



**ASHEVILLE TRANSIT COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**First Floor Conference – City Hall**  
**February 7, 2012 4:00-6:00**

**Attending:**

**Commission Members:** Paul Van Heden, Julie Mayfield, Tom Tomlin, Ken O'Connor, Kevin Jenkins, Dave Erb, Georgia Shannon, Councilman Gordon Smith

**Staff:** Mariate Echeverry, Martha McGlohon, Yuri Koslen, Janet GeorgeMurr, Shannon Tuch.

**Community members:** Timothy Spader, Garrett Male, David Frayer, Don Lilenfeld, Jeannie Rosenthal, Michelle LaRocque

4:02 p.m.: Paul Van Heden opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

**Transit Commission Members and staff listed above introduced themselves.**

**February 7, 2012 Agenda review and approval:** Julie moved to accept the agenda; Paul and Kevin seconded and carried unanimously.

**January 3, 2011 Transit Commission Minutes Approval:** Paul moved to accept the minutes with a minor change; Tom and Ken O seconded and carried unanimously.

**Public Comment - Part I:** - David Frayer stated that with the City's budget issues, he suggested ways that the Transit could save fuel: by removing Dial-A-Ride; bus driver training; on Route 5 to improve the route by running a loop rather than a straight line; and reward the bus drivers when there is fuel savings. Mariate stated that once the Transit Master Plan implementation begins, some of the Dial-A-Rides will be removed; she also stated that there was an 8% savings in fuel consumption in the second quarter of FY12. Yuri stated that the Environmental Management Systems program addresses not only fuel savings but environmental issues.

**Transit Commission Members' Experiences on ATS this past month:**

- Tom - Route 2 was fine
- Julie – no problem
- Ken O – has not ridden, but spoke with students who stated no problems with riding the bus.
- Kevin - he does not receive IRIDE messages.
- Paul - had a positive experience, but, questioned the bus stop at the round-about on Clingman where other vehicles are blocked.
- Dave - Routes 2 and 18 were on time and ride was smooth
- Georgia - have not ridden the bus lately
- Gordon - was pleased to announce that the bus ride was seamless and both buses were full.

**Presentation by Shannon Tuch, City of Asheville Planning Department:**

- Affordable Housing and Transit:** Shannon presented Transit Commission with detailed background of the complex issues with transit and affordable housing. The Community Development Division has initiated the creation of new "Affordable Housing Advisory Committee." The Committee is a balanced group with a wide focus. The Center for neighborhood Technology (CNT) established a Housing and Transportation Index which they hope the results will be in next month. The idea of the index is to include transportation costs in affordability calculations. The study will identify "affordable areas" in Buncombe County among other things. On the White Oak Grove project, Council wants to reexamine their policies that support density. One of the main policy points is the proximity of density to transit lines which should be 1/4 mile to all transit lines. There is a subcommittee of Council members Manheimer, Bothwell and Hunt as a working group to review the policies and guidelines. Gordon is the Council liaison on the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee in which the committee will roll out a housing index.

- ❑ **Changes to the UDO concerning Advertising on benches:** Shannon stated that advertising on benches would be similar to the exemption used for advertising on City Buses. The most appropriate process would likely be to have the Transit Commission review and approve a policy first, then Planning staff would follow-up with a wording amendment creating the exemption and the present o the Planning & Economic Development Committee before taking to the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Election of new Transit Commission Officers:** Paul Van Heden moved to nominate Julie Mayfield as the new Chairman of TC, Tom and Dave seconded the motion and carried unanimously. Gordon thanked Paul for his contribution to transit. Julie moved to have Dave Erb serve as Vice-Chairman of TC, Ken O. seconded the motion and carried unanimously. Kevin asked when the election of officers should be held. Martha stated that the by-laws state that elections should be held in January of each year.
- **Possibility of changing time of Transit Commission Meetings:** Julie stated that this question was brought to her attention at the January meeting to change the starting time of the TC meetings to 3:30pm rather than 4:00 pm. Julie asked the other members of TC if this time would work for them. Julie moved to have the time changed beginning in March, 2012 to 3:30pm, Dave and Paul seconded the motion and carried unanimously.
- **Greenway Commission Transition to Transportation Department:** Mariate announced that the Greenway Commission and the City's Greenway Program is now under Transportation Planning Division's purview. Conducting and planning for greenways is part of the Transportation projects which will work with for the Greenway Commission to implement the City's greenway plan.  
Gordon asked if the Bike and Ped Task Force should be part of the Transportation purview. Mariate stated that in the past Bike & Ped Task Force has expressed no interest in becoming an official committee, mostly because of the flexibility; the division does work with Bike & Ped Task Force and Barb Mee is the liaison.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- **Transit Master Plan Implementation Update:** Mariate explained the implementation chart that each TC member had with their packet. Implementation will begin 30 days before the route changes, maps, etc. There will be meetings with special groups, etc. with an anticipated date of 5/28/12 for the roll out of implementation. Mariate stated that the implementation can only begin on a Monday due to the Union bus drivers having to sign up for the routes. Yuri stated that the drivers need to become familiar with the routes. A group discussion with the following suggestions:
  - ❑ Julie suggested 5/7 as the start date and the latest date of 5/14/12;
  - ❑ Gordon suggested 4/30 and proposed the month of May as free fare;
  - ❑ Paul strongly stated to pick a date and go "full steam ahead;"
  - ❑ Mariate feels does not feel comfortable with an earlier date by 5/1 due to all the pieces involved.
  - ❑ Julie suggested 5/7 as implementation to get the routes and complaints a head start in order to keep the momentum of SNTD week.
  - ❑ Ken O. suggested moving the SNTD earlier in May;
  - ❑ Mariate stated that 5/7 is a realistic target in case there are emergencies;
  - ❑ Julie pledges Transit Commission members to help;
  - ❑ Mariate will work with Marsha Stickford in reaching out for volunteers and groups to feel empty spaces;
  - ❑ Julie suggested redoing the chart to the date 5/7 and send to TC. It would be helpful for Mariate to tell TC where they are needed on the chart.
  - ❑ Mariate requested having TC comments on the maps and schedules by next Monday in order to send to the marketing/designer.

- Julie proposed for free fare from the date of implementation through the Strive Not To Drive week up to 3 weeks. Julie moved to approve proposal; Dave seconded the motion and carried unanimously. This will be presented to the Finance Committee (*amended.*)
- **2011 Transit Commission to review Annual Report to Council:** After TC reviewed the report, Julie asked Gordon to be an advocate on the budget part of the report. Julie volunteered to speak with Council if asked to present report. Gordon had a few suggestions for Julie when speaking with Council. Yuri will send Julie Title VI update to add to the report. Paul moved to have TC support the Annual Report after the changes, Dave 2nd and carried unanimously.
- **Fuel Blend for Asheville Redefined Transit (ART) from B5 to B20:** Due to time constraints, Councilman Smith moved this agenda item to March.
- **Transit Commission Work Plan Updates:**
  - 1. **Funding:** Brought a wide range of folks together in December for initial discussion about funding options;
  - 2. **Public Relations and the Implementation of the TMP:** Paul will talk to new City Council members about the TMP in February, 2012.
  - 5. **Integrate with other Transportation and Land Use Groups:** Recommended having Transit, Greenways, and SACEE make presentations to Planning and Zoning about the different plans.
  - 5. **Advance regional transit issues at MPO:** Julie is on the TDM Advisory Committee
- **Smoking at Transit Center -** moved this agenda item to March due to not meeting with the bus drivers regarding this issue.
- **Transfers:** Tom stated that there is bus transfer fraud with some bus riders; and losing revenue for Asheville Transit. Riders are keeping the transfers, to give to another rider, for another day. The transfers are labeled A, B, C, D, E, etc, but the same transfer could be used on the other days. Mariate will speak with Norman for a solution and to speak with the President of the Bus Drivers Union to bring this subject up at the next union meeting. Mariate stated that after new routes are implemented, there will also be a new transfer policy. Tom stated that the drivers are not picking up the transfers which would prevent fraud. Yuri stated there is a new transfer policy which is one of the measurements on Title VI. Gordon asked if this measure would prevent fraud and stop abusing the transit system. Mariate stated that the bus drivers should not be enforcing the transfer policy, but to give equal service to everyone and to design a pass that drivers will easily identify for each day of the week. Staff will speak with Norman and the drivers and report back.

### **Staff Updates:**

- **Budget-** Mariate stated that she was asked to submit a flat budget for the FY12-13 operational budget. Mariate suggested that this was the moment to request any increase in the budget if TC wanted to pursue something in particular. Julie and Gordon mentioned funding to marketing and asked how much the system will require. Dave asked what was the amount for the flat budget, Mariate stated that is was 5 million dollars; operational is 4.6 million dollars.

On the marketing budget Mariate stated that TMP recommends 3 to 5% of the total budget to be allocated to marketing, which is approximately \$150,000.

Mariate mentioned that this year's State Maintenance Assistance Program (SMAP) will be reduced by \$130,000. Transportation will need to off set the deficit.

- **Endorsement by Transit Commission of the Environmental Management Systems (EMS) ISO 14,000 Certification:** Mariate briefly explained the EMS project. Mariate stated that to apply for the certification the cost for the consultant is \$23,000 and funds were found in the capital transit fund and will be presented to Council on 2/28/12 for a budget amendment. At this time, the Water Department is the only department that has the ISO certification. There are just a few transit systems in the nation ISO 14001 certified. This project is aligned with Council strategic goals.

Julie moved to endorse the EMS ISO certification; Ken O seconded and carried unanimously.

Mariate brought to TC's attention that there is a big movement by the House and Senate a bill of the Ways and Means Committee where transit is being combined with highway funding, therefore, the lost of dedicated funding. Mariate encourages TC to contact our representatives.

- **Bus Advertising on benches and shelters** - postponed to March, 2012.
- **Status on RFPs-roof, cameras and market** - postponed to March, 2012.

**Public Comment:**

- Don Lilienfeld asked TC for support for a bus shelter at ABCCM. Yuri stated that funding for a shelter at this location is being proposed. Donald also wanted to give notice for customer service of the drivers on Tunnel Road on Route 170.
- Jeanie Rosenthal - asked TC for consideration of non-smoking at the Transit Center platform due to second hand smoke. Julie stated this topic will be brought up at the next operators' meeting.
- Tim Spader - asked TC to campaign for horse people on greenways and solar for the bus shelters.

**Agenda Items for next meeting:**

Fuel Blend for ART from B5 to B20

Budget

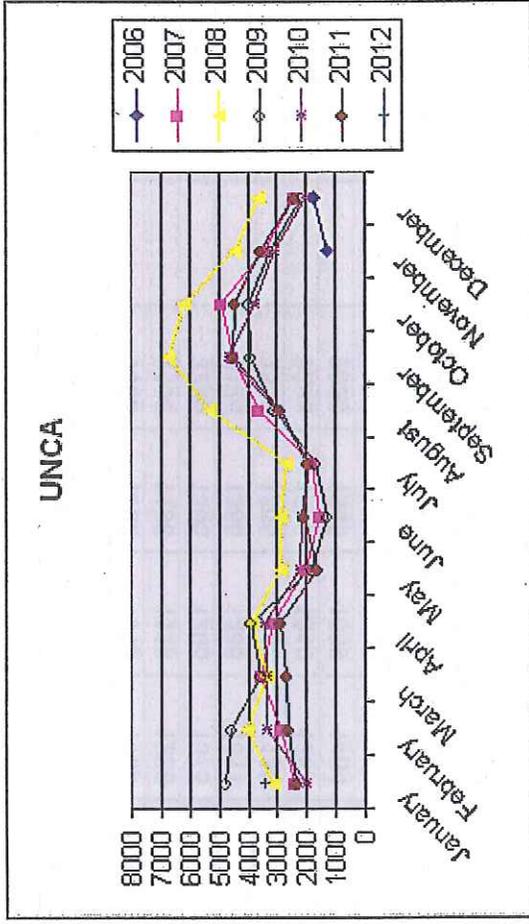
Bus Advertising on benches and shelters

Status on RFPs.

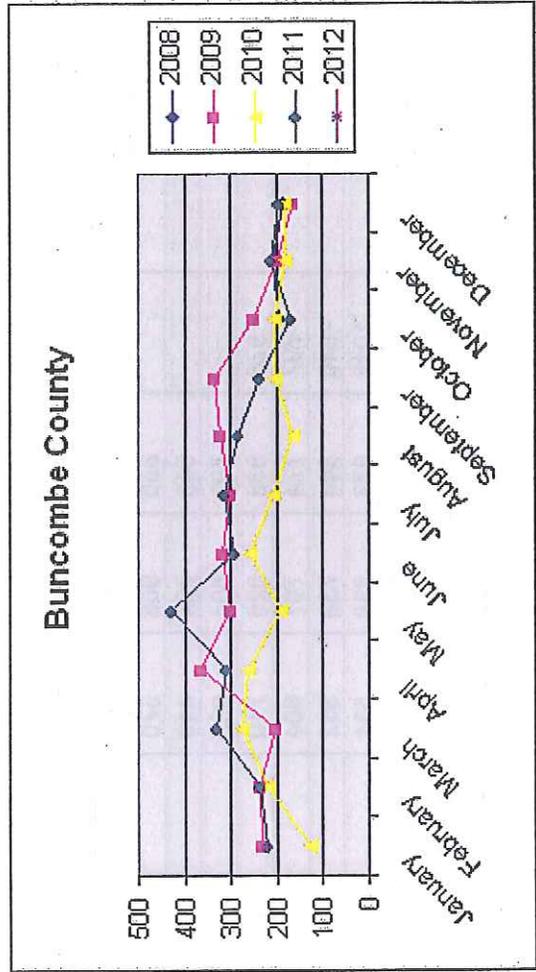
Meeting Adjourned at 6:14 pm.



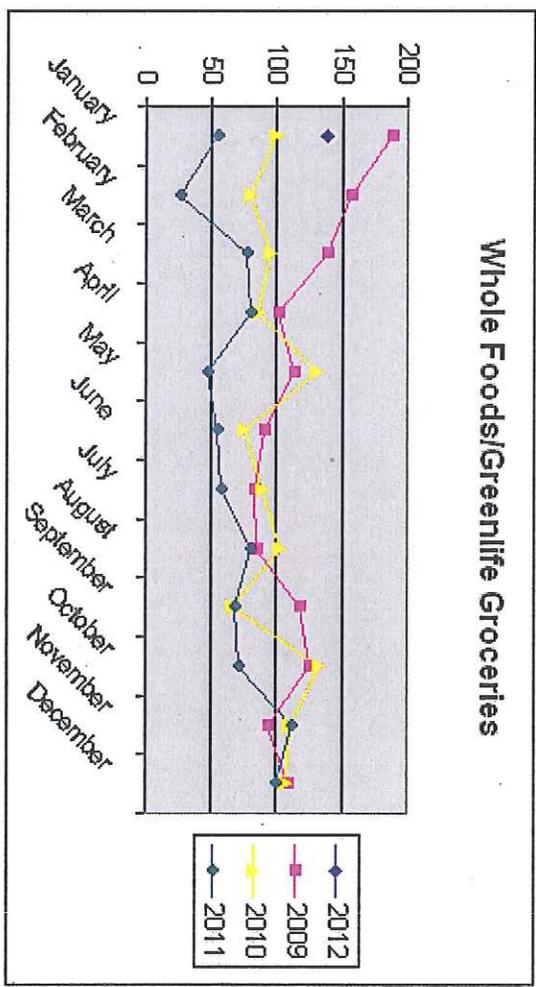
UNCA	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
January		2433	3140	4777	2020	2326	3398
February		2860	4041	4562	3346	2652	
March		3536	3346	3554	3335	2662	
April		3163	3906	3891	3433	2888	
May		2010	2870	1803	2248	1582	
June		1529	2882	1253	2129	2055	
July		1816	2692	1677	1890	1918	
August		3611	5336	3118	3013	2923	
September		4512	6755	3897	4663	4511	
October		4881	6169	3935	3774	4455	
November	1285	3452	4444	3234	3072	3572	
December	1754	2443	3649	2124	2042	2433	
<b>Year Totals</b>	<b>3039</b>	<b>36246</b>	<b>4923</b>	<b>3782</b>	<b>3496</b>	<b>3397</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Overall Totals</b>	<b>195282</b>						



Buncombe County	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
January		231	127	221	230
February		236	222	238	
March		204	275	329	
April		366	264	311	
May		302	189	430	
June		319	259	294	
July		301	208	313	
August		324	167	283	
September		334	203	236	
October	195	251	205	169	
November	209	199	184	211	
December	187	165	183	197	
<b>Year Totals</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>3232</b>	<b>2486</b>	<b>3232</b>	
<b>Overall Totals</b>	<b>9541</b>				



Whole Foods/Greenlife	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
January		188	100	54	139
February		156	80	25	
March		138	94	77	
April		101	85	79	
May		113	131	46	
June	103	90	75	54	
July	205	82	88	57	
August	177	84	103	79	
September	164	117	66	68	
October	181	125	133	71	
November	152	93	110	111	
December	185	109	107	99	
<b>Year Totals</b>	<b>1167</b>	<b>1396</b>	<b>1172</b>	<b>820</b>	
<b>Overall Totals</b>	<b>4555</b>				

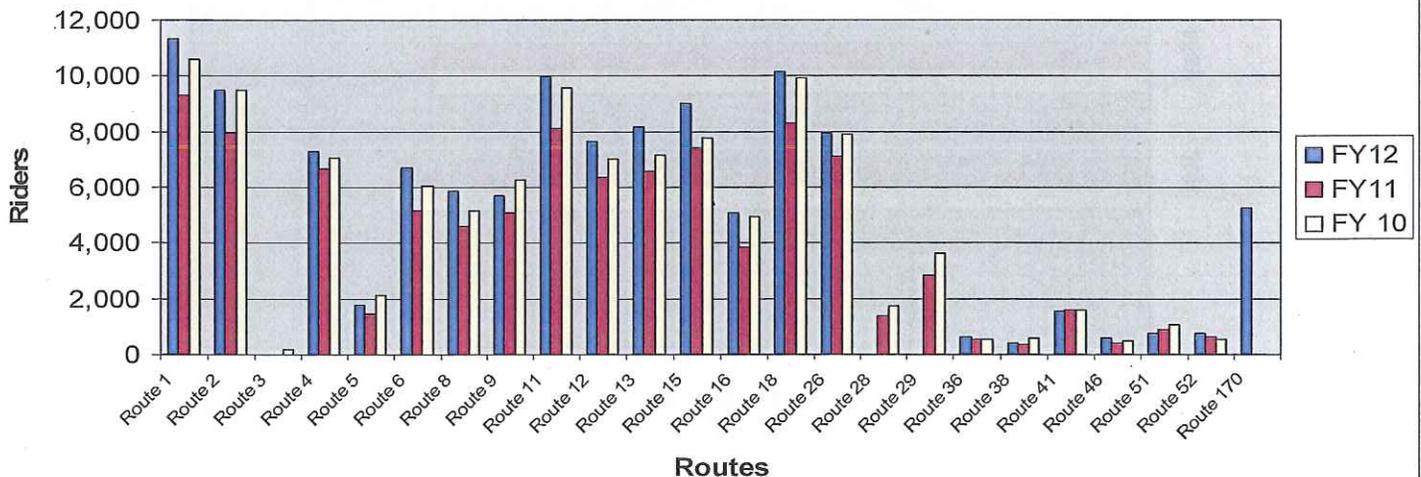


Asheville Transit System

Route Ridership-January, 2012

Route	Current Month				Fiscal Year to Date			
	This Year	Last Year	Change	Delta	This Year	Last Year	Change	Delta
1	11,347	9,289	2,058	22%	85,490	71,029	14,461	20%
2	9,492	7,941	1,551	20%	70,503	59,106	11,397	19%
4	7,277	6,654	623	9%	57,900	47,503	10,397	22%
5	1,776	1,439	337	23%	1,776	1,439	337	23%
6	6,704	5,181	1,523	29%	48,937	39,239	9,698	25%
8	5,859	4,581	1,278	28%	44,312	35,168	9,144	26%
9	5,673	5,067	606	12%	43,833	41,429	2,404	6%
11	9,979	8,099	1,880	23%	69,610	55,418	14,192	26%
12	7,612	6,375	1,237	19%	60,320	48,716	11,604	24%
13	8,176	6,557	1,619	25%	64,843	49,020	15,823	32%
15	9,019	7,418	1,601	22%	61,310	46,412	14,898	32%
16	5,072	3,846	1,226	32%				
18	10,149	8,278	1,871	23%	70,351	57,250	13,101	23%
26	7,955	7,092	863	12%	57,757	46,068	11,689	25%
28	0	1,384	(1,384)	-100%	-	12,602	(12,602)	-100%
29	0	2,828	(2,828)	-100%	830	22,802	(21,972)	-96%
36	618	545	73	13%	5,032	4,113	919	22%
38	415	336	79	24%	4,826	4,569	257	6%
41	1,525	1,585	(60)	-4%	12,597	11,355	1,242	11%
46	588	403	185	46%	5,910	5,455	455	8%
51	755	869	(114)	-13%	6,560	6,108	452	7%
52	729	612	117	19%	4,734	3,789	945	25%
170	5,255	213	5,042	2367%	41,488	213	41,275	19378%
<b>Total</b>	<b>115,975</b>	<b>96,592</b>	<b>19,383</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>115,975</b>	<b>96,592</b>	<b>19,383</b>	<b>20%</b>

Route comparison January FY12



# Ridership Comparison

