I don't know if it's our role to do that. Ms. Gullickson said the timing on that is if there is a new program you want to do, you do it in the context of the budget which comes together in July/August. Ms. De Vos said what would our recommendation be then? That it be considered as an item in a new budget? Ms. Gullickson said we don't know yet. July or August is when we will be seeing if there is a recommendation. At this point there isn't a proposal to recommend. We have to see how much money, if there needs to be a staff person, etc. Ms. Martin is working on that. It is just informational at this time. Mr. DuRocher said I don't know how space is at Metro, but it would seem if you could do it on site, there would be a lot of advantages. The part he found very significant was the reduction in unconditional eligibility. When you see people function, it becomes clear a person may not need paratransit all the time. Ms. De Vos asked how many people become inactive every year. This year almost 800 people became inactive because of responses to the recertification mailing in February. Other years, it's not nearly that much.

7. [30218](#)

ADA Regulations - Guidance Update

- a. Common Wheelchair Language Removed from Regulations
 - Proposed Changes to Public Materials
 - Action Item

Attachments:

[ADA Final Rule one pager 9-28-11.pdf](#)

[FTA Guidance Concerning Wheelchairs and Bus and Rail Service 02 13.pdf](#)

[ADA Regulations Update - Common Wheelchair.pdf](#)

Ms. Martin said the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) issued some new rules on ADA requirements for rail but also in dealing with the term "common wheelchair" which we have used extensively for the Madison box test and providing service for oversized mobility devices. The term 'common wheelchair' has been removed from the regulations. In general, what we've been doing in Madison is the model for how things should be done. Because we use the term "common wheelchair" in our materials, we have to not use it any more. Other providers were using the definition of a common wheelchair

as a maximum size and denying service based on that. We don't do that; we've wanted to know if it is beyond the common wheelchair definition so we know we need to send a Metro vehicle to accommodate a larger wheelchair. FTA was unhappy that some other systems were using federal money to buy equipment that could serve people, and then denying service.

We use the "common wheelchair" language in our application, on our website, and our paratransit information sheet. We still need to know wheelchair size, so we can use the right equipment. Staff has proposed alternate wording. Ms. Martin said she's asking the subcommittee to approve these changes so we can put it in our materials, and show that we did update our materials and it was approved by our advisory group. Ms. De Vos said you are asking us to approve this but you contracted with Abby Vans, and I'm mystified as to what our role is. Ms. Martin said the Subcommittee's role is to advise the Transit and Parking Commission (TPC) and monitor our ADA compliance. Ms. De Vos said this could imply that we are being asked to approve more things than we are actually being asked to approve. Ms. Martin said approval for contracting service goes to TPC and the Board of Estimates (BOE). I've asked if it should go to ADATS, and I've been told no, it's a budget issue.

Mr. DuRocher moved that this subcommittee go on record as approving the suggested language changes to update our literature to be in line with current ADA guidelines. Ms. De Vos seconded. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

8. [30220](#) Pending List Revisions and Update

Attachments: [Pending List 02 09 12.pdf](#)

Ms. De Vos suggested that it's time to reorganize the whole list. Things need to be moved and revisited. Ms. Martin said checked off items need to be moved to completed, including the in-person assessment pilot. There is room for new items.

Ms. De Vos suggested:

- Identify bus stops with benches (D)
- How to ID which stops should have benches (K)
- Do this also for shelters
- Snow clearance – In the winter we can't have even the shelter stops cleared of snow, but if you can identify a few stops people can count on and perhaps be dropped off there – the whole issue of reconsidering the city's policy about snow clearance and how bus stops tend to be on the bottom of the list for snow clearance

Ms. Martin said under completed items we have discussion about that in November 2009. Ms. De Vos said I don't think in my mind it was ever completed. We may have discussed it, but did we ever come to a resolution? Ms. Martin said there was a new plan in place at that time. Ms. De Vos said there was something that never got implemented; it was taken out of the budget or something. Ms. Gullickson said the positions were not hired by the city, but things have changed since 2009. We should put that on the agenda

before the next snow season.

Ms. De Vos asked Metro's policy in identifying which stops get shelters or snow clearance priority and what is our role in that. Is it in house Metro or Metro with us? Ms. Gullickson said she can't offer that off the top of my head, but it would be a good agenda item. Ms. Brunette-Tregoning said we did have something about snow removal in February, so it is always before us, not completed.

Ms. De Vos said either snow clearance or benches would be good; she can't prioritize one over the other. She didn't finish her re-organization. Ms. Martin said she could email it when it is done, and we can talk about it next time. Other items:

- Identify shelters and priority clearance on route maps – Ms. De Vos
- Have a city person about snow removal (streets) attend an ADATS meeting – Mr. Tangney. The parking committee had good luck with that
- Bringing on more committee members – Ms. Brunette-Tregoning

Ms. De Vos just because things are marked completed on the list doesn't mean they shouldn't be reconsidered.

9. [30221](#)

Reports

- a. Transit and Parking Commission
- b. Commission on People with Disabilities
- c. Dane County Specialized Transportation Commission
- d. Other Community Meetings
- e. Performance Indicators
- f. Report from the Chair - June Meeting - Officer Elections
- g. Staff Report - Contractor Site Visits, NEMT Broker (MTM) to start 8/1/13, Subcommittee Vacancies

Attachments: [Para Indicators Mar2013.pdf](#)
[Fixed Summary Mar2013.pdf](#)
[ADATS roster 5.15.13.pdf](#)

a. Transit & Parking Commission – Alder Subeck is not present. Ms. Martin said their last meeting was cancelled because it was not properly noticed. The meeting before that was a public hearing about route changes. Next TPC meeting is the 29th. Taxi licensing will be on the agenda.

b. Commission on People with Disabilities – Mr. Tangney said he had nothing to report. Ms. De Vos asked if they took up the bus stop removal information. Mr. Tangney said he can't recall. Ms. De Vos said staff from the MPO has a really nice presentation.

c. Dane County Specialized Transportation Commission – Ms. De Vos asked if there was some sort of transportation subcommittee for the county. Mr. DuRocher said there is with Ken Golden. The committee has been having a problem identifying its function. There is a great deal of expertise. The Minnesota DOT decided it is in their interest to have high speed rail from the

Twin Cities to Chicago. The most efficient route would be through Wisconsin. But Wisconsin has been unable to work on that project. Minnesota can go forward because the project does not involve any state owned tracks. So there is momentum to add high speed rail through Wisconsin. Madison would not be on that track. Minnesota can work directly with Union Pacific. The reasons for not stopping in Madison have more to do with the planners from Minnesota trying to make a 5 hour connection from Minnesota to Chicago. Adding Madison would make it unlikely that it could be a 5 hour trip. An advantage of a Watertown connection over Columbus includes fewer towns being affected. The idea of county wide transit raises questions the committee doesn't have answers to regarding jurisdiction, oversight and funding; these are things the regional transit authority was designed to answer. Right now we have a hodgepodge of partnership agreements.

d. Other Community Meetings – There were no other meeting reports.

e. Performance Indicators – Ms. Martin said the March indicators are fuzzy because spring break came early this year compared to last year. April will be much more telling. Mr. DuRocher asked if we will be able to see again the cost per ride at the top of that page or not. Ms. Martin said she doesn't know. It stopped appearing and she doesn't know why. They've had some turnover in finance and are trying to keep up with the day to day. Metro just finished the annual audit. The projected cost for the agency rate this year is \$32.25. Mr. DuRocher said under on-time performance – although it shows Metro as the worst, that's not his experience. Badger Bus is worse. Ms. Brunette-Tregoning agreed. Ms. Martin said it's a button pushing program. The major issue has been corrected. Mr. DuRocher felt they are not necessarily reporting when they are not on time. Ms. Martin said it would be nice to have an electronic system, but that's probably not in the budget. Mr. DuRocher said also passengers could report. Ms. Martin said also we have supervisors spot check.

f. Report from the Chair – June Meeting – Officer Elections – The next meeting in June will have officer elections. Also, the October meeting now has a conflict with a BOE budget meeting. So maybe next month we'll determine an alternate date or decide what we want to do for October.

g. Staff Report – Contractor Site Visits, NEMT Broker (MTM) to start 8/1/13, Subcommittee Vacancies – Ms. Martin said we did our contractor site visits with 3 contractors, went through their materials, how they are maintaining their reporting, response to feedback, licensing, vehicles, etc. We had a really good visit with all three of them this year. There were some noticeable changes compared to previous years. It was good to have one of the staff people along and rotate them to have a different Metro staffer visit a different contractor. It's good to get an understanding of each other in person. When we went to Abby Vans our scheduler Karen Darcy went and was able see their scheduler and their software. It was a good experience. Contractors are working hard.

MTM is the non-emergency medical transportation manager (NEMT) taking over for LogistiCare on August 1st. We had a meeting with them at Metro. The message they gave us is that the Department of Health Services (DHS) is pushing for more and more utilization of public transit and what that means to DHS is fixed route services. MTM was more savvy about what that means and

will be utilizing paratransit, too. We were able to provide them with links to our information so they can identify what services are available and appropriate.

Ms. De Vos said she can't help but comment on the irony of the Governor proposing to cut transit funds and putting it in the general fund and then DHS counting on transit. Ms. Martin said the Joint Finance Committee is discussing transit next week. They just added it to the schedule.

Ms. Martin said we talked to MTM about agency fares. But also they are able to reimburse their riders for the fare directly, which means they have a way around the agency fare model. They have debit cards that they give to customers, so the customer can front the fare for them. Ms. Martin said with the last broker we did not see an increase in applications or ridership. This broker said this time we will. Also, on Thursday, MTM is having a meeting for the local providers.

Ms. Martin said we did a quick campaign about subcommittee vacancies – tweeted, posted on Facebook, and mentioned it in the Rider Alert. We gave applicants a deadline of May 10th. We haven't heard back yet from the Mayor's office if there was any interest. We can do another round, but we thought we'd create a sense of urgency. We are actively recruiting, the Mayor's office is asking for help, so if you know someone who is interested, pass that along.

10. [30222](#) Other Transit Related Announcements

Ms. Brunette-Tregoning said Badger Bus has the worst buses; she will cancel her rides when she is scheduled with them. Her back just can't take it. Ms. Martin said Abby Vans is using mini-vans so it is a different structure. Badger Bus has put 7 or 8 new buses on the road since last year. Ms. Brunette-Tregoning also apologized that she cannot attend next month.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DuRocher moved to adjourn; Mr. Tangney seconded. The meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM.