



# City of Madison

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

## Meeting Minutes - Amended ADA TRANSIT SUBCOMMITTEE TO THE TRANSIT AND PARKING COMM

---

Monday, May 21, 2012

5:15 PM 115 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, Room LL-130 (Madison  
Municipal Bldg)

---

### CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

**Staff:** Crystal Martin, Ann Gullickson, Ann Schroeder, Dave Eveland

**Guest:** Tom Kenny

**Chair Jacobs called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM.**

**Present:** 6 -

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

**Absent:** 2 -

Bridget R. Maniaci and Michael A. Huckaby

### 1. PROPER MEETING NOTIFICATION

**The meeting was properly noticed.**

### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Mr. DuRocher moved approval of the minutes; Mr. Streit seconded.**

**Absent:** 2 -

Bridget R. Maniaci and Michael A. Huckaby

**Ayes:** 4 -

Mary E. Jacobs; Carl D. DuRocher; William J. Tangney; Kenneth M. Streit and Jeanne M. Tregoning

**Abstentions:** 1 -

Susan M. De Vos

### 3. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

**There were no public appearances.**

### 4. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

**There were no disclosures or recusals.**

### 5. [26405](#)

Incentives for Fixed Route Migration

- a. Fixed Route Bus Passes, Tom Kinney, Mobility Manager  
Milwaukee County Transit System

Ms. Martin said long-standing on our pending list has been the topic of how to migrate people from paratransit to fixed route service. Mr. Kenny is the mobility manager for Milwaukee County.

Mr. Kenny said they face the same thing as we face in Dane County. He was involved in the Milwaukee County paratransit program for a long time. When the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was approved there was such pressure to be compliant. All the focus was not to integrate people but to use vans and see what capacity was needed and not get in trouble with the feds. Milwaukee got a 2008 New Freedom grant and decided to use it as a way to try to market/encourage/train paratransit clients to the fixed route bus system. They took several different approaches, but the fundamental thing is that it was voluntary and it would not affect clients' paratransit eligibility. One of the things systems run into is resistance by people who are afraid that once they are "caught" using fixed route, they won't be able to use paratransit service anymore. It's important to let people know that it won't be punitive if they decide to try migration.

A main component of their program is a community outreach effort. That allowed them to design a very consumer-driver program. They spent a lot of time at consumer groups, agencies, and commissions and asked for feedback about how they could encourage people who were getting door to door service to try the fixed route bus. The cost of a paratransit ride is \$25-\$30 compared to \$3.50 public subsidy for fixed route. There is a financial incentive, but it is also consistent with ADA is to try to get people on mainline if possible. The greatest resource was people with disabilities who were already taking the bus. They put a group together and asked them about why they take the bus which helped inform the marketing plan. They made a video that is on the website now. Mr. Kenny shared copies. It shows people just telling their stories about why they prefer the mainline bus over paratransit. One thing they promote is empowering consumers by giving them choices. Paratransit is sometimes the best choice; fixed route is sometimes the best choice. We want to educate and train people on their choices, and then it's up to them to make the choice.

Another thing that people wanted was a travel training program. A lot of people had anxiety about using or didn't know how to use the system or be a good pedestrian. There are a lot of variables. They offer three different kinds of travel training:

- They have a bus orientation program for large groups to introduce people to the bus system. This is used a lot at schools and senior centers. It's about 30 – 45 minutes of classroom instruction including the history of the bus system, do's and don'ts of using transit, using the website, and how to plan a trip. They have an "All about the Bus" kit that includes a map, schedule, and brochure. They include age specific things if appropriate, such as coloring books. They also take a bus and operator so the group can experience a bus ride. Many people have never been on a bus, never used a farebox, and have normal anxiety about doing something for the first time.
- Particularly people in scooters and power chairs have a lot of anxiety about getting on and off the bus without holding thing up, so Milwaukee offers small group training at the bus system. They make a bus, operators and travel trainer available for about 3 hours and let people get on and off of the bus

multiple times until they are comfortable. They do these trainings eight times a year and provide people with paratransit tickets to attend. There is no out of pocket expense to get to the facility. They used to have someone like Mr. Kenny out there; now they have consumer volunteers do the training - people who actually use mobility devices and the bus. That is much more effective.

- Some people need more intense 1-on-1 training. They have two travel trainers who do this. Sometimes they will work with someone twice, sometimes a few months at a time or whatever is needed. This usually involves customers who have cognitive disabilities or visual impairments. They trained about 110 people last year. They've created a database to track whether people who receive training have a decrease in paratransit trip activity. It has decreased significantly in most cases.

When these programs were implemented, the county decided to make transit free to all conditionally eligible paratransit clients. That is about 3,000 people. Those clients are provided with an invitation to participate in the program. They have to fill out and send back a card. In 2009, the first year, they have 850 participants. Now they have 2800. They felt it was important to have people fill out something and send it back in order to get a pass. They continue to do that. It's part of the county budget. It's not funded by the New Freedom grant, but it is part of that program. It's a nice incentive for people to use the bus.

They do about 50 community outreach presentations a year talking about the benefits of transit. They wanted to use teachers to promote transit use to students, and then found teachers hadn't been on the bus for 20 years. They decided they needed to enlist the help of the teachers. They promote them using the bus whenever they go on outings and encourage the students to plan the trip.

New Freedom money includes a barrier removal component. They often heard people say they couldn't get to the bus stop because of no curb cut or no bus pad. They have a modest amount of money that if someone raises an issue of access like this, they can take care of it. They've done about 80 bus pads, and a dozen shelters. They are looking at providing benches. The system had to cut back transit service because of funding. That means people might have to wait longer, so it makes sense to provide benches to make that wait more reasonable.

This program started in the middle of 2009. It took six months to set up the program. It's not always easy to measure how well it's doing, but they have two indicators.

- Milwaukee has always tracked ADA boardings when someone has to be secured. The drivers are required to call dispatch and dispatch records the fact that there was a securement. Obviously there were lots of other people with disabilities that don't require securement that aren't being recorded. There were 47,775 ADA boardings prior to this program. Last year there were 76,608. Regular ridership is down, but ADA boarding are way up. They are up this year 43% from this time last year. There is less service on the street, a reduction in regular ridership, but a 30 – 40% increase in ADA rides provided.
- The other measurement was to look at paratransit numbers. They were providing slightly over 1 million ADA van rides a year at the beginning of the program. Last year they provided 825,000. Prior to the New Freedom program,

these rides increased every year. This is the first time it went down, and it continues to go down.

The final challenge was driver reaction and training. A lot of drivers went through training 25 – 30 years ago. Even for those hired more recently who got some ADA training, it was pretty brief and not very hands-on. It wasn't consumer-driven. They developed a new driver training program and made a new video. They took portions of the old video, added additional footage and put together more of a message directed to drivers. They purchased a scooter, a power wheelchair and special vision goggles that simulate different vision issues – total blindness to tunnel vision. Drivers are required to experience wearing the goggles to get an appreciation of customers. This portion of training used to get a half hour. They now get a full day. The coolest thing they do is take the drivers to a school in Milwaukee that has a lot of special needs kids who use every conceivable mobility device. Most of them have never been on a bus. They sort of merge the mobility training and driver training and spend 4 hours together.

Ms. De Vos asked if Milwaukee had dealt with several issues:

- Accessibility of bus stops in regards to snow clearance issues
- bus wraps as some service dogs will not let people get on the bus if they don't recognize it as a city bus
- There is talk about making Metro bus stops a quarter mile apart. That will impact people with mobility issues getting to stops.

Mr. Kenny said Milwaukee was going to lose a lot of service in 2012. We restructured some routes to "express" routes. That allowed us to capture some federal money by combining. That also, though, meant fewer stops. The office of people with disabilities tried to identify particular locations where we didn't want to lose a stop or have the stops to go beyond a block between. The other thing they did is that during the busiest segment of the route they continued regular non-express service. When you face that funding reality, you have to know where your clients are. We know the popular ADA boarding stops. But you are always going to adversely impact someone when you make those sorts of changes.

In terms of the snow, we've done a lot of work with the local municipalities because the county doesn't have that enforcement authority. We were discouraged from marketing the bus system to paratransit clients during winter months. But we have found that this record increase in ridership is happening during the winter months as well. You have to come up with creative solutions. They were working with the sheriff's department to get Department of Corrections inmates to do shoveling of bus stops, particularly in high use areas. They agreed, but some people got skittish about the idea. They are going to keep pursuing that.

Mr. Kenny said they have bus wraps. It's not anyone's favorite thing, but it brings in a lot of advertising revenue. He has never heard of the problem with service dogs, but buses do look very different when wrapped.

Mr. DuRocher said we've had a leveling off/decline in paratransit numbers. He thought it might have to do with people not going as much to supported employment sites. It's encouraging to think it's migration, but do you think

that is part of your numbers? Mr. Kenny agreed that is part of it. They no longer use paratransit numbers as a measure, just the ADA boardings. Once Family Care got fully implemented, the Family Care agencies did not want to pay the county's rate. They looked for less expensive providers. So that dynamic skews paratransit numbers. After 2010, they haven't used paratransit numbers, although they still track.

Mr. DuRocher said that transferring over to cheaper rides decreases ridership because it effectively becomes a denial of service. The one benefit of Family Care is that case managers and their agencies have been anxious to partner with Mr. Kenny's agency for the first time. If they can identify clients that are sometimes transit users, it benefits Family Care's bottom line. Previously they weren't vested in that issue, but they are now. Mr. DuRocher said he was trying to get a picture of his discussion of travel training. What is the description of ambulatory vs. non-ambulatory? Mr. Kenny said most 1 on 1 training is ambulatory folks. Large trainings are ambulatory folks. They've found that with the mobility devices, small group training is most beneficial. People are out there in the community, but the fear of being able to maneuver is also there.

Mr. DuRocher asked if the buses use flip out or hydraulic ramps. They used fold out ramps. Ms. Martin asked their annual grant award amount. It is about \$350,000.

Mr. Tangney asked if the stop benches have wood or metal seats. Mr. Kenny said they haven't received them yet, but he thinks they are metal. Mr. Tangney asked if there are ever injuries with tie downs that don't work properly. Mr. Kenny said he's heard of a few but not many. They've been providing a lot more training. They've tried to make the training more consumer driven. People who manufacture wheelchairs don't advise because they don't want liability.

6. [26406](#)

Electronic Communication with Customers - Dave Eveland, Metro IT Coordinator

Mr. Eveland said you've probably heard about a capital project we've talked about for years an interactive voice response (IVR) system which would allow for an automated phone system. It would be similar to when you call a bank and get account information. Riders could call and get route information or schedule a ride. It would be available 24/7 and would be used for other functions as well. It could have the capability of doing outbound calling, so people wouldn't have to call to confirm trips. It would make outbound calls for real time information to say the ride will be arriving in 10 minutes. It has other functionality uses internally for providing employees information about scheduling. We would very much like to do it. It's a large, expensive project. Where it resides in this year's capital budget would just be a guess at this stage. It will probably in an outlying year's budget. At some point in the future we'd like to see that. It's something that would be a great benefit to the riding public.

Beyond that, we are engaged in electronic communication with passengers on an increasing basis in a variety of ways, particularly our webpage, Twitter, YouTube channel, and Flickr account. We are looking at the possibility of

using Twitter more. TriMet in Portland, OR has a very active Twitter process where people actively provide information back and forth to / from the transit system. This is good for detour information, or passengers reporting information about problems with equipment. It has become a two-way communication vehicle. We'd like to begin using more of that. Right now we use it at a low level. We're looking at increasing the usage as we figure out a better way to do that. Some systems are actually at the point that they have staff assigned to watch the Twitter feed.

Beyond that some of the things you might be familiar with is information on the internet – schedules for fixed route. Right now there is just basic information that can be used to schedule paratransit trips. But there is a lot of information for people using fixed route and the mobile apps – not developed by us – by third party developers. They scrape data from our website to make real time information available via their apps. After 4 years of negotiations between the city and Google, we are a participating agency with the Google Transit application for providing static information. They aren't yet doing anything with real time information.

We have real time information and can provide that at the stop level. We have 8 electronic signs at our transfer points and at some major stops in the downtown area. We are in the process of purchasing more signs, so they will have a greater presence in the community. We look forward to increasing electronic elements for customers. If you have ideas, feel free to offer them.

Ms. Gullickson asked if there are any systems that are able to provide real time information in the form of apps for paratransit service. Mr. Eveland said no. With IVR, you could get the same information as you could get over a website. Someone is probably building it, but he hasn't heard of it.

7. [26407](#)

Tracking Fixed Route Ridership of People with Disabilities and Seniors During This Era of Crowded Buses - Dave Eveland, Metro IT Coordinator

Mr. Eveland said he is a little vague about this item. He would like to know what is being looked for here. How we can track the ridership for people with disabilities on fixed route specifically having to do with crowded buses? It's a difficult thing for us to track. Ms. De Vos said we don't have near as good data as Milwaukee does. All we know is the number of times the lift was deployed to get on the bus. Mr. Eveland said we do it a little differently than Milwaukee – the number of times we deploy for a wheelchair user or for a stroller. It is the best we have. It allows us to see trends. Ms. De Vos said some drivers are more ready to use the lift right away than others. Mr. Eveland said that is also true about kneeling the bus. As far as tracking it, that is dependent on drivers reporting they had to pass people up or couldn't board a wheelchair at a specific location. But it is driver-specific characteristics that make it difficult to track that.

Ms. Martin said Alder Maniaci mentioned it as a concern when we talked about promoting migration at the same time we have over-crowding on fixed route. We may not have the resources to expand to meet all the demand. How can we encourage people but also track the issues? Mr. Streit asked the motivating factor to require drivers to call dispatch each time there is securement. Mr. Kenny said they did that because there is an expectation that there is a 3

minute window to get to a stop, so if that is going to be altered and a bus sits for a couple of minutes, dispatch will know about that logistical issue. In addition, if both wheelchair spots are taken on the bus, the driver is required to get out of the bus and explain to another individual who can't get on and tell them when to expect another bus. They call that in and then the next bus is authorized to express to that stop.

Mr. Eveland said something that has been quite effective is that drivers have taken the initiative to provide forewarning to the bus a person using a wheelchair is transferring to so they can have the lift ready.

Mr. Streit asked if whenever a Metro driver had to get out of the seat to secure someone, if they called that in would there be someone at dispatch who is able to record that somehow. Mr. Eveland said not easily with our current system. Mr. Streit said it doesn't need to be automated, but if the driver calls in a securement, could we have dispatch record that. Mr. Eveland said we don't have procedures in place for that now. But if a voice call is made and we have a requirement that the dispatcher has to record that somehow, it's certainly possible. Mr. Streit said that would help differentiate a chair securement vs. other times a lift is deployed. That's what Alder Maniaci was trying to get at when this discussion happened at the Transit and Parking Commission (TPC). Mr. Eveland said we could do some thinking about how to do that. We are looking at some updated software that might be able to get an automated recording of that call without requiring a dispatch response, which would be difficult in busy times. Streit asked that Mr. Eveland pass that on to Chuck Kamp.

Ms. Gullickson asked why we want that information. That might be good information about people in a chair. But isn't it just as relevant to count people who are ambulatory or people with visual disabilities? What is the purpose of that data other than that it is interesting? There are lots of things that would be interesting to have drivers record.

Mr. Streit said it would tell us something about how frequently both of those wheelchair spots are being used. Not to diminish the other disabilities, but for those, lots of other seats can be used. But for those two spots, you can't have a third person ride that bus. This is one area to track instead of having a whole lot of data being recorded.

Ms. Martin said you get a very specific set of data from the number of securements performed. Something that is broader for all types of disabilities is the fare type – half fare for senior/disabled. We could make an effort to follow the trending with that type of fare usage. Or maybe it's something that works hand in hand.

Mr. Kenny said they are getting new fareboxes. Participants of the New Freedom program get a sticker, but that is not getting recorded. But with all of their programs, new fareboxes will have a swipe feature. They will be able to track every type of usage based on type of disability. They will also use smart cards that allow people to add money to their cards.

Ms. Brunette-Tregoning asked how we track people who have an unlimited ride card such as UW, MATC – they have regular passes, so we can't track those

rides based on fare type. Mr. Tangney asked if that would be possible to track with the strip on the cards. Mr. Eveland said we are getting new fareboxes, but not smart cards at this time. It's possible we could get that information on a smart card, but a question comes up about what the riding public would like to have on their pass. There will be holes in data collection of this sort. But if it's important to come up with something so we'll be able to look at trends.

8. [26408](#)

Reports

- a. Transit & Parking Commission
- b. Commission on People with Disabilities
- c. Dane County Specialized Transportation Commission
- e. Performance Indicators
- f. Report from the Chair
- g. Staff Report

Attachments: [Pending List 02 09 12.pdf](#)  
[ROSTER ADA TS 03 2012.pdf](#)  
[Para Indicators Feb 2012.pdf](#)  
[Para Indicators Mar12.pdf](#)

a. Transit and Parking Commission – No report.

b. Commission on People with Disabilities – Nothing to report.

c. Dane County Specialized Transportation Commission – Ms. Martin said in April they talked about the Veterans grant application to have a statewide call center for veterans' transportation programs. They are partnering with mobility managers and dryhooch.org. There was discussion about LogistiCare. They are working very hard with dialysis centers. Care Wisconsin has changes going on with liquidating their fleet and contracting out for rides. Ms. De Vos asked why they are doing that. Ms. Martin said Dane County is the only county where they directly operate service. In order to provide service all over, they need to match their Dane County service to that in other counties.

d. Other Community Meetings – There were no reports.

e. Performance Indicators – Ms. Martin said we're just through March. Trends aren't clear until April or May. It was a mild winter and year to date ridership is comparable to last year. It is down a bit. It is interesting to note that cancellations and no shows are down. Mr. DuRocher said Transit Solutions, which in his perception is reliable, has the highest rate of late rides. He was surprised to see that. Ms. Martin said there is clearly a mistake all across that line. There will be correct number for April.

f. Report from the Chair – We will have our organizational meeting next month.

g. Staff Report – Mr. DuRocher said Care Wisconsin has been providing a lot of paratransit rides for different segments of the population. They are no longer providing those rides. They aren't bowing out of transportation but contracting with other providers. What is the causal factor there and does it impact us? Ms. Martin said it has to do with their overall management and operating here like in the other counties. They are not out of money. They



were haggling with the state, and the state was not forthcoming with more funds. They had to maintain a ratio of overhead to operations; that might have been a factor. But they stated they wanted to do transportation the same in all counties. They annually do about 80,000 trips. They contract 11,000 and about 21,000 are adult daycare trips that go to their facility on International Drive. They have seven contracts with private firms. They don't provide evening or weekend service. The county is looking to contract with Care Wisconsin and piggyback on Dane County for adult daycare trips. So they could do that all with one transportation manager at the county. The county and Metro and Care Wisconsin have been in discussion about this to make it a smooth transition.

All Care Wisconsin rides are Medicare rides. Mr. DuRocher asked how they got to continue after the advent of Family Care. They were excluded.

9. [08706](#)

Other Transit Related Announcements

Ms. De Vos said the Transportation Planning Board (MPO) is doing a five year Transportation Development Plan (TDP) and a major component of the plan would be to restructure to ¼ mile bus stops. She thinks we really need to discuss that issue. There are different ways to deal with the issue of speeding up the bus and making transit more attractive while still including people who need more bus stops. Ms. Martin said Mike Cechvala will be attending to speak to this issue in June. Ms. De Vos said she won't be here in June. Ms. Martin said she'd try to change it.

Mr. Tangney said he sometimes rides with friends who use Metro Plus. There are some concerns about quick starts or stops. He wonders if Milwaukee has a program to train about ride comfort. Mr. Kenny said the video we have addresses that issue. The video is consumer driven, and that is a big issue. For people who can't verbally communicate they provide written message cards and several of them address that issue. Ms. Martin knows Darlene Hall, the other mobility manager in Milwaukee county, and she was riding one of the routes. A car drove in front of the bus when she was standing and she went crashing into the front bar. So even mobility managers are sensitive to that issue!

Mr. Tangney asked how that is being addressed in training with drivers. Mr. Kenny said in our focus groups, we found that is a big issue. So we put that into the film and the training program. Mr. Tangney said they used to give new drivers a "bad" sensitivity ride to let people feel all those things, then do it properly. That's a big wake up call. It takes 10 – 15 minutes. It's not used frequently today, but it is something worthwhile knowing that in the back of a vehicle in a chair it's a whole different ballgame. Mr. Kenny said one thing they do is blindfold trainees and then not call out stops. Mr. Tangney said he is talking more about paratransit service.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Tangney moved adjournment; Ms. De Vos seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.