



ASHEVILLE TRANSIT COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
First Floor Conference Room - City Hall
May 2, 2012
12:00pm-1:30pm

RIDE.RELAX.CONNECT

Attending:

Commission Members: Julie Mayfield, Dave Erb, Tom Tomlin, Kevin Jenkins, Ken O'Connor,

Staff: Mariate Echeverry, Norman Schenck, Janet GeorgeMurr

Community members: Jeanie Rosenthal

12:05 p.m.: Julie Mayfield, Chairman, opened the meeting; read the Announcement to the Public; and welcomed everyone.
Transit Commission, staff and public introductions

- **May 2, 2012 Agenda review and approval:** Add to Old Business: Smoking at the Transit Center and Transit Commission Work Plan.

- **April 3, 2011 Transit Commission Minutes Approval:** The minutes were approved with the following corrections:
 - Julie requested to remove the following agenda items: Under April 3, 2012 Agenda review and approval: remove Under New Business: Regional Transit Operators Meeting and Under Old Business: remove Transit Commission Work Plan Update -
 - Under New Business: Soliciting more rider feedback: 3rd bullet point - correct as follows: Mariate stated that all phone and email complaints to City staff and Operations are logged into a complaint form.
 - Under New Business: Soliciting more rider feedback: add a bullet point to reads as follows:
 - Norman stated that the dispatchers received the Disney customer service training.

After the above corrections and minor changes, Tom moved to approve the minutes, Ken O. seconded and carried unanimously.

- **Transit Commission Members' Experience on ATS this past month:**
 - Julie – rode Route 1- the bus was full
 - Ken O. - no problems
 - Kevin - was picked up at Asheville Eye Associates at Medical Park worked out well with Dial-A-Ride program.
 - Dave - Routes 2 and 18 were fine all month.
 - Tom - rode Route 18 at noon with no problems and rode Route 16 at two different times to check passenger count with no problems with time.

- **Comment from Tom Tomlin: Special fare for Earth Day:** Tom had questions about how different fares are set, such as the Earth Fare Day with \$0.25 fares. Mariate stated that the Earth Day fare has been under the City Council approved Fees and Charges for a number of years and other special rate fares for example, Veterans Day, Earth Day, SNTD. Julie asked TC members if they would want to ask Council to have the free fare week for SNTD as standard protocol for every year rather than a special request. Mariate recommended to wait to make that decision since there are cuts planned for the state funding and it would be wise to wait until the Fees and Charges are brought up for next fiscal year to make a decision.

NEW BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Transit Member Volunteering for TMP Implementation Community Meetings:** Julie thanked TC for attending the first public information meeting on April 30, 2012. Julie asked if anyone else could attend the 5/14/12 with Councilman Smith. Mariate stated that she anticipates a large crowd at the Shiloh meeting and having Julie and Dave will be most helpful. Julie recommended to the Transit Commission members if they have additional available time to volunteer their time on the list of community meeting dates that need volunteers
- **MAHEC Update:** Julie stated that data is still being compiled and information from Mountain Mobility before calling a meeting with the group of people whom Julie met with last month.
- **STRIVE NOT TO DRIVE Update:**
 - Julie stated that Council approved the three week free fare in combination with SNTD and the Transit Master Plan Implementation roll out.
 - At last count there were approximately 60 businesses that registered for the workplace challenge which was two weeks ago.
 - Yuri is in charge of the PassPort Challenge and Norman will make sure that the bus drivers will count PassPort participants during SNTD week and during free fare for the three weeks.
- **Transit Commission Work Plan update:**
 - Dave and Tom stated that they met with Council member Jan Davis for 45 minutes.
 - Julie reported that she met with Council member Esther Manheimer.
 - Julie reported that she has not met with the Mayor at this time before the launch on 5/21/12.
- **Comment Box at Transit Center:** Norman stated he will have the same company that is installing the schedule racks to install a comment box at the Transit Center. Mariate stated that comments, complaints or ideas that come through the ART voice mail system is going to Janet and will be rerouted and logged into a spreadsheet that each TC member will receive with the monthly reports.

Tom asked about a rack for the schedules. Norman stated the placement of the racks at the ART Station will be ADA compliant. Tom is concerned if the maps are in racks the supply will be depleted faster. Mariate stated that other systems have racks in the waiting room. Kevin stated that only the full system map is on the glossy sheets are costly and suggested placing the full system map at the top of the rack to prevent small children from picking them up. Mariate feels that the passengers will pick up more of the individual maps rather than the full system.

- **IRIDE Tracking Form:**
 - Dave requested that Norman improve clarification of the information in the new IRide tracking spreadsheet that is being distributed to TC. Norman requested from TC and staff as to what information they would like to see on the spreadsheet.
 - Julie suggested that TC add their own comments of complaints that they have received.
 - Julie stated that she has heard complaints about the restrooms being closed due to being cleaned.
 - Norman stated the restrooms are closed until maintenance can clean them. Norman stated that in most cases the restrooms need to be sanitized after someone becomes sick in the restrooms.
 - The mechanics clean the restrooms at the ART twice a day and sometimes that is not enough. The only way to clean the restrooms more frequently is to add staff.
 - Julie asked if the restrooms need cleaning more than twice a day, could the dispatcher clean, if necessary. Norman stated that the dispatchers' workload is already over-tasked.
 - Mariate stated that this is a resource problem due to lack of funding to hire another person.
 - Tom stated that on Saturdays in the Buncombe County parking lot there is free-food distribution for the homeless, etc. and that is a heavy burden on the ART Station restrooms. Norman stated that with the new restrooms at Pack Park should take the load off from the ART Station restrooms.
 - Kevin stated at the first public meeting at the Civic Center on 4/30, a person representing people from Asheville Terrace was complaining how their route was changed and that the bus will not be going to Target any longer; and another

complaint about not having one system map with times on it. Julie stated that this will be discussed further when Mariate reports later in the meeting.

• **Smoking at the Transit Center:**

- Martha stated that there is flexibility of transportation staff to designate the non-smoking areas. It was staff that initially designated the Transit Center as a smoking area at that particular location. Staff has the ability to also remove from the list the designated locations.
- Mariate stated that before the decision was made, this issue was brought to the Transit Commission when Edna Johnson was the GM.
- Julie stated that last month TC had a divided vote to ban all smoking at the Transit Center.
- After the discussion with the Union, the staff will make the decision. Martha stated that staff will talk with the management company through Norman Schenck. The management company is the entity through which City of Asheville (COA) gets the process working with the Union.
- Legal will look at a process where by COA will talk with Norman and others as to what impact there will be on no smoking at the Transit Center.
- Mariate stated that this will not happen soon. This could be a distraction and the drivers need to focus on the upcoming roll-out.

• **Abstention from voting:** Martha stated that there are various thoughts on the impact of an abstention from voting. Both McQuillian and Am Jur 2d., both municipal publications, often utilized by municipal attorneys, tend to hold that an abstention from voting constitutes an affirmative vote with the majority. However, issues arise depending upon whether the Rules require that the vote be by 2/3 vote of the entire membership or by a majority vote of the members present. If it's by a majority of the members present, then an abstention makes no difference. If it is by a 2/3 vote of the entire membership, the effect of an abstention becomes more problematic. Robert's Rules of Order does not agree that an abstention constitutes an affirmative vote. Julie's understanding is in line with Robert's Rules of Order, although it is not clear if the Commission has adopted Robert's Rules of Order.

• **Public Comment on Smoking at the Transit Center:** Jeanie Rosenthal stated that the smoking issue is very serious and it has been dragging on. It has been proven that second hand smoke causes cancer. The non-smokers at the Transit Center are subjected to the smokers. Jeanie indicated that at the Asheville Airport and at the Greyhound station smoking is banned. Jeanie suggested better signage at the mid-point on the transit platform. Martha stated that at car rental places there is a smoking room and Mariate stated that the airport has a smoking room, as well. Norman stated that a smoking "butt" can was mounted above where the regular cans are located up on the hill which be helpful.

Staff Updates:

• **TMP Update:** Mariate reported:

- That the first public meeting on 4/30/12 had 155 people attending. Mariate is very pleased with communication strategy and the results. The first of 5 community meetings was on 5/1 at West Asheville Community Meeting that 25 people attended.
- The next step is the volunteer portion and the team is targeting organizations to find volunteers for bus ambassadors. Mariate stated the team is working with Hands On who recruits the volunteers. Because it is cumbersome to register, it was decided to send the link and one of the staff's emails who could complete the form. Julie asked TC members to help to volunteer as bus ambassadors.
- Temporary employees from Green Opportunities are being hired to man the phones as this is a very important component - this will start on 5/10/12.
- The volunteer group will begin on 5/14/12 and there are many time slots open. Mariate requested TC to send emails to Mariate for volunteering.
- Mariate observed at the public meetings that fear of change is being diffused that riders are more receptive to the transit changes.
- Julie stated that the materials are easy to read and they look great.
- Ken O. saw a more positive feedback than he expected and the riders wanted to be more informed. Kevin stated that a representative from Services for the Blind is interested in setting up an introductory training at in helping riders with vision problems to navigate and/or use the bus system. The Low-Vision

Support Group meetings are held on the 4th Friday of the month. Mariate stated that three years ago a grant was awarded to Mountain Mobility to provide a one on one on how to ride, but Mountain Mobility had problems finding interested groups.

- **RFPs:** Mariate reported:

- Roof contract was awarded on 4/24/12.
- Council asked what the cost would be for transit for holidays; Sunday service or marketing costs. Mariate provided all of the costs to Council. Mariate stated that the budget is looking better than last year and there will be a tiny surplus. Council is looking where the surplus will be used as there is a pool of options.

- **ATS Reports:**

- Mariate stated that the ridership continues to improve (add #)
- Mariate stated that AB Tech has shown interest in the PassPort program; the preliminary numbers show that it can be in the order of the \$100,000 due to the amount of students and faculty. The information was forwarded to AB Tech and we await their answer. Ken O. stated that the decision is up to the Administration and Chief Financial Officer and President. Questions regarding the possibility of service to Enka-Candler was raised. Due to lack of funding, transit could not service Enka-Candler. Mariate will provide PassPort information to Julie and Ken.

- **Announcements:** None

- **Agenda Items for next meeting:**

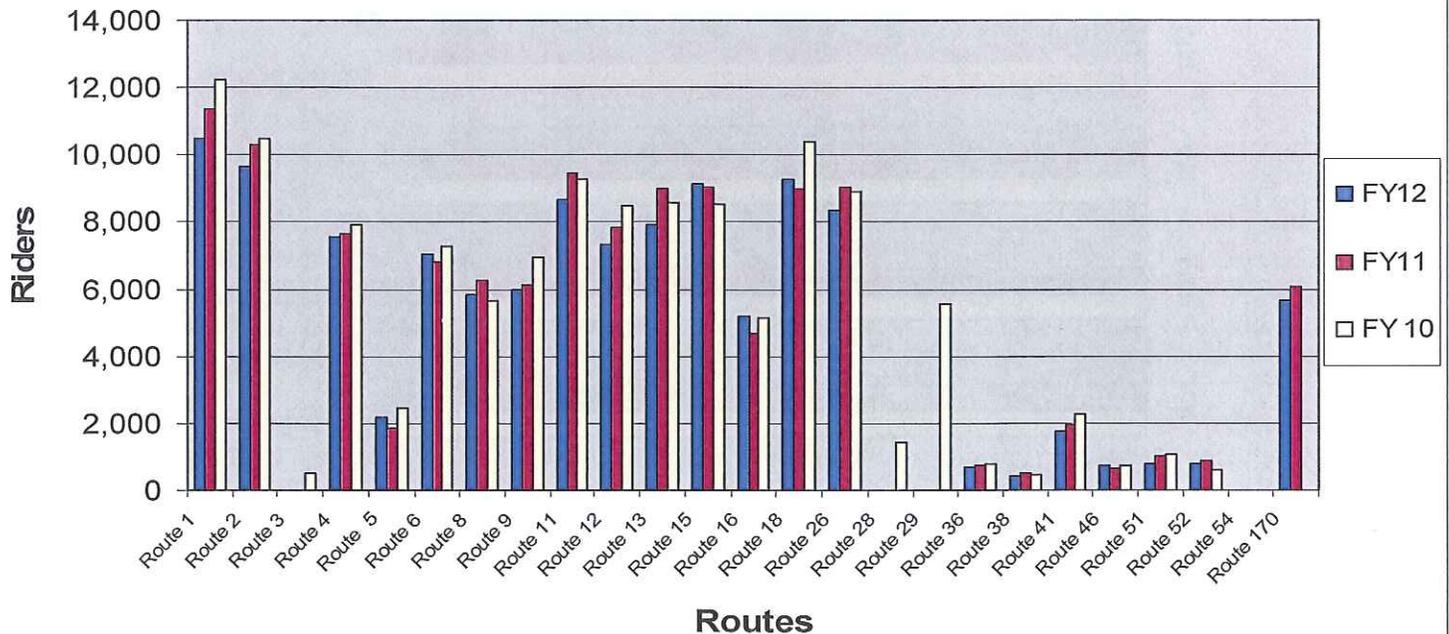
- MAHEC Update
- Date for the Transit Commission Retreat in September
- Regional Transit Operators Report of 5/1/12 on Consolidation
- Transit Commission Goals

Meeting Adjourned at 1:15 pm.

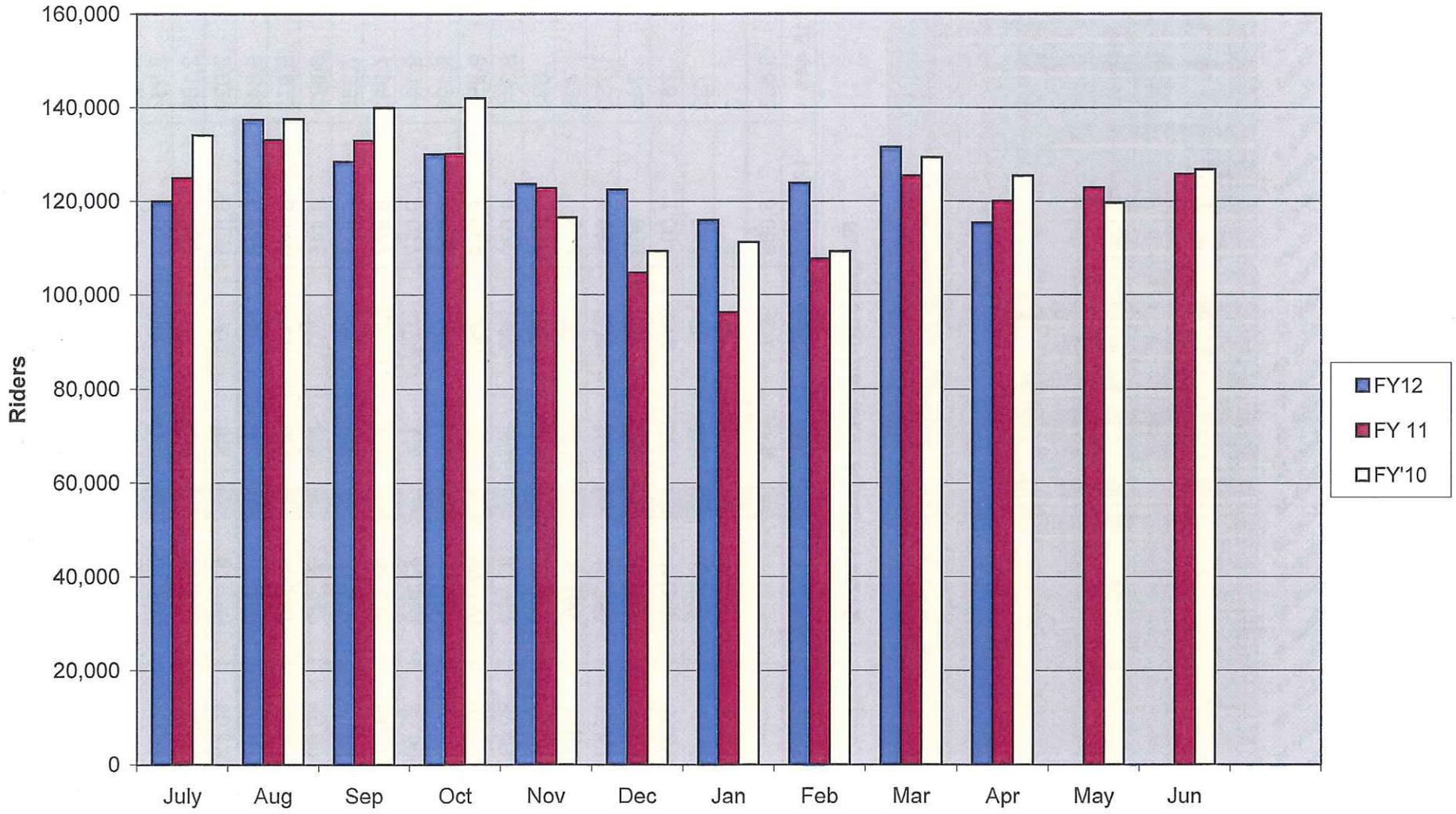
Route Ridership-April, 2012

Route	Current Month					Fiscal Year to Date			
	This Year	Last Year	Change	Delta		This Year	Last Year	Change	Delta
1	10,496	11,347	851	-7%		117,788	117,930	-142	0%
2	9,637	10,276	639	-6%		98,794	100,861	-2,067	-2%
4	7,534	7,634	100	-1%		81,504	79,333	2,171	3%
5	2,185	1,857		18%		25,603	40,675	-15,072	-37%
6	7,029	6,824	-205	3%		67,798	66,522	1,276	2%
8	5,843	6,245	402	-6%		60,702	59,898	804	1%
9	5,973	6,120	147	-2%		63,861	67,753	-3,892	-6%
11	8,673	9,445	772	-8%		97,247	95,096	2,151	2%
12	7,335	7,831	496	-6%		82,874	80,687	2,187	3%
13	7,941	8,977	1,036	-12%		88,548	84,817	3,731	4%
15	9,141	9,017	-124	1%		87,822	83,500	4,322	5%
16	5,199	4,662	-537	12%					
18	9,257	8,999	-258	3%		99,335	97,594	1,741	2%
26	8,340	9,022	682	-8%		83,311	82,230	1,081	100%
36	698	757	59	-8%		12,561	11,135	1,426	13%
38	436	514	78	-15%		6,466	7,170	-704	-10%
41	1,759	1,963	204	-10%		17,283	17,821	-538	-3%
46	745	668	-77	12%		9,132	9,059	73	1%
51	788	1,001	213	-21%		9,074	9,676	-602	-6%
52	799	877	78	-9%		6,819	6,645	174	3%
54	0	8	8	-100%		7,481	6,963	518	7%
170	5,635	6,066	431	-7%					
All Rts.	115,443	120,110	4,995	-4%		1,124,003	1,125,365	-1,362	-0.1%

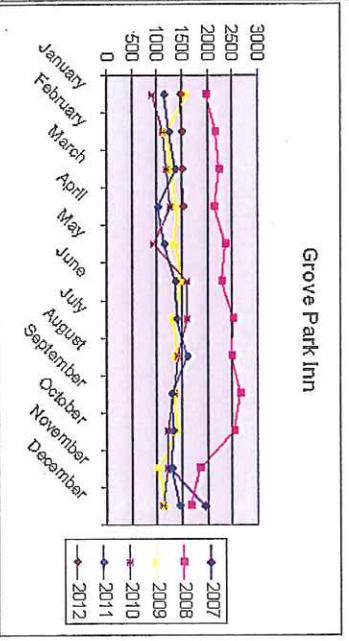
Route comparison April FY2012



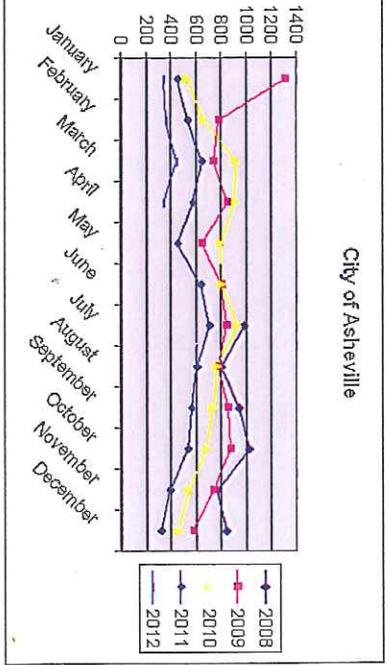
Ridership Comparison



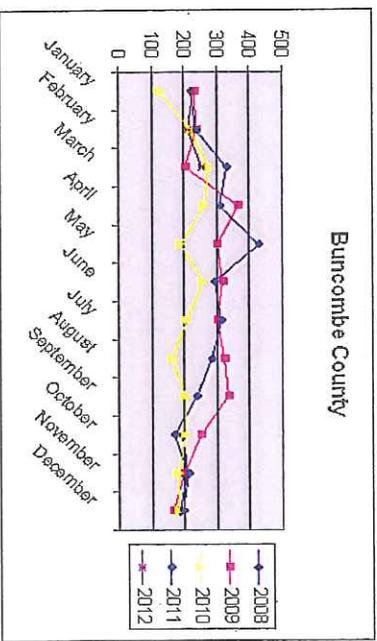
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Grove Park Inn						
January	1993	1592	913	1137	1487	
February	2156	1198	1119	1238	1493	
March	2225	1305	1205	1375	1603	
April	2128	1386	1258	1011	1532	
May	2366	1366	942	1133		
June	2298	1509	1610	1383		
July	2520	1345	1609	1404		
August	2494	1387	1432	1603		
September	2659	1376	1344	1303		
October	2552	1410	1231	1325		
November	1268	1863	1042	1217	1288	
December	1969	1676	1167	1112	1451	
Year Totals	3237	26920	16083	15002	15654	6015
Overall Totals	82911					



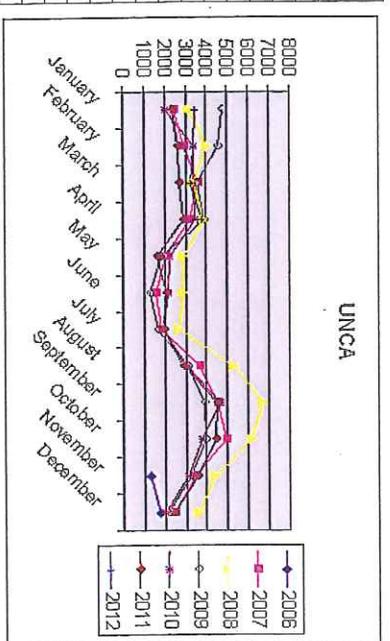
City of Asheville	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
January	1306	530	448	337	
February	779	664	536	362	
March	733	916	640	444	
April	850	906	570	342	
May	643	794	449		
June	793	804	635		
July	976	838	926	710	
August	797	774	767	604	
September	940	844	733	562	
October	1018	873	680	531	
November	770	735	545	392	
December	835	575	458	321	
Year Totals	5336	9743	8723	6398	1485
Overall Totals	30200				



Buncombe County	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
January	231	127	221	230	
February	236	222	238	213	
March	204	275	329	254	
April	366	264	311	207	
May	302	189	430		
June	319	259	294		
July	301	208	313		
August	167	283	167	236	
September	334	203	236		
October	195	251	205	169	
November	209	199	184	211	
December	187	165	183	197	
Year Totals	591	3232	2486	3232	904
Overall Totals	10445				



UNCA	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
January	2433	3140	4777	2020	2326	3398	
February	2860	4041	4562	3346	2652	3349	
March	3536	3346	3554	3335	2662	3245	
April	3163	3906	3891	3433	2888	3737	
May	2010	2870	1803	2248	1582		
June	1529	2882	1253	2129	2055		
July	1816	2692	1677	1890	1918		
August	3511	5336	3118	3013	2923		
September	4512	6755	3897	4683	4511		
October	4881	6169	3935	3774	4455		
November	1285	3452	4444	3234	3072	3572	
December	1754	2443	3649	2124	2042	2433	
Year Totals	3039	36246	49230	37825	34965	33977	13729
Overall Totals	209014						



Whole Food (Greenlife)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
January	188	100	54	139	
February	156	80	25	151	
March	138	94	77	158	
April	101	85	79	91	
May	131	131	46		
June	103	90	75	54	
July	205	82	57	88	
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	
Year Totals	1167	1396	1172	820	539
Overall Totals	4555				

