



City of Madison

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

Monday, April 21, 2014

5:15 PM

Madison Municipal Building, Room LL-130

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Staff: Crystal Martin, Ann Gullickson, Ann Schroeder, Laura Sherrington

Guests: John Donnelly, Fred Kropp

The meeting was called to order at 5:19 PM.

Present: 6 - Lisa Subeck; Jeanne M. Tregoning; Susan M. De Vos; Mary E. Jacobs;
Carl D. DuRocher and Betty Hicks

1. PROPER MEETING NOTIFICATION

The meeting was properly noticed.

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions were made.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. DuRocher moved approval; Alder Subeck seconded. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

4. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

There were no public appearances.

5. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

There were no disclosures or recusals.

6. [33781](#) Bus Size Study - Informaton Only a. Mike Cechvala, MPO

Attachments: [BusSizeStudyFinalReportFebruary2014.pdf](#)

Mr. Cechvala is from the Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (a Metropolitan Planning Organization – MPO) here to talk about the Bus Size Study that they spearheaded for Metro. The report was recently passed by the City Council. It was recommended in the 2008 Ad Hoc plan that we should look at diversifying the fleet. Metro currently has 214 standard buses for fixed route service. They are all 40' buses. The goal of the study is to investigate the use of smaller and larger buses. Larger buses could help with overcrowding in busy corridors and increase efficiency by reducing use of extras. Smaller buses could help to save fuel and make the system more efficient that way. The study looked at 40' buses, 30' heavy duty buses as well as articulated buses. There are other types of buses such as light and medium duty small buses and double-decker buses, but those three previous ones are the standard in the industry.

We looked at loads on buses to see where it would make sense to have larger or smaller buses. We broke it down by route. We staged people downtown during rush hour to do passenger counts. We also stationed people at the transfer points. Metro has good data about where people get on the bus, but we don't know loads because we don't know where people get off or what starting loads are at different points. We looked at the maximum load on the bus because even if buses are "empty" on the periphery, if they are full downtown we really can't use a smaller bus. We observed some trips that were very light, very heavy and some in between. We asked if during the peak period 20% or more of trips were overloaded, we would recommend a larger bus. If 10% or fewer were overloaded on a smaller bus, we could recommend a smaller bus.

We then looked at interlining to see how routes worked together. There were some routes that could use a larger bus, and some that if we broke apart a route, they could use a smaller bus on one part of the route. We didn't want to present that as something we would do because it would have other consequences like making a transfer where a one-seat ride currently exists. The Route 2 and Route 80s were the main routes that could immediately use large buses. Other routes could use larger buses at some times but not other times throughout the day. We found 5 to 6 buses in the fleet that could be converted to small and 38 that could be converted to larger buses. We have a spare ratio of 20%.

Routes that could use larger buses are through the core of town. Routes that could use smaller buses are on the periphery. The conclusion of the study was that we not have fewer than 10 buses that would be their own special subfleet. The challenge on the small bus side is to have enough buses that would make sense. If you have just 4 or 5 you have to have special parts, training and storage. On the large bus side we have operational shortcomings such as the ability of the maintenance facility to accommodate those buses. It is already over capacity, so we would not have room for larger buses. We would also need to lengthen bus stops and reconfigure transfer points. We can do those things, but there is a cost and time element. Bus Rapid Transit

(BRT) is also something that is still in development. This goes along with bus size. If we have a BRT system in place, does that change the need for diversifying the fleet? Once we solidify a plan for BRT, we can decide what the future of the fleet is going to be.

We did an online survey about bus size. Most people who took the survey were Metro riders. We asked about overcrowding; most had experienced this. We asked if that was a concern. Most said moderately. They expect it at rush hour. Most people notice occasionally when buses have empty seats; most said they were not concerned. Asked whether Metro should use smaller buses on some routes, most were neutral. Most felt larger buses could be used. There was a "do it if it makes sense" response.

The study is posted online. The summary was in packets. Mr. Cechvala was happy to take questions. Ms. De Vos said Chapter 9 of the report talked about next steps. For example one idea was to utilize the paratransit buses as a sort of supplement to the fixed route fleet since their peak times don't coincide. There might be a way to have them integrated into one system that would use them more efficiently. Mr. Cechvala said the original intent of the study was to look at the fixed route fleet. We said the two fleets do different things. The paratransit vans are lighter duty vehicles. But you could have vehicles to do both. That was deemed to be outside the scope of this study, but that could be a next step that we look at.

Mr. DuRocher said in the scenarios where a smaller bus could be useful, did you calculate whether there would be any operational cost savings to having a smaller bus. It seems that the major costs like driver time and fuel would remain the same. Mr. Cechvala said we did a cost and fuel use model to see what it would actually cost to use smaller and larger buses. We looked at a scenario with 10 small buses and 13 large buses. We also did a 40 large bus scenario. The ten small buses scenario didn't save any appreciable amount of money. If we have to reschedule and reblock the system without interlining there could actually be an increase of cost. Ms. De Vos said it would be a onetime cost. Mr. Cechvala said the difference in cost was about 70 cents an hour. On the large bus size, the consultant found that articulated buses were significantly more expensive to operate – a little more fuel, but more axels and the articulated joint, etc. The 13 large bus scenario could increase combined operating and capital costs \$600,000 annually. That is the annualized cost. It doesn't look at federal funding. Some of that can be recouped by decreasing the use of extra buses.

Ms. De Vos said there is a difference for other costs too like carbon footprint. Smaller buses have fewer noxious emissions. Mr. DuRocher said the same end could be reached using hybrid buses. Alder Subeck said were there any models to look at how it would impact rider behavior as far as whether we would increase ridership because they aren't turned off by crowded buses or standing loads. Mr. Cechvala said we don't have a good way to measure. That is a serious issue out there. We know if we increase capacity there are people out there to fill that capacity. It is a little bit of a guessing game. It's a little anecdotal. It's hard to get a number that is meaningful. You also have other factors. Ridership has been increasing throughout the years. You look at service changes, fare increases, jobs and it's hard to get a meaningful number.

Alder Subeck also asked about accessibility in each type of bus. Are there advantages or disadvantages that would impact entering or exiting? Mr. Cechvala said no. The 60' bus is basically a 40' bus with extra space. That's the short answer. But when we have a 40' bus with a person using a wheelchair that can displace many seats. There are many things that can affect how crowded a bus is – how people pack in, if the aisle is blocked to seats in the back. That is how overcrowding ties into accessibility.

Mr. DuRocher said he heard one of the articulated manufacturers came and made the hairpin turn on Observatory Hill. Mr. Cechvala said they actually have a shorter turning radius than a 40' bus. They don't do as well in the snow as a 40' bus because they are powered by their rear wheels. Ms. Gullickson said while this study was underway, we were reading in the trades that they had taken their articulated buses off the roads in Seattle because they couldn't handle the weather. They have icy weather there, but it made us think about how interested we and the University, which had been pushing for articulated buses, would continue to be. Mr. Cechvala said Seattle is very hilly. Minneapolis has articulated buses. Seattle doesn't have snow plows or the facilities to deal with that sort of weather. That is a consideration. There are northern cities in Europe and Canada that use articulated buses all the time. They are flatter, but what do they do on hills? East to West you're going up a hill unless you are on John Nolen Drive. Those are things we would need to look at in-depth before going further. This is just the beginning to see if we should consider other sizes. Ms. Martin thanked Ms. De Vos for serving on the Bus Size Study Steering Committee.

7. [33782](#)

The Jefferson - Exemption Request from paratransit boundary for service
a. Fred Kropp from The Jefferson

Attachments: [ParaBoundary Map OOSA.pdf](#)

Fred Kropp said Ida Wyman (Nathan) is a resident and says hello to everyone. Mr. Kropp said The Jefferson on Old Sauk Road is a senior independent living facility. They have about 110 residents, about 10 of whom are wheelchair users and sort of stuck at the facility. They have a small school bus vehicle with steps, and if they change to a lift that makes them an assisted living facility and rules and regulations change as well. Some residents call Union Cab when necessary. Another resident uses another paratransit service. Ms. Martin said that is the County's Group Access Service for grocery shopping.

What they have found is that a potential resident from the east side was looking to move in, but she told him paratransit, her mode of transport, doesn't go there. The other thing is that The Jefferson is a City of Madison polling place. He wondered how people who use paratransit would get out there to vote.

Ms. Martin said the nearest bus stop is by Attic Angels. The furthest west service goes near to the Jefferson is a cul de sac called Waterside Street about half a mile away. We have one client who lives west of the Jefferson, and we drop him at the cul de sac, and he walks the rest of the way. Alder Subeck asked the rule. Ms. Martin said it's $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the core route. Ms. De Vos

asked the definition of a core route. Ms. Martin said it's continuous service, not a commuter route. It doesn't have to have weekend service as long as it's not just commuter hours during the week. Ms. Subeck asked if we have made exemptions before or if there is a procedure.

Ms. Martin said when we filed our ADA plan back in 1994, we had to define our paratransit boundary area, which we did as $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, which followed the law. Prior to that Madison had "elderly and handicapped" city service. It was a very high level of service compared to the ADA – it wasn't just curb to curb, it was door to door. So Madison implemented a higher level of service than required, including door to door service. So instead of going beyond the service area, they focused on maintaining the service area but providing more services. Over the years we've had people come to this committee or the Transit and Parking Commission (TPC) requesting exemptions. The most recent was Ten Pin Alley. Fixed route service ended up being expanded that put Ten Pin Alley in our service area. Other Alders have wanted to expand from commuter to core service that would also allow paratransit service. We haven't made exceptions in just providing paratransit service beyond the fixed route because it is supposed to provide access to the existing bus service area. In twenty years, there has never been an exemption.

Alder Subeck said it sounds like there have been attempts to provide paratransit service by expanding fixed route service. Ms. Martin said that was mostly in response to growth in those areas. Ms. Subeck said I feel strongly about expanding service for people trying to get to work and other things. The area around The Jefferson isn't that new. Mr. Kropp said we are 9 years old. There wasn't much when we went up, but there are a lot of apartments and other development around there. Ms. De Vos said I think the better route is to go to the Alder and try to get fixed route service there. Alder Subeck said she would be happy to work with Alder Skidmore to expand that bus route. Ms. De Vos said it would be dangerous for us to grant an exception for one place and set a precedent. But it would make sense to try to expand the bus route. Alder Subeck said I'm less concerned about the precedent, but the intent of paratransit is to reach the same areas as fixed route. So it's the same end. I'd love to see us provide more transit service to folks in that area of town. Sometimes these things can be a really simple fix; in other cases it can throw everything into chaos. We would need to gather more information. But I'm willing to pursue that with Alder Skidmore. It would help for The Jefferson to have a conversation with the Alder. Ms. De Vos said I know he is very concerned about this issue. Mr. Kropp said we thought maybe being a polling place would have some pull as well. We're talking about just $\frac{2}{10}$ of a mile distance.

Mr. DuRocher said the closest we have done to an exception is the VA Hospital. Shorewood actually reimburses Madison for their paratransit trips. Another situation is Access to Independence. The bus stops on the other side of the street, and for people who use paratransit getting to the other side of the street (which is not in Madison) requires assistance. If you want the system to be predictable, affordable and manageable by the City, it's important to maintain the rule. I see The Jefferson situation a little differently because it's not outside the City of Madison. There is a bus route that gets near, so maybe the idea of extending the bus route one more stop shouldn't be that impossible. The thing about using it as a polling place – Union Cab advertises

that they will get people to the polls for free. So until there is another solution that can be used. I'm happy to hear that Group Access provides some service. Mr. DuRocher said he wouldn't advocate an exception, but he would advocate working with Metro to expand service a little bit.

Alder Subeck moved that ADATS recommend to the Transit and Parking Commission that they pursue a bus route extension in order to accommodate The Jefferson with public transportation and paratransit service within the ¾ mile paratransit boundary. Mr. DuRocher seconded.

Ms. De Vos made an amendment that the motion include "and consult with Alder Skidmore." The group voted on the amendment.

Aye – De Vos, Hicks, Brunette-Tregonning
Nay – Subeck, DuRocher

The amendment passed.

Alder Subeck moved that ADATS recommend to the Transit and Parking Commission that they pursue a bus route extension in order to accommodate The Jefferson with public transportation and paratransit service within the ¾ mile paratransit boundary and consult with Alder Skidmore.

The motion carried by voice vote/other.

Ms. Brunette-Tregoning asked the difference between exception and extension. Mr. DuRocher explained that it would be changing bus service but keeping the ¾ mile rule in place. Ms. Brunette-Tregoning said so that could happen in other areas? Ms. Martin said yes. Alder Subeck said we change routes frequently.

8. [33784](#)

In-Person Assessments

a. New Staff Person, Laura Sherrington

Ms. Martin said Laura Sherrington started on 3/31/14 as our Paratransit Eligibility & Mobility Coordinator. She has been learning quickly. We did a pilot last year for in-person assessments. That went well, and we learned a lot. We were fortunate to get some grant money. Ms. Sherrington will be doing in-person assessments as well as some counseling about other transportation services available in Madison and Dane County.

Ms. Sherrington said she came from the Northeast Side Senior Coalition, a non-profit that works with independent seniors. She started there as an intern. She had many different roles – case manager, volunteer coordinator and special events volunteer coordinator. She had assisted clients there with paratransit assessments, and decided it was time for a change. She has enjoyed working with Ms. Martin and learning about the guidelines. She has been reviewing applications and learning about making determinations. She took a ride-along to see how all the information that goes into Trapeze gets to the driver.

Next week she will be in Salt Lake City for National Transit Institute training about in-person assessments and eligibility. Ms. Martin said she has a lot of experience developing new programs. So that will be very valuable experience in implementing a full scale program.

Mr. DuRocher asked what she can see from her office window. She can see the parking lot. Ms. Martin had explained that this was valuable to see if clients function the same in getting to the building as they do during the assessment.

9. [33785](#) Next Paratransit Service RFP - Review & Update Contractor Performance Standards

Attachments: [Review Paratransit Contractor Service Standards for RFP 2015.pdf](#)

These are the requirements in the request for proposal (RFP) for our contractors. There are a few new items from the last time we took proposals. We want 100% feedback responses within ten days. We want contractors to get back to customers instead of Metro staff getting back to customers. Because it's in the performance standards, there will be a monetary penalty if they don't meet it.

If there are other items that you think should be looked at more closely, please let Ms. Martin know, and we can put those on our next agenda. I've already started scheduling appointments with contractors and prospective contractors to find out what is going well or not going well. The RFP will be released very early next year. The current contracts expire June 30, 2015.

10. [33787](#) Reports
- a. Transit & Parking Commission
 - b. Commission on People with Disabilities
 - c. Dane County Specialized Transportation Commission
 - d. Other Community Meetings
 - e. Performance Indicators, Quarterly Feedback by Unit
 - f. Report from the Chair
 - g. Staff Report

Attachments: [Para Indicators Jan2014.pdf](#)
[Para Indicators Feb2014.pdf](#)
[Multi-Yr Counts by Primary Unit and Category 2013-01-01 to 2013-12-31.pdf](#)
[Pending List 12 16 13.pdf](#)
[ADA TS Roster 03 05 14.pdf](#)

a. Transit and Parking Commission – Alder Subeck said she is not on TPC but last time the update from TPC had an update from Lyft and Uber. Some may have heard that Alder Resnik is going to make a proposal about potentially making their services legal. She asked that whatever his proposal is it gets referred to ADATS and Equal Opportunities Commission. Ms. De Vos said she

testified at the public comment period regarding the fact that TPC ignored the ADATS motion about consulting the disability community when taking away bus stops. She asked that the TPC agenda include this issue and she be contacted when it was on the agenda. The TPC accepted the motion and did nothing about it. She thought that the Tenney-Lapham bus stop elimination situation is setting a precedent. If they ignore us the first time, then they could just follow that policy from this point forward.

Alder Subeck said that raises the need again to have a TPC representative to this subcommittee. Alder Subeck said she would call Gary Poulson again. Mr. DuRocher said he emailed Gary Poulson again today. Perhaps it will help him to say that we are really pushing for this.

b. Commission on People with Disabilities – No report. Ms. De Vos said she wishes that committee would deal with the bus stop elimination issue so more than one committee shows concern. Ms. Hicks said she prefers to give online feedback. Ms. De Vos said like the budget feedback increased online last year. Lots of people prefer that to in person meetings; you can get a lot of wonderful ideas. It would be great if the CPD could let the Mayor's office know this is a good mode of communication.

c. Dane County Specialized Transportation – The RSVP program provides a lot of rides, and they are losing funding on the federal level. They are greatly threatened in terms of what they can do. There may be an overlap of how that affects paratransit.

Now MTM took over the statewide brokerage. MTM is not working out very well either. If you saw Ms. Martin's email, there is a hearing Thursday to get the joint legislative committee to do an audit of their contract. Read the email and pick a couple of names and call them up and tell them what the problems are. There was a situation where a person was getting out of the hospital and he called to confirm his ride multiple times. The day of the discharge no one showed up and the dispatcher (who is out of state) said there is no ride, and we need paperwork before you are eligible. There is a meeting at 9 AM at the State Capitol; the room number is in the email. Please share it.

d. Other Community Meetings – There is an upcoming panel discussion with Uber/Lyft services, local cab companies, and Alder Resnik.

e. Performance Indicators, Quarterly Feedback by Unit – Ms. Gullickson said she wanted to draw attention to the Quarterly Feedback report. When Ms. Martin talked about what we expect from contractors, this report is what she is talking about. We want to hold contractors to the same standards as internal staff. We get a monthly report about how well each unit at Metro did on timeliness, so now we are including contractors on that expectation.

Ms. Martin said we have number that indicate how many feedback items we get per year. I looked back to see if that is fairly consistent. Back in 2006, 2007 and 2008 it was more like 400. Ms. De Vos pointed out there are some compliments. Ms. Martin said it is very small. Alder Subeck said does this correlate to an increase in ridership. Ms. Martin said I went back to performance indicators – complaints per 1000 trips. In 2005 our total was 1.59 and now they are 2.19, so what will be a red flag is 3.5 or 4.0. So it's still fairly

good. We also watch the late service reports per 1000 trips. We had a high with Badger Cab. But I look at the last year with Transit Solutions at 6.03 whereas Badger was “great” with 7 because it was down from 14. Ms. Martin said I don’t look very closely at January and February statistics because snow is a major contributor during those months.

Ms. Martin said we use the feedback report quarterly to get a picture, talk to our contractors about issues or even see where we are doing well.

Ms. Brunette-Tregoning asked if any contractors have two rides that have to be at different places at the same time. Ms. Martin said yes, because we have the twenty minute window. If you can pick them up in that 20 minute window and get them to their location, that is the standard. But what doesn’t work is picking up two people at the same time two miles apart. But if it’s along the route it can work. Also, it sometimes depends on the skill and experience of the driver. Ms. Brunette-Tregoning asked if there are lots of new drivers. Not at Metro, and the contractors don’t report the number of new drivers.

f. Report from the Chair – No report from the Chair.

g. Staff Report – Karen Darcy says hello. Her surgery was successful and she’s now in rehab.

11. OTHER TRANSIT RELATED ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Brunette-Tregoning asked when we contract out for what we will be paying for fuel. Ms. Martin said we could bring that to the next meeting.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. DeVos moved to adjourn, seconded by Alder Subeck. Meeting adjourned at 7:07 PM.