



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
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Wednesday, May 11, 2011

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

Vice-Chair Amanda White called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

Present: 9 -

Ald. Bridget R. Maniaci; Chris Schmidt; Ald. Lisa Subeck; David E. Tolmie; Amanda F. White; Duane F. Hinz; Susan M. Schmitz; Kenneth M. Streit and Margaret Bergamini

Excused: 2 -

Gary L. Poulson and Jay B. Fern

Please note: Maniaci arrived at 5:06 PM, Subeck arrived at 5:07 and Schmidt arrived at 5:10, at the start of the Parking Report.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Streit, seconded by Hinz, to Approve the Minutes of the April 12, 2011 meeting. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

C. PUBLIC APPEARANCES - None.

D. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS - None.

E. TRANSIT AND PARKING QUARTERLY REPORTS

E.1. [22372](#)

Parking: April 2011 Activity Report, March & EOY Revenue/Expense Reports, and March Occupancy Reports - TPC 05.11.11

Parking Operations Manager Bill Knobloch made the following remarks about the Activity Report and the Revenue/Expense reports:

- On June 1st, the Utility would take over operations of the portion of Brayton Lot recently purchased from the State.
- All 26 state share-ride vans had elected to stay at the Lot; and a waiting list of monthly parkers (inc. some hourly parkers) would fill all the remaining spaces in this portion of the Lot; together producing \$145K annually – with a payback of 10 years on the purchase.
- A review team of mostly City employees had created a short list of respondents to the RFP for planning Block 105/Gov East, with interviews to begin May 18th. The 90-day ULI/Marcus/City planning team for Block 88/MMB (inc. Parking) had just met for the first time. After the main meeting, the parking folks stayed and discussed parking with Block 88's consultant, Carl Walker.

- Video cameras were now installed in three locations: Overture, Buckeye and State St Cap. Being an unattended lot, and to provide more security for parkers, cameras would be installed at Brayton next; conduit for the cameras would be laid during the upcoming resurfacing of the Lot.
- Per the Comptroller's report, revenues in March was up vs. March 2010 by \$41K, or 3%, due somewhat to the protests at the Square. Revenues for the first quarter were up \$179, or 6%. With this, revenues were right on budget.
- Though 11% under budget, YTD expenses through March were \$130K higher than 2010. Parking had applied for \$60K from FEMA for the February storm, which they were likely to get.
- Bottom line: The Utility's operating income was up \$49K, or 3% vs. first quarter 2010.
- Having completed a quarter of the year and showing revenues at 24.7% for the year, the revenue budget was right on.
- Expenditures on the other hand were 14.8% lower than budget through first quarter; but since expenditures were year-end loaded, not much should be taken from this.
- Looking at first quarter 2011 vs. 2010, actual revenues were up \$179K, which was what Parking had budgeted; without the protests, perhaps these predictions would have been too high.
- Almost all of the revenues came from Attended Facilities, which comprised 3,500 stalls out of the 5,500 stalls system-wide.
- With the Children's Museum having their own parking, the Utility hadn't seen much of a bump because of their relocation.
- Among actual expenditures 2011 vs. 2010, payroll was up about \$10K, and purchased services and supplies were up. Being year-end loaded, people should not surmise too much from current numbers.
- Looking at actual to budget for all of 2010 (through 12/31), revenues were 4% higher than budget; and expenses were 16.5% under budget, due to lower-than-expected costs in purchased services for electricity, snow plowing and credit card fees (=\$500+K).
- Using its own personnel, Parking had started pushing snow aside (using unneeded spaces) rather than contracting out for complete removal; and because multi-space meters weren't installed as quickly as planned, credit card fees for them were budgeted higher than actual.
- Though budgeted for \$580K, the bonds were paid off and debt service cost nothing; thus debt service was \$580K under budget.
- Purchased services and debt service together accounted for \$1+ million of expenditures coming in under budget.
- Transfers Out – what Parking paid the City for rent on metered spaces on the street (=10¢ on every \$1) – was \$50K over budget.
- Also, Capital Assets were nearly \$200K under budget, because purchase of some of the multi-space meters was delayed (until 2011); purchase of Brayton Lot was planned for 2010, but would occur in 2011.
- So, although it looked like Parking had under spent, it was really more of delay in expenditures.
- Comparing 2009 to 2010, revenues were \$885K higher in 2010; expenses were down \$3.6 in 2010, again because of debt service.

Turning to average weekday occupancies for the first quarter 2011 vs. 2010, Knobloch said the numbers were probably affected by the protests, and pointed out the following items:

- Brayton Lot Paystation surprisingly went down from 95% to 80%, still a good %; soon Brayton would also have a Permitted portion as well.

- As always, occupancy at Wingra Lot was next to nothing, even though different marketing strategies had been tried, inc. 10-hour meters to attract commuters.
- With a lower % in 2011 vs. 2010, Buckeye used to be measured by a one-day survey, but now was measured by more accurate data from the multi-space meters. Occupancy was less there during the day: Peak time at Buckeye fell from 5-7 PM, while peak time at other facilities was 10 AM-2 PM.
- Most revenue coming from (hourly) Cashiered facilities.
- Cap Square North went from 74% to 93%, due to the protests. A percentage of 90%+ reflected a facility that was too full; and Parking would try to stop this trend if they thought it was permanent.
- Gov East went from 73%to 82% (a good %), also due to the protests.
- With a similar occupancy %, monthly parking at Gov East revenue/space/day went from \$8.57 to \$9.81; hourly parking there went from \$8.82 to \$10.34.
- At Brayton Lot meters, revenue/space/day went from 44¢ to 77¢, a very low number because these meters were being used by people with disabilities, who paid nothing to park there.
- Total YTD revenues for 2011 were up \$215K from 2010.
- Occupancies for first quarter were up, probably because of the protests; next month would show if this was true.

When asked about the effect of the Children’s Museum, Knobloch said he had actually seen a slight decrease in occupancy at Cap Square North (CSN). The Museum had its own parking at its new location, with pay-by-space multi-space meters – pretty convenient for Museum visitors. To redistribute demand during the day among the different facilities, monthly parking rates at CSN had been kept the same at the last rate change, while monthly rates at Gov East had been raised to \$180/\$210. Parker did in fact shift to CSN. But maybe rates had gotten too low at CSN, and would need to be reviewed before the rate changes next June.

Streit/Hinz made a motion to receive the report. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote/other.

At this point, the Commission took a moment to meet its new members and introduce themselves.

E.2. [22373](#)

Metro: YTD Performance Indicator (Fixed and Paratransit), Revenue/Ride by Fare Category, Financial & Hybrid Reports, and Correspondence & WURTA information related to the State budget and public transit - TPC 05.11.11

Metro General Manager Chuck Kamp highlighted the following items:

- Fixed Route Operating Stats: Ridership was up 117,612, or 8.5%, in March vs. last March, probably due to the protests, no spring break/more school days in the month, and an increase in gas prices.
- Metro had seen a similar increase in ridership in 2008 when gas prices last hit \$4/gal.
- YTD ridership was up 246.8K, a 6.3% increase over 2010.
- Accidents were up 43 to 53, six of which were preventable/chargeable, and four of which were not; 2010 was a record low in this area, so these numbers were being compared to a very good year.
- When buses were hit by others due to weather, these were considered non-chargeable; but when buses hit others due to weather, these were considered chargeable/preventable, because drivers are expected to adjust for circumstances.

- Road calls (related to mechanical issues) were up, due to winter-related issues with doors on hybrids; and some of the new Flyers needed electrical work to address fuse problems in the cold weather. Because the fuses prevented fires in the engine compartment, fortunately, these were simpler to address than a fire would be.
- Most of the door issues were still under warranty.
- The jump in Vehicle Hours in March (vs. Revenue Hours) was likely due to the police shuttles that Metro had provided; a \$79K request for reimbursement had been submitted.
- Route Productivity: Total ridership was up 6.3%, and Trips per Revenue Hour were up 5.3%.
- New service (such as Routes 59 and 10 begun in late 2009) typically starts out at lower productivity; thus, as expected, there was a slightly smaller increase in the productivity % than in ridership % among such routes.
- UW Route 80's continued to show the highest productivity and were a large factor in the increase in ridership: Without the 80's, YTD ridership increased by 4.3% (vs. 6.3% total).
- Based on a public input meeting on Campus, proposed changes to Route 80's had been pulled off the table. Following revision and more review, any new proposals would be among possible 2012 changes, not 2011.
- When an extra bus was sent out to a route (to ease overcrowding, etc.), both hours of service and passengers were included in ridership and productivity data.
- Paratransit Operating Stats: YTD ridership dropped by 1,224 rides, or 1.8%; different from fixed, paratransit was not influenced by gas prices. Though vehicle accidents were the same as last year, chargeable/preventable were down; these moderated the increase on fixed routes.
- Paratransit Performance Indicators: Despite fuel costs clauses, paratransit Cost/Passenger Trip had increased only 42¢ in 2011, or 1.7%, reflecting good cost controls. For Fixed Routes, Cost/Passenger Trip was down 10¢, reflecting improvement in that cost efficiency area.
- Abby Vans was new among the list of providers, doing 16% of the trips. Though a bit higher than others for Complaints/1000 trips, this was probably related to being a new provider and was expected to come down.
- Paratransit On-Time Performance was in a good range (90-95%).
- Fixed Route Ridership & Revenue Comparisons: YTD Passenger Revenue was up by \$140K. Reflecting the impact of the protests and rising gas prices, YTD ridership had increased in each of the first three months of 2011, inc. in the cash fare category, which had been down in 2009-10 due to fare increase.
- Total unlimited ride pass rides increased from 1,491,545 to 1,603,181.
- Route 80's increased from 729K to 842.5K.
- Fixed Route Rides % Change: Cash fare %'s were up 20.2% in Feb. and 17.8% in March; but not connected to the protests, cash fares were also up 14.7% in Jan. With the cash fare in effect for two years and gas prices steadily increasing, it seemed cash ridership was increasing.
- Typically, riders started as cash fares, and then as they got to know Metro, they transitioned to 10-ticket packs, monthly passes or other discounted media.
- Total passenger revenues were up 4.8%.
- YTD Financial Performance: Diesel prices through February 22nd were part of a good fixed price (quantities) contract from last year. Though YTD fuel costs were a little below last year's expenditures, they were above budgeted levels. March was the first month that the City and Metro were on a floating (variable price) contract (that could be revisited later in the year if things

improved). Now being over budget on diesel and knowing this would increase every month over rest of the year, was a big financial issue for Metro.

- Due to reduced OT and savings in natural gas and other categories, reserves were at \$207,323 after the first quarter – a good place to be, esp. since diesel costs would begin to turn that the other way.
- Using 100K gallons of fuel/month, with prices ranging from \$3 to \$3.50/gal. vs. budgeted amount of \$2.40/gal., Metro was likely to be \$500-800K over budget by the end of the year (\$1.00/gal more than budgeted x 100K gal/month x 8-9 months remaining).
- First quarter passenger revenues were \$100K over budget and nearly \$300K over 2010. If gas prices stay up, new riders would continue to help revenues, which could help offset these diesel costs.
- Metro was also looking at reducing expenditures in other areas, such as training costs; and would examine other areas as well.
- Ridership in the summer was lower than in the school year: UW and Madison schools were out of session, and more people walked and biked. \$4 - \$4.50/gal. gas could counter this a bit, but would not entirely offset the reduction in riders over the summer.

Kamp pointed out the Hybrid and Customer Feedback reports. He mentioned that WISC-Channel 3 had made an open records request for complaints on the fixed route system for the second half of 2010, with a possible report in coming weeks.

Kamp also pointed out the email from Beloit Transit Manager Michelle Gavin to Rep. Tammy Baldwin re: federal Section 13c transit employee protection laws. Wisconsin transit systems had been hearing ambiguous responses at the State level as to the impact of reduced collective bargaining rights in the State on federal transit funding contingent on Sec. 13c protections. It was the understanding of Metro and the City Attorney that this would be an issue. The Department of Labor and the FTA were reluctant to offer an advisory opinion. So, in response to Gavin's email, Rep. Baldwin had sent a letter to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), formally asking for guidance on the issue on behalf of all Wisconsin transit systems, which could stand to lose \$46.6 million in federal funding. Kamp expected other transit systems to ask their congressional representatives to do likewise.

Schmidt/Tolmie made a motion to receive the report. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote/other.

F. NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

- F.1. [22150](#) Relating to 2011-2013 Taxicab "Paratransit" Licensing Renewal.

A motion was made by Hinz, seconded by Streit, to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ADOPT - REPORT OF OFFICER. Discussion followed. Registered in support and available for questions were: Phil Anderson, Green Cab; David Lee, Union Cab; Richard Nesvacil, Madison Taxi; Tom Royston, Badger Cab; and Greg Morrison, Transit Solutions.

Maniaci asked Royston how Badger contacted customers to alert them that the cab had arrived to pick them up. Royston said they tried to take phone numbers for virtually all calls. Sometimes numbers weren't needed because customers watched for the cab. Occasionally, when customers weren't

watching, the driver would toot their horn.

Royston was aware of one constituent in Maniaci's district who had contacted him ten times since last July to complain about drivers honking outside his residence. Royston said that his company had had 395,000 passenger trips in 2010, during which time he and the City had received no other complaints about honking. Also, the ten complaints were for honking during daylight hours, when most people wouldn't consider it unreasonable to toot a horn. In a 2005 letter to the constituent, Knobeloch (then in TE) said that he understood the person's concern, but no ordinance was being violated.

Regardless, Royston had never ignored the citizen, and having lived right by a bus stop, he was sympathetic to the person's concerns. He had addressed each complaint, by investigating and talking to the (eight) different drivers involved; and a notice had been posted in the drivers' room. Badger was also installing a computer system that would allow drivers to mobile-dial customers to alert them that the cab was on its way or waiting outside. Maniaci said that most taxi companies were now using phones (not honking), and since this issue seemed to occur mainly at one particular property, she hoped Badger would take whatever steps were necessary to resolve the issue there. Royston said they were trying their best and would continue to do so.

Subeck and Maniaci inquired about Badger Bus, which among the taxi companies had a high number of crashes and complaints with the fewest rides, and a high cost/trip. Pollock said Badger Bus was a paratransit contractor for Madison Metro; he only dealt with them for their licensing/renewals. Kamp noted that on Metro's Paratransit Report, Badger Bus had the lowest rate of complaints, which indicated a strong performance. ADATS Member Streit thought they probably should be compared to other paratransit providers; also their cost of \$29/trip was so different from the other (regular) cab companies because they provided accessible service, with more service, labor and time/trip.

Bergamini remarked that Green Cab seemed to be significantly increasing its fleet. Anderson anticipated a steeper slope of growth over the next year, as indicated in the info they supplied. Pollock commented that traditionally cab companies were allowed to float additional permits over the year if needed without bringing it back to TPC.

Having completed discussion, action was taken on the motion, which passed by voice vote/other.

F.2. [22256](#)

Amending Section 10.08(6)(a)1. of the Madison General Ordinances to allow the City Traffic Engineer to authorize small vehicle parking spaces for up to 50 percent of the required number of spaces in parking facilities regulated under Sec. 10.08(6).

A motion was made by Ald. Maniaci, seconded by Tolmie, to Return to Lead with the Recommendation for Approval to the BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS.

Hinz pointed out that in the body of the proposed language, the authorized agent should say "City Traffic Engineer" rather than "City Engineer". Bryan Walker of Traffic Engineering said that this would be corrected to say "City Traffic Engineer".

Having no objection to creating more parking spaces by making the spaces

smaller, Streit wondered if the proposal to allow up to 50% was consistent with the need for this amount of small car parking. Walker said that the intent was to create a buffer for the future. TE would continue to use 25% as the standard; and private facilities would have to prove a hardship and demonstrate through traffic studies that they could accommodate compact car parking beyond this. Small car parking was not going to go up to 50%, except for good reason. TE was running into a very few new developments where the percentage was slightly above 25%, and nothing more could be done with design. The proposal would accommodate these situations.

In response to other questions, Walker said demand for this was rare, but that it was becoming an issue in the downtown. Usually the lots could be redesigned to minimize this, but very occasionally with bigger buildings (due to their architecture and pillars, etc.), every design resource was exhausted. While zoning codes set minimums/maximms for the number of parking spots for a development, the ordinance gave Traffic Engineering the responsibility of approving the design for the parking stalls. Members discussed the possibility of incorporating this language into the zoning code rewrite. But Schmidt felt it didn't really fit in the code, since this was more of an administrative detail and could become a point of contention on a larger project.

Schmidt offered a friendly amendment to the motion to change "City Engineer" to "City Traffic Engineer". Maniaci accepted the amendment as friendly. Please note: After the meeting, the City Attorney's Office was contacted, and they made this edit (to reflect the original intent of the legislation) before the item was sent to the Lead, BPW.

Hinz wondered if there were guidelines to go along with the proposal, to determine hardship and need. He hoped the parking study would be weighed as much as demonstrated need (perhaps to add more stalls to meet certain codes); to determine if actual (small car) usage showed that more small car stalls were warranted to satisfy total parking demand. It wasn't a good idea to simply add small car parking if the demand for large car stalls wasn't served. Though most situations only called for a small % increase (over 25%), he hoped care would be taken re: setting precedents in which people could prove hardship in that they couldn't put in as many stalls without a large increase in small car stalls. Subeck noted there were different percentages for different types of businesses. She understood how a development might need more small car parking to meet the required number of spaces, but wondered if it would really accommodate the kind of parking demanded there.

Walker said there was a standard size for parking stalls that could vary based on aisle size, with design options for width of stalls. For residential properties with assigned parking or for hotels with valet parking, where people knew their lots well, stalls could be narrower. Walker said one of the reasons for the proposal was a hotel parking lot. Hotels didn't want a lot of compact car parking for their guests, who would complain. Most developments didn't want a lot of compact car parking; usually it was a last resort. They had some different standards; it kind of depended on the development.

A vote was taken, and the motion passed by voice vote/other.

F.3. [22357](#)

Multi-space Parking Meters: Business Improvement District (BID), and Parking Staff Bill Putnam and Bill Knobloch - TPC 05.11.11

Neither in support/opposition, Registrant Mary Carbine, representing Madison Central Business Improvement District (BID), made the following remarks:

- BID represented the commercial properties and business owners in the Greater State Street and Capitol Square area.
- Multi-space meters were very important to the customer experience in the downtown, which was critical to the health and vitality of the district.
- BID was supportive of having the multi-space meters, which accepted credit cards, increased convenience for customers, and were a good thing overall.
- BID recognized all the hard work of the Parking Utility staff to get the meters up and running and their continued effort to tweak them to create a more positive customer service experience.
- BID had received a lot of input from owners of businesses adjacent to Buckeye Lot, and from customers at the BID Ambassadors visitor center, also located near Buckeye.
- Based on these observations and suggestions, and having seen some negative impacts, some improvements could be made to the user interface aspect of the meters, and to the ratio of meters to spaces in the Buckeye Lot.
- Mainly, there weren't enough pay stations at the Gorham entrance of the Lot. As many as six to eight customers were frequently lined up there, esp. during peak events. People sometimes waited as long as 10 minutes or even walked away and risked getting a ticket. At such peak events as WIAA tournaments, they didn't have time to wait to use a parking meter.
- One-third of all multi-space meter transactions were at the Gorham Street pay station, which showed the need to match pay station capacity with demand. If visitors had a negative experience, they might not come back. Given that the Utility was expanding its number of meter locations, maybe this would be a good time to put a second pay station at the Gorham entrance.
- Based on complaints, prominent signage was needed here as well, to alert people to remember their space number, esp. with two meters serving 55 spaces.
- The MAX button had been added. However, the user interface for the meters needed some further attention, perhaps from professionals. There was still fair amount of confusion.
- For example, the directions said to add time by pressing the blue buttons; but the blue buttons displayed money increments rather than time increments, creating a disjuncture for customers.
- Though the Utility didn't create the interface, it still needed some improvement to be optimal.

Carbine said these suggestions were offered in the spirit of wanting to improve a good thing.

Neither in support/opposition, Registrant Jeanette Riechers, owner of Madison Sole, 414 State Street, made the following comments:

- Buckeye was key parking spot for customers who used businesses in mid-State Street area.
- Everyone was very happy to have multi-space meters placed there, because the old coin system had not worked very well.
- The new meters were a great addition to the city, but improvements were needed.
- While potentially positive, she wasn't sure if right now the meters were almost a negative. Her observation was they did not enhance the customer experience.
- Frequently traveling between her two locations, she had started opting for

street spaces, which were faster and easier to use.

- She had also observed the lines of parkers who were frustrated, confused and even embarrassed because they couldn't figure out the machines while others were watching and waiting.
- Not much was intuitive or fast with the meters. While adding a meter to the Gorham end of the lot would help, clearly the directions needed more work to be more understandable.
- The ergonomics weren't good; people had to hunch down to read them.
- Locals were likely to have a learning curve, and their experience would likely get better.
- But visitors were very important to the downtown businesses; and it had to be assumed that new customers were continually using the meters for the first time. So the meters had to be easy and quick to use, or people would just leave.
- Good experiences just weren't talked about as much as bad ones.
- Summer was extremely important to downtown businesses, when they really made their money; downtown businesses were very weather-dependent. She was confident the problems could be addressed, but hoped it would be done on a timely basis, so summer business was facilitated.

Parking staff, Bill Knobloch and Bill Putnam, Project Manager for the multi-space meters, came to the table to answer questions and discuss the issues.

- One machine cost \$8,000, and it was possible to place an extra machine at Buckeye (as it would be to do so anywhere).
- A live camera view of Buckeye at that time, around 6:45 PM – a peak time there – showed the Lot was quite full, with two people at the Gorham pay station; and no customers at the Gilman end. [Please note: Maniaci excused herself from the meeting at this point.]
- Knobloch had frequently stopped by at the Lot on his way home at night, during the Lot's peak hours, to see what was happening there.
- Very often, he saw people were using the machine, and he would get out of his car to go check on how things were going. Usually, by the time he reached the machine, the customers were done. He often found that 5-6 people might be part of two groups.
- One-third of all transactions at the lot were at the Gilman end, and two-thirds were at the Gorham end (probably because it was closer to State Street); perhaps people could be encouraged to go the Gilman machine more.
- New signs were being installed: A large "Pay here" sign at the Gilman machine to bring attention to it, and other signs to remind parkers to note their space number.
- Updates had been made to the machines: The credit card failure rate went from 14% down to 2%, which along with the MAX button had helped shorten transaction times considerably. After starting out with a few stutters, the system had improved a lot.
- Knobloch had tested every machine in the city that morning and every transaction went through immediately every time. With time limits at various locations ranging from 25 minutes to 3 hours, using the MAX button produced varying amounts.
- Transaction times took less than 30 seconds, using a four-step process: entering the space number, swiping his card, pressing the MAX button, and taking the receipt. Using coins wouldn't have been as fast. The machines returned any non-U.S. coins.
- Based on feedback from various sources, the instructions had been tweaked

to use language that seemed to work the best. Other tweaks had also been made to make the machines more customer-friendly.

- With 140,000 transactions so far, and recognizing that we more often hear of the unhappy experience, hopefully many parkers were having a positive experience as well.
- Parkers clearly were happy about being able to use credit cards. Also, in no parking/tow-away zones during peak traffic hours, the machines did not accept any payment, and gave the message, "No parking."
- Another improvement would prevent parkers from overpaying any more than a 25¢ extra.
- The height of the multi-space meters was determined by ADA requirements (as were coin meters), so that a person using a wheelchair could read/use the machines.

In follow-up discussion, Schmitz asked Carbine about the tweaks. Carbine felt that anything that improved the transaction time was good (such as the credit card acceptance rate and MAX button), but she didn't think this resolved everything. Carbine confirmed with Putnam that as of April, a third of all multi-space transactions system-wide were at Buckeye Lot, which would indicate that there were too many customers for the machines there. On a regular city block, one machine served up to 12 spaces. Buckeye was a 55-space lot, where the majority of parkers wanted to exit to State Street at the Gorham end. Asking customers to exit at Gilman didn't really address the issue of not having enough capacity at Gorham.

Carbine also noted that along with 5-7 PM being peak hours, parking at Buckeye was also driven by big, periodic events, which produced big peaks and which would create a problem if parkers weren't being served there at mid-State Street. During peak events, many of the parkers were out-of-towners. She understood the challenge of providing instructions that all people would understand, and thought perhaps professional help would be worthwhile in developing a better user interface. They were hearing a higher level of confusion than usual, even compared to machines in other facilities. Carbine thought that the steps that had already been taken were good, but that it would be critical to add capacity at the Gorham end of Buckeye before summer. She thought that a machine planned for a street should be diverted.

Hinz observed that typically machines were placed at the exits of a facility, which usually made sense. He wondered if in this case, both machines could be placed in the middle of the lot. He also asked about the standard ratio for spaces/machine. Knobloch said that the standard was one machine for 500 spaces, which was a lot higher ratio than Parking would use or was using. Brayton had two machines for 174 spaces, which followed the same steps. Of the 150 spaces now part of the multi-space system, 54 of those – or one-third – were in Buckeye, which was why it made sense that one-third of all transactions were at Buckeye. This percentage would change drastically by the end of May, when 25 more multi-space meters would be added to the system (or when multi-space meters would eventually cover 1,000+ spaces). In a couple of instances, where there was an especially long block, two machines would be installed, so that parkers wouldn't have to walk so far. Cost was a factor.

Hinz recommended that Parking work with Mary and BID members on the issue of wording for reminder signs and for instructions on how to use the

machines, a relatively inexpensive way to resolve some of these issues. White asked that Parking provide an update in June on their progress in this area.

Schmidt asked if a transaction report could be provided, using a representative sampling to show how many transactions occurred at what times. Considering the importance of speed in completing transactions and the number of spaces at Buckeye, he wasn't sure if adding another machine would have more impact than improving wording.

Just as previous feedback had helped identify the tweaks already made, Knobloch said that Parking would welcome input on signage as well. He noted that credit card authorizations were done wirelessly, another factor in transaction time.

Streit asked about the cost of diverting one of the new machines to Buckeye. Knobloch said the cost would be \$8,000, without creating any more revenue there. Putnam added that it would cost about \$2,000 to pour a concrete slab and run conduit. Streit pointed out that the 7 to 1 machine/stall ratio was fairly low in some locations, compared to a fairly high ratio of 27 to 1 at Buckeye. If one new multi-space machine were diverted from another location, pole meters would still collect revenue at the other location. Since 25 meters were already purchased and scheduled to be installed shortly, it sounded like rather than being a logistical issue for this summer, it was a question of whether to install three machines at Buckeye at this time using one planned for a different location, which would have to be purchased/installed eventually.

Subeck said her biggest challenge with the machines was that she couldn't choose a certain amount of time, and had to choose cash amounts. She asked if this could be changed so that a specific amount of time could be chosen instead. Knobloch said that when customers added cash increments, the time purchased was shown. Also the MAX button was a way for a customer to choose a time certain. He didn't think this was something that could be addressed through labeling, but would instead require changing the system from the ground up. He thought some of these questions would resolve themselves over time. Hinz later wondered if an inexpensive alternative would be to post a time-cost conversion chart on the machines. Knobloch said most of the free space was already filled with instructions; and people seemed to start pressing buttons without stopping to read the info.

White wondered if user-tests, focus groups, and surveys (with residents and visitors) might be helpful in the long run. Bergamini wondered if the manufacturer had conducted this type of research when designing the machine, and whether the vendor had data on ease of use or whether other localities such info to share. Acknowledging that customer tolerance for slow vending machines was very low, she felt that ease of use and transaction time would be important criteria for future RFP's. Intelligent design was really key.

Knobloch said it was just a matter of cost; and rates could be raised to help with such costs. However, Parking did try to keep costs down for the customers' sake. The machines were very expensive, but like pole meters, the new machines had a 10-year life. There were about 20 manufacturers of these types of machines, mostly in Europe. The main convenience of the machines was their ability to take credit cards, which surprisingly customers were using 50% of the time for transactions of \$1.00-\$2.25. But along with convenience

came innate problems associated with taking credit cards wirelessly.

White asked Parking staff to continue working with Carbine and Schmitz over the following month to discuss short-term options, and to return in June with a report on what was decided and how they would move forward on some of these issues. She invited Carbine to join that discussion. Schmitz said the focus should be to improve the customer's experience. When asked, Knobloch said that Parking staff had received about two dozen complaints out of the 140,000 transactions conducted since September.

Being a discussion item, no vote was needed/taken.

F.4. [22358](#)

Metro: Request for public hearing in June regarding various service changes - TPC 05.11.11

Streit/Hinz made a motion to schedule a public hearing at the June meeting on proposed Metro service changes.

Kamp said that if approved, the proposed service changes would go into effect on the last Sunday in August. Referring to the map on the hand-out, he noted that Routes 50 and 18 were the only two routes with street changes. The changes were intended to address driver comments re: time and schedule issues, esp. for Route 18, which connected the South and West Transfer Points, to help make it a more reliable route in meeting transfers. Route 50 was interlined with Route 18. Also ridership on Route 18 and the routes that interlined with it had increased from 850K to 1.040 million (+22%) in five years. With more people came more scheduling issues. The rest of the proposed changes related mainly to schedules.

Transit Schedule Planner Colin Conn said Route 18 (via Coho) was a high priority: the route was so tight that drivers never got out of their seats. Changes to the other routes related to scheduling issues, with the intent to improve on-time performance (esp. long-time problem Route 38), and to do some things to improve the efficiency of the system. Now, with the capability to download ridership data at the trip level, they were able to make educated adjustments to a schedule as to whether a trip was actually needed, or whether people could ride a couple minutes earlier/later and improve the productivity of the route.

Bergamini asked that the info distributed to the public be as understandable as possible. Transit Planning and Scheduling Manager Drew Beck said the proposed schedules would look like other public schedules.

The motion to hold a hearing at the June meeting passed unanimously by voice vote/other.

F.5. [22374](#)

Metro: Managing extra buses for overcrowding - TPC 05.11.11

Presented in response to a member request, Kamp said the "Extras List" was a working document that Conn used to manage extra buses. Based on downloaded ridership and trip data, the list was very dynamic. Conn said staff didn't always have this load information. In the past, they would have put out extra buses based on driver/passenger complaints, or supervisor observations. The use of extra buses was esp. appropriate for Metro's system because of the significant drop in ridership when the UW went out of session.

This was an economical way to respond to fluctuating service levels and needs.

Conn explained the Extras List, which showed a particular dodger and its average load (# of passengers/# of days) between Nov. 1 and Dec. 31, 2010. For example, on the AM Extras list, Dodger 175 had averaged 31 passengers during this period; and had helped on a specific run, Run 531 on Route 2, which averaged 61 passengers all across town. The dodger circled between Sheboygan/Eau Claire and UW Hospital/Johnson Street to pick up overloads. The start time for the extra was 7:35am and 8:05am, two minutes ahead of the regular schedules. Corridor Extras Route 2 Dodgers 28 and 23 were "Gray Bar trips", which were shown on the public schedule, since they were running so often. That way they could be shifted around a little bit and dispersed to run 7½ minutes apart to provide a better flow and more convenient flow for people, rather than having buses leap-frog or travel bumper to bumper down a busy corridor.

Conn said the system had really good ridership going west to east on University Avenue, and going east to west on the Johnson/Gorham corridor and Jennifer/Bassett corridor. They had more buses going westbound than eastbound. Corridor Extras down towards the bottom of the list, on Route 37, showed low passenger counts. Identified as bus cycling trips, these buses went to UW Hospital where most of these buses ended (dead-heading); after which they ran back east.

In the afternoon, the Corridor Extras were much different, with far fewer Gray Bar trips than in the morning. With a preponderance of traffic westbound between the Campus and the Sheboygan Avenue area, they put out more extras on Route 15, a popular route on Campus Drive/University Avenue, spacing them about 4½ minutes apart from mainline service, to relieve overcrowding on the (still overloaded) mainline buses. They did the same thing feeding eastbound buses on Routes 28 and 38.

Referring to the proposed service changes, Bergamini said the proposal would supplement Route 2 with additional trips in the AM to create more frequency. Conn said these trips were kind of there now, through the Extras; but this would be expanded a little bit, changing some trips from Gray Bar extras (run only during UW sessions) to year-round extras. White thanked Metro staff for joining them.

**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
Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (MPO)

No action was needed on this item.

H. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

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

H.2. Commission member items for future agendas

Schmitz reported that the future of the RTA was not looking good. However, people were working at the State level to preserve the Dane County RTA in the Governor's budget. Members were welcome to help.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Tolmie, seconded by Hinz, to Adjourn at 7:40 PM. The motion passed by voice vote/other.