

TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary
Thursday September 10, 2009

PRESENT: Rick Sanderson
Jenifer Falls, Huntersville
D Evans, Charlotte
Scott Jernigan, Charlotte
Terry Lansdell, Charlotte
Anthony Wesley, Charlotte
Rob Cornwell, Davidson
Charles Jolla, Charlotte
Walter Horstman, Charlotte
Don Carnahan, Cornelius
Kevin Spitzmiller, Charlotte

STAFF: Larry Kopf, Duretta Weicken, Ramond Robinson, Rocky Paiano, Patrick Hoskins, Chuck Juliana, Dwayne Pelfrey, Theron Barrino, Kiera Terrell, Arlanda Rouse, John Trunk, Dave Feltman, Lisa Flowers, Zettie Phillips

MEETING TIME: 4:00-5:30 PM

I. Call to Order and Approval of May Meeting Summary

Chairman Rick Sanderson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. The August meeting summary was approved as written. Rick introduce new TSAC member Kevin Spitzmiller, representing Charlotte.

II. Information Items:

A. Budget Update

CATS Staff

CATS staff Dee Pereira, Larry Kopf, Arlanda Rouse, and Dave Feltman presented the TSAC committee with CATS 2010 budget highlights, the impact of the recession, how CATS earns, spends and implements the dollar along with future budget plans.

Rick stated the debt service would not be the same this year. Dee stated that was correct as the debt service is usually 14-16 million dollars per year.

Anthony Wesley asked if CATS borrows money in anticipation of receiving funds from the Federal grants, CATS anticipates receiving those funds when. Dee stated when the Federal government awards grants, the grant funds are not advanced in a lump

sum amount to the grantee. CATS (the grantee) will draw reimbursements from the grant based on actual expenditure.

Don Carnahan stated the gap in sales tax between 2001- 2011 seemed large. Dee stated CATS projected the recovery at 5.5%. Don suggests there be some recovery commentary in the presentation.

Jenifer Falls asked what type of transit the Silver line to Matthews would be. Dave Feltman stated the Silver line would either be Bus Rapid transit or light rail.

Dee Evans stated the new STS buses were not very comfortable and wanted to know when the parts to fix them will be installed. Larry stated the parts are in and are currently being installed but he did not know how long it would take to install them. Larry will report to Dee the time line.

Rob Cornwell stated he would like to see actual dollars in the budget presentation and where they are allocated. Dee stated that CATS distributes a management report to the MTC every year and that she will be sure that TSAC will receive the financial summary as well.

Rob asked where the 20.7 million dollars of stimulus funds are allocated. Dee answered that those funds would be utilized to renovate the Davidson Street Garage building.

Terry Lansdell asked what fare structure would be for the Saturday service to Concord. Larry stated the Concord service would have a regional express fare.

Terry asked if there were any parking expansion projects at this time. Dave Feltman stated there are currently no expansion projects at this time. Terry also wanted the committee and CATS staff to know he believes the system is missing potential revenue generation by having free parking at park & rides.

B. Discussion TSAC By-laws

All

The committee briefly discussed the changes TSAC made to the committee By-laws that will be presented to CTAG and MTC this month. The committee was reminded the reason for an update to the bylaws is to have a standard set of bylaws for all committees serving under the same consistent rules.

Anthony asked when the bylaws will go to CTAG and MTC. Lisa Flowers answered that the bylaws go to CTAG September 15 and to MTC September 23.

Terry stated he is in agreement that term limits need to be decided on a case by case decision as there may not be enough people to serve for some townships.

Rick stated CTAG was concerned with term limits as it may result in having no one to serve on the committee once a member completes their term.

Charles Jolla stated the bylaws right now read with an exception to term limits for each committee thus authorizing authority of discretion to term for each committee. Charles felt the committee should leave the bylaws as written and see what decision MTC makes.

Rick stated he wanted to leave the term limit section as written and see what MTC does with the bylaws.

III. Public Comment on agenda items:

There were no public comments.

IV. Service Issues

All

Walter Horstman asked how the non-smoking rules at the CTC were being accepted. Larry Kopf stated that most people were complying but some people do not know there is a policy and when asked to comply they will go out to the sidewalk to smoke but then they want the bus to stop on its way out to pick them up thus creating an extra stop for the driver and schedule.

Don Carnahan asked if headsets could be used for bus operator to alleviate, for safety sake, the driver from holding a radio device while driving. Dwayne Pelfrey AGM of Bus operations stated statistics have not shown that drivers using bus equipment cause accidents. Larry stated headsets were not convenient for drivers to hear when interacting with customers.

Walt asked what the term "Aim High" means on the bus announcement. Theron Barrino stated the term "Aim High" is part of the safe driving methods safety training and comes across the system during every start up. The term "Aim High" means to look ahead and anticipate.

Anthony Wesley asked if the last train of the evening is on a set time schedule. Larry stated the last scheduled train at 1:00am can vary during a special event as CATS will accommodate the event end times. Anthony asked how CATS accommodates varying event end times. Rocky Paiano stated that trains are staged and will accommodate when needed. And that the time frames are usually announced in advance for customers.

Rick stated there are usually ambassadors working during the special events and they advise customers as well.

Dee Evans asked if events at Verizon were accommodated by the train. Larry stated there were not many customers from Verizon events that ride the train.

Terry Lansdell stated there is a new bus stop at the Wal-Mart store and people waiting for the bus were turning over shopping carts to sit on. Terry wanted to know if there were plans for a shelter there. Ramond Robinson stated there has been some feedback on placing a shelter there in the future when there are more businesses in service.

Terry asked if the #25 bus route was considered the lowest ridership as he believes it has increased ridership since the service change. Larry stated it was not the lowest in ridership but that the #25 route was low on the monitor scale. Larry will get the current stats to Terry.

Terry thanked CATS stating the VMF tour for the TSAC last month was very good.

Rick stated there is also a tour of the Bus Operations facility planned soon for TSAC.

Jenifer Falls stated the driver for the 48X route at 5:30pm does not use the HOV lane when on the highway. Larry stated staff would check into it.

Dee Evans wanted know if the bus operator or the customer is responsible to make the stop at new bus stops. Larry stated it is the driver's responsibility to stop at new stops. Larry went on saying if CATS gets specific information a campaign could be done on that route and also CATS can make signs more visible.

Scott Jernigan asked if a customer is not at the bus stop sign if the bus is supposed to stop for them. Larry stated the driver does not know if a person is just walking somewhere or if they need to catch the bus if they are not at the sign. But if he felt he was treated wrongly to let CATS know.

Kevin Spitzmiller stated there was overcrowding on the train one weekend and was wondering when two car trains run. Rocky stated during special events two cars are run but when needed two car trains run. CATS may need to look at specified weekend time frames.

V. Chairman's Report

Rick Sanderson

Rick gave report from the August MTC meeting stating the van pool fare increase was approved and the committees bylaws were put off for further discussion. Rick stated he and Terry Lansdell were present at the Enhanced bus Sprinter ribbon cutting and the service goes into effect on Monday September 14.

VI. Interim Manager of Operations Report

Larry Kopf

Larry stated the August service changes went pretty smoothly with some usual concerns of service change complaints.

Larry went on to explain that the City Council did not vote on the streetcar project as there was discussion of whether dollars should be spent on design at this time of economic concerns. Larry told the committee that he will be absent at the October TSAC meeting and that Rocky Paiano will be representing CATS staff.

NEXT TSAC MEETING: THURSDAY OCTOBER 8, 2009 4:00 PM