

TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary
Thursday April 11, 2013.

PRESENT:

Rick Sanderson, Charlotte
Rob Cornwell, Davidson
Anthony Wesley, Charlotte
Terry Lansdell, Charlotte
Walter Horstman, Matthews
Jean Veatch, Cornelius
Christine Bryant Huntersville
Scott Jernigan Mecklenburg Co.
Michael Warner Charlotte

STAFF:

Duretta Weicken, Paulus Ford, Theron Barrino, Larry Kopf, Pamela White, Judy Dellert-OKeef, Brian Horton, John Fitzgibbon, Olaf Kinard, Marvin Bohon, Meghan Makoid, Tom Reynolds

Meeting Time 4:00-5:30 PM

I. Call to Order and Approval of the March Meeting Summary

Chairman Rick Sanderson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m., The March meeting summary was approved as written.

II. Public Comment on Agenda Items:

Several residents from the Dilworth community came to discuss the changes to the Park Road route 19.

III. Action Item:

A. Gold Rush

Pamela White CATS Service Planning explained there are two Gold Rush lines, the Red and Orange. The Red line operates between Johnson C Smith and Presbyterian and the Orange line operates along Tryon and the Charlotte School of Law. MTC has a policy for activity center shuttles which governs these types of

services and how they are paid for. The policy requires there be a reimbursement to CATS up to 100% however CATS has a long standing relationship with Center City Partners of a 50% reimbursement. The reason for discussion of changes to the service today is there are funding challenges with some of the funding partners and as a result of that CATS must respond with the hours accordingly so that the 50% match with services is honored. CATS' is proposing that the Orange Line that currently operated to the Charlotte School of Law be discontinued and the Red line which operates between Johnson C. Smith and Presbyterian will be reduced. At this time, CATS is seeking TSAC endorsement with the said reductions to continue the 50/50 partnership and keeping in line with MTC policy.

Scott Jernigan stated he read the School of Law is moving so there is no longer a need to service there. Larry stated service would have been discontinued anyway. Scott continues saying the riders losing service on the orange line can be serviced by the rail line. Larry stated yes there is access to the light rail line but it is not a free service. Scott asked if there were any way to get a schedule for the Red line. Larry stated CATS will have to think about the schedules but the service may be able to run more frequently with the proposed changes.

Walter Horstman stated he believed the Orange line was used by people using parking further out from center city and students use the line as well. Pamela stated people also use the service to go to lunch.

Terry Lansdell asked if there was a letter of recommendation from Center City Partners on the changes to the Gold Rush Service. Pamela stated CATS has been working with Center City Partners and they have attended meetings on the Gold Rush Service. Larry stated he has had most of the Gold Rush Service conversations mostly by emails with Center City Partners and they have expressed they understand that CATS doesn't want to fully fund the service and seem to be OK with the changes.

Christine Bryant stated since the Red line is being reduced what will be done with the unused vehicles. Larry stated CATS will retire the vehicles that have met their life expectancy and keep the vehicles that are still good and explore other ways of using them.

The Committee voted in favor of endorsing the recommended Gold Rush service changes to MTC.

IV. Information Item

A. CATS Trivia Contest

Olaf Kinard

Olaf Kinard CATS Marketing Manager explained that CATS has dove into the social media pool and now are moving forward with a trivia contest, the strategy for the trivia contest is to generate more interest in what CATS is doing by drawing Facebook and other sources to the CATS website. The trivia question answers are on the CATS website. There is also a fan of the week contest so the more a person interacts with the Facebook page CATS knows that information, captures it and the person that has the most activity is the rider of the week.

Rob Cornwell asked what the overall objectives were for the Trivia contest. Olaf stated by doing the contest it indoctrinates CATS key messages and key stats to increase the knowledge base and to reach different consumer sets.

Terry asked what line item this expense comes from in the budget Olaf stated the expenses come out of the general line item in the marketing budget.

Walter wondered if these types of contests and such get an increase in overall satisfaction of the transit system. Olaf stated CATS did a research about three months ago and CATS was about 4th or 5th in comparison of other transit systems that were out there three or four years.

B. Light Rail Inspections

Marvin Bohon

Marvin Bohon General Manager of Safety & Security addressed the committee with safety & security stats on fare inspection. Marvin stated Charlotte Area Transit System has a dedicated Police force consisting of 40 sworn Company Police Officers, 11 Officers are assigned to the train system. Officer's responsibilities are to ensure protection of CATS passengers, employees and property while enforcing statues, ordinances and rules. Fare evasion is enforced second to safety & security at peak times. When proof of fare is not presented a passenger can receive one of three citations: A Warning, A Civil Citation or State Citation. Marvin continued saying citations are \$50 and must be paid or appealed within 30 days of issue. Total fines for the last twelve months were \$39,450.

Terry asked if there were 1000 citations last year. Marvin stated warnings and citations totaled 1000. Terry asked if there is an expectation of 2 to 4 officers on the trains at all times. Marvin stated yes there are 20 trains so CATS tries to have 2 officers on North bound and 2 officers on South bound at all times.

Scott asked how youthful offenders are handled. Marvin stated juvenile offenders are handled like any other offenders.

Walter asked if the word on the street is if you are going to jump the fare, to do it during rush hour. Marvin stated that during rush hour CATS main concern is Safety & Security and then fare evasion but when a train is packed, the last thing Officers want to do is create a fight or commotion over fare.

Terry asked Marvin to share a success story about a crime issue that was resolved or prevented. Marvin stated the camera system has help solve instances where the person of crime has been arrested in a short period of time.

Terry asked Marvin to talk about the safety in park and rides. Marvin stated the I-485 Park and Ride station has officers there 24-7, other park and rides are covered by the four CMPD liaison officers.

Larry asked if there were agreements with Huntersville and Matthews for the Park and Rides. Marvin state CATS does have agreements with other surrounding agencies where they will do right checks for CATS.

C. Origins Destination Study

Meghan Makoid

Meghan Makoid of CATS Development informed the committee about the surveys that are taking place along the rail line saying. Meghan stated Beginning March 4, 2013, CATS' contractors RSG, Inc. and ETC institute conducted origin-destination study onboard CATS vehicles. This study was required by the LYNX Blue Line Extension Federal Full Funding agreement to document the transit conditions prior to construction of the LYNX Blue Line Extension. In addition, the data collected will also be used to improve the regional travel demand model, which is used to predict ridership for future capital and operation improvements. City Council approved the contract for this work on December 10, 2012

The origin destination study was conducted in two phases. Phase 1 is a system wide "on-to-off survey that collected the GPS location of the customer boards the vehicle and where they exit the vehicle. Results from the survey are used to create the sampling plan for the second phase of the study. Phase 2 is a detailed origin-destination survey of customers that will collect trip information about origin, destination, boarding, alighting, trip purpose, mode of access, egress, and transfers as well as important customer and household information like vehicle availability and household income. The second phase will also document park and ride usage on the bus and light rail system. Council will receive additional information in mid-April about the second phase of the study.

Walter asked how many surveys were collected during the 1st phase or the Origin-destination survey. Meghan answered 1200 surveys were collected in the first phase.

Rob asked when customers don't have 5 minutes of time for the survey what is done. Meghan stated when people don't have time for the verbal survey; a hard copy of the survey is given to the customer and they are asked to mail the survey sheet back to CATS.

V. Service Issues

Anthony Wesley wanted to know who pays for the bus bridge for the Poindexter project. Larry stated the project pays for the bus bridge, CATS submits the costs for reimbursement.

Walter stated the construction on College Street at Tryon is a mess for bus Operators. Also a couple of the later express bus routes to Matthews have some timing issues once out of Matthews where the next bus is right behind the first bus. Larry stated CATS will take a look at the route.

Terry stated Rt. 25 on East Blvd is inconsistent. Larry stated CATS will take a look at the service times.

Terry commended CATS for all their efforts in reaching out to the public to get a feel for what the service needs to be. Also it is free ride on CATS transit system if you bring a bike, May 5 – 11.

VI. Chairman's Report & Manager of Operation Report

Rick stated he did not attend MTC so Larry reported on MTC stating the MTC meeting was held in Mint Hill and the major agenda item was the change to the financial policy due to the way funds are distributed for the BLE so a secondary funds reserve needed to be created since the dollars are now to be received over a ten year period. Continuing with the Manager of Operations report Larry stated the Obama administration has released a recommendation for the next budget year which included \$100 million dollars for the Blue Line Extension, so now CATS is waiting for Congress approval. Also Larry stated CATS came in 3rd at the State Rodeo and STS won safest Para-transit system and CATS won the safest system in the state. Larry introduced Tom Reynolds the new Assistant General Manager of Bus Operations Division.

NEXT TSAC MEETING: THURSDAY MAY 9, 2013 4:00 PM
