



# City of Madison

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
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## Meeting Minutes - Approved CONTRACTED SERVICE OVERSIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE

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Thursday, July 10, 2008

12:00 PM

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

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### 1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

**Guests:** Gordon Graham

**Staff:** Chuck Kamp, Wayne Block, Ann Schroeder

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM.

**Present:** 5 -

Carl D. Durocher; Bruce K. Sylvester; Mark M. Opitz; Rob Kennedy and Margaret Bergamini

**Absent:** 2 -

Jed Sanborn and Rick Rose

**Excused:** 6 -

Rindert Kiemel, Jr.; Andrew Potts; Ahnaray Bizjak; Shawn M. Murphy; Howard E. Teal and Renee R. Bremer

### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kennedy moved to approve the 5/8/08 minutes as written. Sylvester seconded. The motion passed by voice vote/other. Introductions were made for Wayne Block, new Transit Finance Manager.

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

### 4. [10772](#)

Adopting the final report of the Long Range Metro Transit Planning Ad Hoc Committee and the recommendations contained therein.

**Attachments:**

[LRMTPAHC Final Report June 2008.pdf](#)

[Survey 1.pdf](#)

[Survey 2.pdf](#)

[Public Feedback 1.pdf](#)

[Public Feedback 2.pdf](#)

[BRT - Madison Area Bus Advocates.pdf](#)

[BRT - Transport 2020.pdf](#)

[BRT - Metro Transit.pdf](#)

[MPO Ltr - LRMTF Final Report.pdf](#)

This Resolution was Return to Lead with the Recommendation for Approval

Kamp gave an overview of the Long Range Metro Transit Planning Ad Hoc Committee Final Report. The Committee began in early 2007 to start its work, and completed its work in spring 2008. Its charge was to focus on long range funding stability issues while looking at a whole host of ways to do that. The Committee broke in to subcommittees to discuss recommendations – funding, cost management, increasing ridership, marketing and service improvement. The subcommittees reported back to the full Committee. There were two public sets of meetings to get feedback on the interim and final report. The final report breaks recommendations into short, mid and long term. Staff is beginning to use this report for the 2009 budget and to guide them in some recommendations.

DuRocher said there was a lot of input to the Committee. Maybe no one supports every single line, but it was a collaborative effort. He encouraged people to adopt the report. It can guide Metro over the next several years, although the financial situation is shifting.

Opitz said staff helped guide the Committee over the course of its work. There were comprehensive discussions on the topics contained in the report. There was also some debate and dissent. One member did resign in frustration. That was unfortunate, although the Committee benefited from her input until almost the end. It was a very good process with plenty of input.

Other committees who have or will review the report include the ADA Transit Subcommittee, Board of Estimates, Metropolitan Planning Organization), and the Long Range Transportation Planning board.

Bergamini commended everyone who took part in the process. She had expressed feedback at various points along the way. She has reservations, especially on page 9, where it says there is an expectation that staff will analyze and come up with ideas and for the Transit and Parking Commission (TPC) to act on those. She hoped the Committee would really focus on the funding issues and imbalances more. In terms of timing and prioritization, there are lots of things staff should do. It also says there isn't enough staff to do what Metro is already trying to do. It's only a set of recommendations, but she hopes no one expects staff to follow it slavishly. It also doesn't prioritize enough. Marketing comes through, but it's weak in prioritization and is too broad in recommendations for staff to get these done.

Sylvester said the report could be adopted and then over the next months and years be implemented and priorities set. Bergamini asked what the Long Range Transportation Planning charge is. DuRocher said that was broken out of the former Transportation Commission along with TPC. Maybe it is appropriate to refer some things to the TPC for prioritization.

Opitz said he appreciates Bergamini's comments. The Committee's main charge was exploring ways to secure adequate funding. The issue of prioritization was only dealt with generally as short, medium and long range, although there was a lot of discussion, for example a lot of support for a Regional Transit Authority (RTA). But it's up to the TPC and others to have that

additional discussion and set priorities. He feels the Committee fulfilled their original charge. The Committee did discuss where recommendations should occur. There are a lot of things that can be done concurrently. It's up to the Council, Mayor's office, with advice from the TPC, to get it all advanced. Bergamini wonders how this translates to Metro's regular work plan. She doesn't want to put it all on Metro or the City's shoulders. There are some things the community or surrounding municipalities should do.

Kennedy said he's not sure the schedule is going to be easily followed. Short term, 2008 – 09, includes a lot of stuff. A lot of it is guidance. But other things are specific like a bus buddies program, or do something with how routes are designed, and add more staff for customer service. It's going to be kind of hard to follow.

Kamp said from a staff perspective (and also heard in public meetings) some of the things are going to happen right when they are listed. The Committee understood that some will overlap in short and mid term and even long term. For example a recommendation in short term is 24-hour fare card machines. That's not getting done in 2009. That will overlap into other years as Metro looks at fare card options. We can receive direction on whether we are moving too fast or not fast enough. It is an important guideline. Metro can use this document and the process the City went through and why some concepts should be used in enabling legislation for an RTA. The report was quoted on both sides in the bus wrap debate. It is a useful tool.

Kennedy said perhaps one of the priorities in the next budget should be to request enough staff to implement some of the things that are important from the report. This report could be a strong tool to make that request. Kamp said regarding the intelligent transit systems recommendation, he will try to make that sooner than long term. Some people might say he is jumping the gun. A Metro Management Audit is coming up by an outside firm. He will ask some questions about this to get another tool.

Sylvester moved to adopt the report; Bergamini seconded. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

5. [11143](#)

Route Productivity - May 2008

Attachments: [Route Productivity May08.pdf](#)

Route 80 continues to be first in route productivity although it appears to have dropped in ridership and productivity. Metro has identified a couple drivers who did not record ridership because Route 80 is free. This lack of ridership counting from just a couple of drivers is a large impact – 25,000 rides per month per driver. This is an example of Metro using this report to see trends. If you look at the routes that are at a productivity increase of 25% or more, several are commuter routes. Staff believes this is probably related to fuel prices encouraging more people to take the bus where the commuter services are well-designed for people to get to and from work. Ridership is up 5.5% and on track to meet the Mayor's goals of ridership and productivity for the year.

Kennedy asked whether Metro can use automatic passenger counter (APCs) numbers to compare with manual counts and adjust for differences. He asked what other communities do. He thought that would be a benchmark to gauge the validity of the manual count. Metro Planner Tim Sobota is leery of relying on the APC numbers, but Metro can look at it for the long run. Kennedy said we wouldn't have to rely on APCs but use them to do a check. Bergamini seconded that. She has heard over the years that the manual counts aren't necessarily accurate. Use the APC and make allowances for the foibles of the technology. You can at least get some spot checks and a ballpark figure. These are May to May numbers. When looking at Associated Students of Madison numbers for March, April, and May, they were unusual. Operations was going to look at the numbers because they didn't match other ridership and other pass programs. It could have been that when buses were stuck and late a lot, students didn't jump on for just two blocks. Kamp said also numbers were really affected by the difference in timing of the spring break. Kamp said in the long run he'd love to have a system where Route 80 ridership as recorded by driver is collected on a regular basis and checking against APCs when available. Then a report would show up on Planner Drew Beck's computer any time there is a 5% difference. Metro will work on this manually initially and hope for a good long term solution.

Kennedy said they are seeing lots of things increase including bus routes. Some routes that are already very full are becoming over crowded, even with an extra bus. He wondered if Metro can deal with that capacity and growth. Kamp said if the 10% to 15% increase happens over ten years yes, if over two years no. Metro is buying 22 buses and might not get rid of 22 buses. If our shift is 5%, that's relatively manageable. More of an increase could cause capacity problems. How far can we accommodate service expansion requests is a good question.

Bergamini said looking at revenue increases vs. ridership increases, there were odd numbers. Revenue has not matched ridership in some very odd ways. Kamp said the through May financials might begin to address that. Metro has identified some areas where all the revenue for Madison Metropolitan School District pass sales was recorded up front. It should have been recorded over the course of the school year.

Kamp said fuel has gone up by \$130,000 or \$140,000 in one month. That is because early in the year diesel costs were kept low. Now Metro is paying in the high \$3/low \$4 range per gallon when it was budgeted for more like \$2.48/gallon. That is overshadowing the additional revenue from increased ridership. Increased ridership revenue helps, but it doesn't come close dollar per dollar to offset fuel increases. Staff will be working on trying to figure out how much it will offset costs. Staff is working next on how the dollar amount per service hour will end in 2008 to share with partners as soon as possible.

Kennedy asked how fuel purchases work for Metro. For 2007, Metro had a fixed price contract. For 2008, Metro and the City had been working on waiting to get a good fixed price using data from the last ten years where there was always a decrease in price in the fall. It didn't happen in fall 2007. The City didn't take a price of \$2.82 because it would have put us over several hundred thousand dollars on the budget at that time. Metro went out for bid in February and got the best price we could. Metro is currently using one contractor but on

a variable price basis. There hasn't been a good time so far to get a fixed price. It has not yet been decided what to do for next year.

Another thing that sticks out in the report is overtime. Kamp said if you look at salaries, Metro currently has 12 driver vacancies. We are trying to recruit. We generally have overtime because of vacancies. Graham asked if Metro plans ahead with training and recruiting. Kamp said Metro constantly recruits for drivers, which are most of our vacancies. It is always the hope to have more of a pool that can get through the entire process. Graham said he assumes someone is looking at retention and how to avoid the vacancies in the first place. Kamp said Metro has one of the oldest workforces in the City. We are trying to address why our average age is older. Our retention would be improved if we had a higher percentage of part time people who were 25 rather than 45. We hire a lot of part time people who are older and don't stay as long. Graham said it's more cost effective to spend money on retention than on overtime and recruiting and training. Something is amiss so it needs to be corrected.

Kamp said one problem is absences without pay that contribute to overtime, and we are currently in negotiations with the Union to address this. Bergamini asked whether there are any other things being explored in negotiations. Kamp said yes.

Kennedy asked about other big numbers of health and depreciation. Kamp said he'd have to get back to the group with those numbers.

Graham asked if Metro plans to buy more hybrids in the next bus buy since they have a lower cost per mile (CPM). Kamp said Metro doesn't plan to buy the higher cost buses (\$490,000 each versus \$310,000 for a non-hybrid bus) right now because the focus is on the short term of capacity. We need more buses. Graham wondered if the analysis was done to see if the savings in fuel would pay for the additional cost of the hybrids. Kamp said it doesn't, but Metro still wants to look at buying hybrids after the next purchase of 22 buses. Also if we could get more federal money for the local share, that would help. Bergamini said there is a need to look at the long term CPM. Graham said Metro does need to look at the CPM since other systems show a 30% savings, not just miles per gallon. University customers are very happy with hybrids. Hybrids are running all the time (except when in for maintenance) and also on heavy routes.

Opitz said he would be interested to sort routes by type for the route productivity report, i.e. commuter, core, etc. He pointed out an error in the report. Under other routes where it says Route 70, it says that it goes to the transfer point on weekdays, which it does not.

Kennedy said recommendation number 8 in the Ad Hoc final report deals with bus size. He understands that it is the operator cost that drives the expense, not the bus size. However, as fuel costs go up, there might be a breaking point where it is more cost effective to have smaller buses at times such as on weekends when loads are lighter. Kamp said he would wonder about that if gas goes up and ridership continues to go up. Metro would need more peak capacity. He wouldn't want to buy only half the 40 foot buses Metro normally would in order to spend money on smaller buses. Kennedy said we may need

articulated buses too.

Bergamini asked about the bill the house just passed giving transit agencies more money this year to help transit agencies for operating costs and also loosening rules so money can be shifted from capital to operating budgets. Kamp said he is still looking at the legislation – some of it is for biofuel. He hasn't found anything yet about just helping with plain diesel costs. The American Public Transportation Association is involved in keeping an eye on this legislation.

Graham said the Route 80 is frequently packed. There are bottlenecks in services in winter in trying to get on or off the bus. On a route that is near or over capacity, that becomes a bottleneck. Sometimes a bus pulls up to a place where snow is not shoveled. Articulated buses might be a solution for the top of the route productivity list. Smaller buses might be a solution for the middle of the percentile and other types of vehicles for the bottom of the route productivity list.

Bergamini said the top 4 producing routes are either UW or MMSD.

6. [08290](#)

Reports of Member Communities/Institutions

Sylvester said Verona is working with Sobota to convert Route 55 so instead of using the bypass around downtown to Epic and then going to pick up people downtown, it would stay on Verona Avenue the whole time. This is going through committees in Verona. Sobota is helping with bus stops on E. Verona Ave. It is not required that there be a concrete pad or connection to the sidewalk for each one, but Verona has decided it only makes sense to do so.

Opitz said Middleton will have 1000 new jobs in the next two months at Costco and UW Medical Foundation near the Middleton transfer point. He is hopeful this will boost both routes. Route 74 is becoming popular for people who commute to Middleton from the isthmus. They are adding two runs on Route 74 for midday service. They don't have any lighting at the transfer point, so they are going to try to get a street light. They will check with Sobota. Middleton is currently updating their bicycle and pedestrian plan. Every bus rider is a pedestrian, so they handed out posters to distribute. They are holding a public meeting next Wednesday to get comments. It is July 16th from 5 to 7 PM at Middleton City Hall.

Graham said he and Kennedy had been working on bike parking, the idea of a high density, secure bike parking area. He wondered if Metro had a surplus bus shelter that could be modified to a lockable bike rack.

Kennedy said that as of September 1st, Highland Avenue would be reconnected with Observatory Drive. This will make a 4 minute difference in the routes using that area and greatly reduce eastbound time on campus. They will have a lot of improved transportation amenities like bike lanes, sidewalks and connections for buses and other vehicles. There will be a roundabout instead of a signal at one area; another area will have a new signal. They are also trying to figure out what kind of bus service the University can afford for next year. Kamp said in addition to looking at end of

2008 charges for all partners, Metro will look at 2009 estimates for UW to help them plan their budget.

Bergamini said some running time will be improved with the opening of Observatory Drive. She is working with a team of students to completely re-do the ASM transportation public image with a new logo, etc. There will be a partial roll out in January and mainly the following year. They are working with volunteer groups to do You Tube videos that are more edgy than Metro's instructional videos. This is more student friendly media that could result in cost savings.

DuRocher said the TPC just approved a renewed ride pass agreement with Madison Area Technical College.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

The next Contracted Service Oversight Subcommittee meeting is September 11th.

Opitz moved to adjourn; seconded by DuRocher. The motion passed by voice vote/other.