



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved TRANSIT AND PARKING COMMISSION

PLEASE NOTE: This meeting can be viewed in a live webcast of Madison City Channel at
www.madisoncitychannel.com.

Thursday, April 8, 2010

5:00 PM

Room 260, Madison Municipal Building
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
(After 6 PM, use Doty St. entrance.)

A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

With a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 5:03 PM.

Present: 6 -

Chris Schmidt; David E. Tolmie; Gary L. Poulson; Duane F. Hinz; Kenneth M. Streit and Margaret Bergamini

Excused: 4 -

Brian L. Solomon; Jed Sanborn; Amanda F. White and Susan M. Schmitz

Streit arrived at 6:02 PM.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Schmidt, seconded by Hinz, to Approve the Minutes of the March 9, 2010 meeting. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

C. PUBLIC APPEARANCES - None.

D. TRANSIT AND PARKING MONTHLY REPORTS

D.1. [17964](#)

Parking: Comptroller's Pre-Audit Year-End Accounting, Central Area Parking, and Competitor's Parking Rates in the Downtown Area - TPC 04.08.10.

Bill Knobloch, Parking Operations Manager, said that with the departure of the Parking Analyst, the monthly staff reports were being replaced by reports provided by the Comptroller's office, which contained the same information in a different format. He discussed the Comptroller's pre-audit 2009 year-end report for Parking:

- Revenue was about 4% under projections, approx. \$474K; \$300+K of this was interest, due to poor rates in 2009.
- Expenses were \$1.5 million over budget due to paying off the bonds; though a big expenditure now, would save \$500-600K/year over the next ten years.
- All other expenses were down due to cost controls.
- Instead of putting \$500K into reserves, \$1.5 million was spent over budget; resulting in a \$1.2 million loss in 2009.
- Revenues in all categories were up, except for interest income (\$658K in '08 vs. \$337K in '09).
- Despite the drop in interest income, 2009 revenue was \$43K higher than 2008.
- Expenditures were up \$2.8 million due to the debt service; the \$602K paid out

for this in 2008 was mainly interest, which would now be saved.

- Less revenue affected cash flow, which didn't affect daily expenses but could affect big ticket items (like Gov East replacement); the impact on reserves would need to be watched.
- Softness in occupancy could be seen when comparing on-street meters for February '09 @ 57% vs, '10 @ 49%.

Items for the Activity Report included:

- The process to replace the Parking Analyst would be started.
- Final touches were being put on '09 expenses and revenues.
- Doors and windows were being replaced at Cap Square North; and concrete remediation was continuing.
- With contractors hungry for business, the CSN bid came at half of what was budgeted, and the bid for remediation came in at \$392K vs. \$500K budgeted.
- Fourteen multi-space meters were installed; the vendor was working on a problem with a low rate of credit card acceptance; the meters would not be put into service until issues were resolved.
- First camera was being planned for Overture; Parking was looking at using the City system (used by MPD, Monona Terrace, and Overture Center), but had the fiber network to set up a separate system as well.
- A camera system would help Parking get more automated; cashier hours were gradually being constricted, and would eventually be quite reduced but not completely eliminated (due to special events or rush hours); 60% of Parking's expenses were people-related.

Knobeloch reviewed some parking rates of competitors. Among the rate variances between the City and its competitors, the monthly rate @ Gov East was \$180, vs. \$83.55 @ Monona Terrace for certain state employees and \$145 @ Block 89. Parking was probably a little on the high side; competitors didn't want hourly business; permit parking was easier and cheaper.

Pointing out a current Isthmus article about the multi-space meters, Knobeloch said the new machines had zero re-set (like all multi-space meters); customers did not piggy-back on the metered time of the parker before them. Each person started their own transaction and paid for their own time.

Hinz asked if there was another reason why the bonds were paid off, besides savings on interest. Knobeloch said the pay-off temporarily removed important bond covenants, after which he started receiving inquiries from various groups asking for lower rates. The City Attorney's Office consulted the Bond Counsel (an attorney paid for by the Utility who represented the bond holders) to find out if doing certain things now would interfere with re-bonding. To rebuild Gov East, Parking would likely sell tax-exempt revenue bonds with very specific rules about how the money can be used. Other agencies might have different answers, but Knobeloch felt that the main answer would be savings on interest.

Hinz said he didn't recall that the issue of the bond pay-off had come before the group. Poulson said he would look into this and whether it was part of the Commission's statutory review requirement. Hinz thought it would be, because of the bond covenants. As a result, he wondered if there were other reasons for paying off the bonds, since he would have expected some discussion at the Commission about it. He wanted to know how and at whose recommendation the pay-off had come about.

When asked about a parking over-supply and if a garage really needed to be re-built, Knobloch said that parking was a geographical asset; people were not willing to walk more than two blocks. With 22 monthly vacancies at Gov East, the permits were probably a little overpriced; however, the total occupancy rate was perfect at 85%. Bergamini thought occupancy info for the privates would help show if rates might be driving parkers from City to private parking. The privates did not share their occupancy info, but Knobloch thought the economic downturn had reduced their tenancy, opening up more parking. Based on his observation, he thought the privates were suffering, and were trying to make the most of their assets by offering PM and weekend parking. Up to the last rate change, Parking had not considered the privates, because typically they were full. Now they were a factor.

In response to other questions, Knobloch said that the bonds had been called in December; because of the interest savings, it was supported by the Mayor's and Comptroller's offices and had been part of a budget amendment approved by the Council. Parking's money came only from its own user fees and never came out of taxpayer money; the \$3.5 million used to cash out the bonds came out of Parking's reserves of \$17 million (a factor in cash flow). When Moody's or S&P rated bonds, their number one criteria was parking demand. If parking was overbuilt, ratings on bonds would suffer, interest would be higher, and at \$30K/stall, the whole system would suffer eventually.

Knobloch concluded by saying that the Comptroller's reports would now comprise the monthly revenue reports; and staff would work on bringing back the occupancy reports. He added that there would be little or no report in May, since he would not be available for that meeting. Hinz/Schmidt made a motion to receive the report. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

D.2. [17995](#) Metro: YTD Performance Indicator Reports - TPC 04.08.10.

Metro's Transit Planning and Scheduling Manager Drew Beck was available for questions. Noting that the fixed route ridership numbers shown in the hand-out were preliminary, ridership through February was up .8% compared to 2009. Schmidt/Bergamini made a motion to receive the report. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS ITEMS

E.1. [17951](#) TPC Resolution No. 37, memorializing action previously taken on Parking Utility Garage Administrative Rules - TPC 04.08.10.

A motion was made by Hinz, seconded by Tolmie, to Approve TPC Resolution No. 37, related to previous action taken on Parking Utility Garage Administrative Rules. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

E.2. [17965](#) Update on Greyhound Bus Stop - TPC 04.08.10.

Keith Pollock, Transportation Operations Analyst for Traffic Engineering, updated members on the new location of Greyhound's bus stop in Madison.

- The arrangement between Greyhound and the truck stop at Hwy. 51 and the Interstate had just fallen through.
- Greyhound would be stopping at the North Transfer Point on Huxley Street

starting April 9, 2010 and for the foreseeable future.

- Greyhound was looking around for a small space at a strip mall just large enough to sell tickets and to store/hold packages for their delivery service.
- Not sure of their schedule, Pollock had read they were making 12 stops/day, but heard they were making four.

Metro's Transit Service Manager Ann Gullickson said there had been no discussions with Greyhound about providing security at the location. Though there were some operational challenges with having Greyhound adjacent to Metro at the NTP, the location would offer Metro riders better access to Greyhound. However, the location had no seating, no protection from the weather/waiting rooms, and no restrooms.

Because of security problems at bus stations historically, and because the NTP was an isolated spot, Bergamini hoped that, as the relationship with Greyhound developed, security arrangements would be considered, esp. during those hours when Metro was not also operating. Gullickson said that the Madison Police Department was aware of the situation, and Metro would work with the MPD to observe any new challenges at the NTP beyond those already there. The NTP did have cameras.

Responding to questions, Pollock said he had emailed Greyhound contact info about the Kelly-Williamson Mobil Station on W. Washington. Schmidt said that at a meeting, Greyhound said they would investigate this location. Pollock observed that Greyhound passengers seemed to arrive earlier and loiter longer than Badger bus customers; and wondered if issues similar to those at the Baldwin stop would arise at this location, which had no shelter, seating or restrooms. Schmidt added that he wasn't sure the business would be amenable to Greyhound stopping there. But Greyhound was told at the meeting that they needed to find a mid-term solution and could not be hop-scotching around the city. The City had offered to help Greyhound find a suitable location.

Because this agenda item was strictly informational, no action was needed on it. Please note: During her comments on Agenda Item F.3., Registrant Rosemary Lee, 111 W. Wilson, remarked as follows: Greyhound had been offered help by John Meier (of Badger Bus) and by City staff, neither of whom was responsible for Greyhound's inaction and long delay in locating a suitable place for an intercity bus stop.

F. NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

F.1. [17972](#)

Metro: Preliminary review of proposed route changes, scheduled for public hearing and action at the Commission's monthly meeting on May 11, 2010 - TPC 04.08.10.

Drew Beck discussed the operational issues which supported the proposed change to Routes 51 and 57, as follows:

- The change would address hazards with the left turn from eastbound Hammersley onto northbound Whitney Way.
- Traffic barreled over the hill from the south on Whitney Way, creating a short sightline distance and limited reaction time for drivers.
- A newly constructed center island and left turn bay onto northbound Whitney Way made the turn more difficult, creating a tighter turn radius and worsening the sight line.

- During construction last summer, buses detoured down Brookwood and Piping Rock, which proved to be a preferable route.
- The sightline distance for the left turn from Piping Rock onto Whitney was much better.
- Piping Rock was a wider, more "bus-able" street, with a boulevard and sidewalks. Hammersley had neither sidewalks nor decent terraces for walking to the bus stop.
- Supplementary school routes were already being run on Piping Rock, and drivers liked it.

Beck did not know of accidents since adding the new left turn bay at Hammersley, but drivers reported that the turn was easier before the changes. Regarding the number of passengers affected, Beck said the stops in the area had low boarding counts. The stop located at Hammersley/Whitney would be the only one really affected by the route change. Hinz wondered if property owner along the new route would be notified, since he suspected they would have more comments about the change than passengers on the route. Beck said that the neighborhood association and alder for the district (Sanborn) could be notified. Metro hoped to make the change in late summer.

Schmidt/Tolmie made a motion to schedule a public hearing on the proposed change to Routes 51 and 57, at the Commission's next regular monthly meeting on May 11th. Bergamini offered an amendment to the motion to say, "to hold the hearing in May after property owners have been notified." After some discussion, Bergamini withdrew her amendment. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

F.2. [17756](#)

Authorizing the Mayor and the City Clerk to enter into an agreement with Badger Bus Lines, Inc. for provision of ADA paratransit services to Metro Transit in a Long-Term Assignment Program through June 30, 2013 with an additional 2 options for 6 months each that may be executed by the Metro Transit General Manager.

Metro's Paratransit Program Manager Crystal Martin came to the table to request approval of the resolution to contract with Badger Bus Lines for the Long-Term Assignment Program.

Martin addressed statements in recent newspaper articles regarding the bidding process.

- Contrary to certain claims, pricing was not 3.4% of the consideration; looking at the scoring sheets for the bid, Items F, G and H all comprised pricing components, and totaled 30% of the consideration for cost for the proposal.
- Paragraph (c) of the FTA procurement language stated that "Price Alone (was) Not Determinative", and that service performance should play "a dominant role" in the selection process; not only because paratransit served people with disabilities, but also because many people involved in the success of vital programs (like supported employment) depended on it as well.
- Before 2000, Metro had weighted pricing alone up to 30% of points.
- This changed after 2000 partly due to a failed contracting result, which threatened interruption of services and created a very difficult situation for everyone, inc. customers.
- After a similar bad experience, Dane County changed their weighting for price as well.

Martin felt the right things had been taken into consideration for the bid. Also, a review of the scoring for the bid by the City's Purchasing Department did not

bear out a claim of bias. Four evaluators were involved in the bid process, which served to diminish the effect of bias of any one person by providing more people to rank the various proposals.

Martin gave some history of the Long-Term Assignment program.

- A piece of Metro's overall paratransit service, the LTA program began in 2006 after a successful pilot in 2005.
- Customers with mostly recurring trips/standing trip requests were assigned, which made the service predictable for the contractor, produced more even demand of service overall, and allowed Metro to appropriately schedule drivers for a continuous and productive day.
- Looking at the color graphs, the top graph showed paratransit trips throughout a service day, with spikes at 8:30 AM and 2:30 PM.
- If Metro drivers were scheduled to meet all of the demand, there would be serious peaks/lulls in their day.
- Not only had the program helped to manage costs by creating a more productive day for drivers, it also helped to maintain a very consistent cost/ride (as shown in the bottom graph), and allowed Metro to more easily package this component for bidding.

Martin talked about the current bid process.

- Metro received five proposals, including two from new bidders.
- The technical team evaluated the technical portion of the proposals; prices were sealed and evaluated separately.
- Badger Bus Lines ranked first in each category, except cost (as seen on the scoring sheet).
- The cost came in under budget for 2010; and based on current, overall pricing, would save \$250K in costs over the course of the three-year contract.

In developing the request for proposals and preparing for the selection process, staff had been very thorough in soliciting and incorporating input from several groups: ADATS, Dane Co. Human Services, Dane Co. Transportation Advisory Committee, City Risk Manager, City Purchasing, customers, current and potential service providers. These groups offered input on: firm qualifications, service and performance standards; technical spec's; insurance requirements; scoring sheets; challenges of fulfilling contract provisions; expectations/recommendations re: the program and the bidding process.

When asked if the process had remained mostly the same over the years, Martin said some things had changed because staff continually looked for ways to improve the process. Bidders were given previous RFP's, score sheets and current contracts to look at. This year, Purchasing had a new format for the presentation of the proposals, which requested specific samples of such things as driver manifests and invoices, and copies of drug/alcohol testing and driver training programs.

Martin said that many transit systems took an all/nothing approach, either providing all the paratransit service themselves or contracting all the service out. Metro's approach of doing both was rare, but offered the benefit of bringing Metro much closer to its customers, who provided feedback on quality of service among providers. The bid processes for general paratransit service vs. the Long Term Assignment program reflected the different requirements of the two programs. For example, general paratransit riders

scheduled their rides through Metro. But since LTA riders scheduled directly with their providers, those providers had to be prepared to carefully document the rides in reports to Metro and its funding partners.

A motion was made by Schmidt, seconded by Tolmie, to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

Upon the motion of Schmidt/Hinz, members recessed briefly at 6:01 PM, at which point Streit arrived. At 6:02 PM, the meeting resumed.

F.3. [17952](#)

Metro: Discussion of stroller/grocery cart guidelines for bus passengers and related customer service issues - TPC 04.08.10.

Registrant Rosemary Lee, 111 W. Wilson Street, 53703, appeared before the group to ask that stroller rules be enforced on buses. Based on her own experience, drivers were not enforcing the posted rules, which was extremely dangerous for passengers and babies both. She urged that drivers be instructed to enforce the rules consistently, and that this issue be resolved with guidance from the Commission. (Please see Lee's additional comments about Agenda Item E.2. in that portion of the Minutes.)

Metro's Transit Operations Manager Richard Buss and General Operations Supervisor Chris Olson (also in charge of the Safety & Security Division) came to the table to discuss the policy. Buss made the following remarks:

- The issue was rapidly advancing because ridership was growing every month, but capacity was not; so conflicts arose among the vast variety of passengers (inc. those with disabilities, mobility devices, strollers, shopping carts) all sharing the limited space.
- Years ago, stroller were not such a big issue because they were umbrella types that could be easily folded up and didn't take up much space; now, strollers were much larger (as seen in pictures given to members), and didn't fold up easily.
- Some passengers were using strollers for shopping carts.
- Many passengers were transit-dependent, inc. those with little children, who had to use strollers.
- They were asked to use securement areas when available; but problems arose when wheelchairs needed that space as well.
- The overall challenge was trying to accommodate everyone who wanted to use the system.
- With many competing interests, drivers were put in the position of trying to accommodate everyone without causing delays or service disruptions (possibly to call police), because of one issue with one person.
- Instead, drivers did everything possible to get everything jammed onto the bus and still give people enough room to get through, so that no would have to leave the bus.

Metro Transit Service Manager Ann Gullickson joined staff at the table. During discussion, staff answered questions and made the following remarks:

- Metro had an exclusion policy, but tried to avoid using it because it involved a lengthy process and was counterproductive to the goal of increasing ridership.
- Metro needed help to create a policy that forestalled serious confrontations and arrests.
- Recently, when a driver enforced the stroller policy, a passenger became so belligerent that he was eventually arrested. Though doing his job, the driver

ended up on the receiving end of this wrath.

- With stricter enforcement of the current policy, more outreach and a public hearing would be needed, to solicit input from transit-dependent customers with children and strollers.
- Often a parent was tending to other children as well as a child in a stroller.
- Under federal reg's, wheelchairs had priority.
- Some of the newer buses with more open space might help the situation; Metro would look at how the four new buses with perimeter seating and wider aisles worked for strollers/carts.
- Metro was looking at other options too, some of which didn't require strollers to be collapsed. However, safety issues remained for children in unsecured strollers, esp. with sudden maneuvers or stops.
- Buses with steps slowed boardings and sometimes induced passengers to fold up strollers; greater ease of entry on low-floor buses didn't give drivers much chance to preemptively interact with passengers.
- Per a news article (distributed to members), Ottawa was struggling to resolve the same issue.
- Staff had come to the Commission to share some of the challenges of balancing the needs of customers with the current stroller policy.
- Stroller rules were not being enforced; drivers were reluctant to enforce the rules that could cause lengthy delays.
- Staff wanted to hear from members before developing a plan.
- Staff was also gathering info from other transit systems about their policies in hopes of finding some solutions; a national study was being conducted, and when completed might help in developing changes to the policy.

Members offered the following suggestions/comments/questions:

- To avoid putting drivers in a position where they had to arbitrate, a specific area could be outlined within which a stroller/cart would have to fit. A notice would be posted defining expectations.
- Shelters could also be equipped to show maximum dimensions (like airlines did)
- Perhaps on an empty bus, a slightly oversized stroller/cart would be allowed.
- Perhaps wheelchair straps (when available) could be used to secure strollers
- The trend toward larger devices would have to be accommodated.
- It was understandably difficult to achieve uniformity in rule enforcement: drivers had different styles; they had to quickly weigh options and exercise much discretion to assure everyone's safety and good service.
- Public education about the issue might be helpful.
- How had Metro handled the issue of wheelchair size, and how might those lessons be applied here?
- Were there federal rules about devices blocking aisles?
- Were there federal rules about securing children on buses?

Gullickson said that Metro would continue working on the issue and would like to bring a plan back to the TPC during the summer.

G. REPORTS OF OTHER COMMITTEES - for information only
(Most recent meeting minutes attached, if available)

[07828](#)

ADA Transit Subcommittee
Contracted Service Oversight Subcommittee
Parking Council for People with Disabilities
Long-Range Transportation Planning Commission

State Street Design Project Oversight Committee
Joint Southeast Campus Area Committee
Ad Hoc Committee to Develop Parking Strategic Plan
Low Income Bus Pass Program Committee
Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (MPO)

No action was needed on these items.

H. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

H.1. General announcements by Chair (Verbal announcements, for information only)

Poulson said he would follow up on questions related to Parking's bond redemption.

H.2. Commission member items for future agendas

Schmidt requested that the issue of Metro overtime be discussed at some future meeting. He also asked when the report about intercity buses on city streets would be on the agenda. Staff said that an opinion was being prepared by the City Attorney's Office, but due to backlogs there, would be ready no sooner than June. Being within the purview of the Commission to review labor contracts and because of concerns about overtime/other issues, Bergamini requested an update and discussion on Metro's contract negotiations.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Streit, seconded by Schmidt, to Adjourn at 6:50 PM. The motion passed by voice vote/other.