



City of Madison

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

Monday, June 22, 2009

5:10 PM 215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Room 303 (Municipal Building)

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Staff: Crystal Martin, Ann Schroeder

Present: 5 -

Chris Schmidt; Susan M. De Vos; Mary E. Jacobs; Michael A. Huckaby and William J. Tangney

Excused: 2 -

Jeanne M. Tregoning and Ida W. Nathan

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Tangney moved to approve the May minutes; Ms. Jacobs seconded. The motion passed by voice vote/other. Ms. De Vos asked if the single paratransit fare issue discussed at the last meeting came up at the Transit and Parking Commission (TPC) meeting. Ms. Martin said the TPC accepted the referral; staff will prepare it in the budget.

3. [15142](#) Subcommittee Organizational Items

These items were tabled until next month.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

5. [15143](#) Paratransit Contract Standards - Service Standards

Attachments: [Paratransit Contracting Standards - Service Standards 06 0...pdf](#)

Ms. Martin said this is the last in a series on contract standards. This month we are talking about what is considered an on-time trip, considerations for inclement weather and what our expectations should be about travel time. The last time Metro went out to bid, we changed from a trip-by-trip approach on late trips based solely on customer feedback where on-time performance was

incumbent on customer complaints. We learned how to track on time performance in our software regardless of whether a customer called in a complaint. Mr. Huckaby asked how we know about a late ride if a customer doesn't complain. The contractor's driver documents pick up time, drop off time, odometer readings and fares collected. Their office staff goes on-line and records that information on a Web interface. Then, those are compared to any complaints. At first, there were some inconsistencies. But after working with the contractors, those mis-matches are minimal now.

Ms. De Vos said it might be hard to write it into a contract but she wondered if late rides impacted a contractor's ability to be assigned new rides as a less reliable vendor. Ms. Martin said that does not need to be written into the contract because there is no guaranteed volume to a contractor. It is the City's discretion how many trips to assign and how trips are allocated.

Mr. Tangney wondered if there were a limit for a number of rides assigned to a driver. It would not be fair if there were more rides assigned than a contractor could keep up with and then they get docked for late rides. Ms. Martin said that ride volume is fairly steady with exceptions for some things like an in-service for supported employment, which can reduce volume by 40% to 55%. The contractors are aware of this, and if there is going to be any unexpected increase or decrease, we communicate that to the contractors.

Ms. Martin said her experience has been that so far contractors are able to meet the 94% on-time performance most of the time. They are very sensitive to the 10% reduction in their invoice for performance below 90%. Ms. De Vos said she thought 90% sounded pretty lax. Ms. Martin said that is why it is the "yellow zone". It is comparable to other transit systems that falling below 90% is a compliance issue. Ms. De Vos said if you're supposed to be at work at a certain time, the employer would not accept being there on time 90% of the time. Even 94% isn't that great. Ms. Martin said she thinks that is what is being said here. The contractor gets a reduction if they don't meet 94%. Ms. Jacobs asked if that is for a full month. It is – for nights, weekends, during construction – anything that can be planned for. Ms. Jacobs asked if it was possible to pinpoint certain days that were more problematic. Ms. Martin said she could get that level of detail.

Ms. De Vos said she wanted to be clear that she meant acceptable should be 97% or 98% and 94% should be what 90% is now. She doesn't feel like it would be acceptable to have an employee who is late 6% of the time. Mr. Huckaby said he doesn't know very many working people who have a better than 94% efficiency rate. There are too many variables in life. He didn't feel this was an unreasonable number at all, considering all the variables in transit. Mr. Tangney said in supported employment, there were people who were late and it was just accepted as what could be. Ms. Martin said it would also be interesting to know what our fixed route on-time performance is. Ms. De Vos said she feels that is something Metro does very well in her experience.

Ms. Jacobs wondered if a contractor feels overloaded they can call and say they can't cover a ride. Ms. Martin said they do that, but it isn't encouraged. Metro monitors that balance. Mr. Huckaby said he had experienced that when one contractor shows up and he was expecting another because they are covering for each other.

Mr. Huckaby reiterated that he thought 94% was pretty good, especially since no contractor has gone to 90% two months in a row for some years. Ms. Martin said no contractor has gone below 90% in three and a half years (ie., since Metro started reporting On-time Performance). Metro has gone below 90% due to other issues such as drivers having trouble adapting to mobile data terminals (MDTs). Ms. Martin said Metro is considering implementing the use of mobile handheld GPS terminals so on-time data will be GPS verified for contractors.

Ms. Martin said during blizzard conditions all bets are off for on-time performance for safety reasons. It is Metro's decision whether to enforce on-time performance on bad weather days. Ms. De Vos said that makes sense.

Ms. De Vos said she has had some really bad experiences with travel time. She has had experiences where she is at the University going to her home on the West side and is taken first almost to McFarland and driven around for an hour and 15 minutes instead of picking the other person up and dropping him off before picking her up. Ms. Jacobs said she has experienced similar scheduling problems; she thinks they have been corrected. Mr. Huckaby said it's true he has experienced some interesting rides. He said that kind of scheduling issue does happen in spite of best efforts. He would like to see those seriously minimized but at the same time there's no such thing as a perfect system. It's a problem if it becomes a regular issue. People need to complain about that. Ms. De Vos said if their ride fits within the regulations, then they have nothing to complain about. Mr. Huckaby said it's not a personal taxi service. It's a provided service that cannot meet everyone's needs every time. There can be a domino effect if a ride is changed to fix one problem. He said he'd like to see a little less reliance on the computer and more on human scheduling; Ms. Jacobs agreed. Ms. Martin said Karen Darcy, Paratransit Scheduling Coordinator, has been working very hard on that. Ms. De Vos said there should be a penalty for a bad ride. Mr. Huckaby asked what percentage of her rides was problematic. Ms. De Vos said often enough that she has started to use mainline years ago and told other people to do the same. Mr. Huckaby said migrating to mainline is the right answer. Ms. De Vos said some people don't have the ability to switch to mainline, and they deserve better treatment than fixed route. Mr. Huckaby asked what her solution is. Ms. De Vos said we can't get to the solution if there is denial of a problem.

Ms. Martin said Metro has more hands-on work on the schedules in the last year than we've had in a long time. We have been sending "trip length reports" at least weekly so contractors can see all trips over 60 minutes. There are some shared rides you can't do from some pick up locations to some destinations (southwest side to far east side for example). Contractors do want to work with us to address these problems. We hope this committee can advocate for more hands on work with the schedules. Ms. Martin said after all the hands on work is done, we run schedules through the computer and other rides are added in blank spots. Those can sometimes be the rides that cause problems. We are a work in progress. Mr. Tangney moved to request that Metro management work to provide more hands on routing for paratransit scheduling. Ms. Jacobs seconded the motion.

Ms. De Vos asked if Metro divides Madison into zones so that can be a factor in

how the ride is handled. Ms. Martin said that has been tried with a polygon system and hasn't worked when the vehicle goes outside the polygon area. Metro hasn't tried it again with recent software upgrades. There are also scheduling issues with oversize wheelchairs and other mobility devices that have to be factored in. Ms. De Vos wondered what this motion had to do with the fact that she is critical of Trapeze. Mr. Tangney said it's not related. This is to let management know that they are short staffed. Mr. Huckaby said it's moot because there is a City hiring freeze. Mr. Tangney said this could mean a reallocation of resources rather than more staff. Alder Schmidt left before a vote. People felt that more discussion and thought needed to be put into this, and it could be brought up at a future meeting.

Ms. Jacobs asked if 90% of the reimbursement rate is paid if the contractor has less than 90% on-time for a month. She thought that it was by trip. Ms. Martin said that was the method prior this contracting term.

Mr. Tangney said the Parking Council for People with Disabilities has developed a photo display of a disabled parking space with photos of someone parking too closely so the person with a disability can't get off the ramp and then a photo of the correct way to park next to that space. Ms. Martin asked how these pictures would be distributed. One example is for people who get tickets. The photos can be given with the ticket.

Mr. Huckaby said in other cities it is a ticketable offense to park within a certain distance of a bus stop. He wondered what the policy is in Madison and if there were none, what would it take to change that. Mr. Tangney said bus stop signs are marked to not park from the sign to the corner. Mr. Tangney asked what penalty there is for parking there. Ms. Martin said the car would get towed. Mr. Huckaby said that would only happen if someone called in a complaint and the tow truck gets there in time. He said he observes delivery trucks blocking bus stops on the square. He wondered if someone took a picture of the vehicle and sent it in whether that person would get a ticket. Mr. Tangney said it has to be done by an authorized person – a trained parking enforcement officer or police officer. Ms. Martin said her understanding is that delivery trucks can pull into no parking zones; she thinks she read an exemption in the ordinances. Mr. Tangney said that was written primarily for the square and State Street. The delivery vehicle has to put their wheels on the curb and leave its flashers on.

6. [15144](#)

Metro Transit Management Performance Audit - 2009

a. Paratransit Recommendations

Attachments: [Wis DOT Audit 2009 - Paratransit Area 06 09.pdf](#)

Ms. De Vos said the criteria for picking peers for the audit does not include amenities available for disabled users on mainline. Ms. Martin said when Catherine Debo was the general manager, she specifically asked that the paratransit peers have similar services. At that time, our paratransit peers were not the same as our mainline peers for audit purposes. Ms. De Vos also said using seniority as a determiner for which drivers are qualified to work in the paratransit unit is not a good criterion. Ms. Martin said that is mentioned as a recommendation in the audit.

Ms. De Vos said the audit compares operating efficiency in 2006 to 2002 and even though it is still above average compared to peers, it is lower than what it was four years earlier. She wonders what impact, if any, dealing with disability issues has on this.

7. [15145](#) Rainy Day Wish List

This was tabled until a later meeting.

8. [10785](#) Reports
- a. Transit & Parking Commission
 - b. Commission on People with Disabilities
 - c. Contracted Service Oversight Subcommittee
 - d. Dane County Specialized Transportation Committee
 - e. Other Community Meetings

a. **Transit and Parking Commission - This meeting focused on service improvements that will go into effect August 23rd. Weekend service to target Verona Road was added. The Route 10 will come back. Fitchburg is adding service on weekends. There is some improved frequency for other routes. Ms. De Vos said this wasn't said to the commission, but Metro's scheduler uses very archaic methods for routing.**

b. **Commission on People with Disabilities – There was no meeting last time due to lack of quorum. Mr. Tangney shared the information about the new paratransit vehicles with some people who were there, and they were very interested. He is very much in favor of having the rear door so that drop offs and pick ups would be easier.**

Mr. Tangney said that regarding the Allied Drive accessible housing project, there are eight apartments that are at ground level that can easily be made accessible at the doors. Showers were poorly placed but within federal standards. Mr. Tangney showed Mr. Olinger how those could be made accessible without moving any walls, and that was passed on to the builders. The minimum standards of accessibility aren't necessarily sufficient. Mr. Olinger went above City requirements to request that 20% of apartments in that development be made accessible. As the population ages, more people will need accessible housing. Retrofitting later is much more expensive.

c. **Contracted Service Oversight Subcommittee – No report.**

d. **Dane County Specialized Transportation Committee – No report.**

e. **Other Community Meetings – There were no reports on other community meetings.**

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

Kobussen will be providing services for Rhythm and Booms again this year. Regular paratransit buses will be running routes that day. They are still reserving space on Troy Drive for paratransit vehicles. Ms. Martin said last year we only had two paratransit riders.

The Governor's budget had some provisions for a statewide manager/broker for Medicaid transportation. It also included a provision to start Family Care in Dane County in January 2011. There were some modifications made to the broker idea that were friendly to protecting transit services. Ms. Martin said the Senate threw everything out and will start from scratch. Now both budgets are going to a reconciliation committee, and we don't know what to expect. If these things stay on track, we will be very busy trying to get ready for the changes.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:43 PM.

[15146](#)

Attachment: Performance Indicators April 2009

Attachments: [Para Indicators Apr09.pdf](#)