



Asheville Transit Committee DRAFT Meeting Minutes, Tuesday, January 5, 2016

Attending:

Committee Members: Calvin Allen, Adam Charnack, Bruce Emory, Ed Johnson, Valerie Macklin, Anthony Mitchell, Lauren Noto, Charlton Owens, Gary Ray, Tom Tomlin

City/ART Staff: Rose Christian, Mariate Echeverry, Martha McGlohon, Yuri Koslen, Sean Spiller

Community Members: Jim McKenzie,

3:31 PM – Opening of meeting

Adam opened the meeting.

Review agenda – Yuri added budget discussion to staff updates. Gary put forward motion to approve, seconded by Charlton. Unanimous in favor.

Approval of 1 December 2015 Minutes – Bruce Emory motioned, Ed Johnson seconded. Unanimous in favor.

Adam added points of order: Adam put forward motion to recommend MMTC reappoint Bruce to the Transit Committee. Anthony seconded. Unanimous in favor.

Adam put forward motion to recommend Lauren as Transit Committee Secretary. Tom seconded motion. Unanimous in favor.

3:50 PM – Public Comment

No public comment received.

3:52 PM - TC Experiences Riding the Bus

Lauren related that N Route has been running more on time and communicating with system operators has been much easier. Valerie related that she appreciates the effort that drivers make for her when she needs to make a connection. Tom related that N1 trip last week had a delay because of traffic. Gary related that he found old bus tickets and the system said he could use them but when he got on the bus the driver refused the tickets.

3:55 PM New Business

Jim McKenzie with the POP project: The POP project proposes a free ride day in 2016 on Asheville City Transit for anyone carrying a book. Noted that the transit system allows you to spend time driving on more productive pursuits. Would like city to consider because of potential to introduce new riders as 10 year city plan stresses. Adamant on idea of paper books instead of e-readers and other technology. Idea done before in The Netherlands, according to McKenzie. Mariate estimates costs of day from \$2000-3000, but cautions people to be judicious when going to council with ideas for reduced fare as it is a hard budget year. Adam and others suggested a nonprofit or a business sponsoring the day. If anyone wanted to work on this, they should email Yuri and Yuri would connect them with Jim.

Re-Appointment of Bruce to the Committee and Appointment of Secretary of TC accomplished in opening of meeting.

Vote/appointment of Vice Chair: The Vice Chair's primary role is to assist the chair and be at the meeting if Chair is unable to attend. Adam directed members to reach out in the next month if they are interested. Tabled vote until next meeting.

4:12 PM Unfinished Business

TC Goals Progress Report – group discussion: TC had retreat in 2014. One goal for next retreats is to have it aligned with City Council retreats (usually at end of January or beginning of February). Mariate and Yuri said it was a good idea for new members to participate in a few meetings to learn what the committee does and then have a retreat around April. 3 goals TC came up with were: expanding service, increase funding, marketing and education. Mariate will send list of past priorities out.

MMTC Update: Bruce: Last meeting - 1st Wednesday of December. Briefing of city's comments on I-26, recommended that City council approve resolution of MMTC comments. Also talked about proposed policies at upcoming city council retreat from MMTC, other committees, forwarded to City Council.

Comments from Members: Adam added an agenda item for various comment from members. Charlton reiterated that lighting for bus stops is a goal he wants to see done, as bus drivers have a hard time seeing passengers in the night if stops aren't lit well. City started a pilot program a few years back with beacons, status unknown on driver requests for reflection. Rose would appreciate lighting and welcomes conversation but is unsure about capital expense. As far as people accidentally being left at bus stops, Rose says data is unclear. Mariate says question on lighting as a service deterrent can be added to the next survey. Adam noted that Asheville App continues to give good response times – available for iPhone, android, possibly windows phones.

4:37 PM Staff Updates

Operating Budget: Mariate. Three budgets: base budget, enhanced budget, and constrained budget. Base budget FY 2016 is \$5,200,000. The proposed base budget for FY 2017 includes staffing, wages, benefits, FY 2016 plus \$300,000. In the enhanced budget, there is a proposal for a resident management team comprised of 3 managers, a grant coordinator position, and vehicles proprietary to ART for supervisors and system management. In the constrained budget, would have to reduce \$90,000 from general fund. Would have to look at how service would be cut and this process would be arduous, so service would most likely be cut in chunks from Sunday and Holiday service. These proposals were submitted to the budget office and conversations will begin. Mariate provided an outline of the budget process: budget approved in June, effective July 1, but good idea of what will or will not be moving forward by March or April. Starting next year, Buncombe and Haywood Counties will be tapping into 5307 fund, where disbursement is dictated by revenue, service miles, etcetera. The federal government is usually very late publishing the allocations and they have until September 30 – they may publish the allocation when the fiscal year has already begun. The federal government also passed a new transportation bill that will affect funding.

Guidelines and Suspension policy update: Yuri and Martha have made movement on policy, but Martha's retirement necessitates the new member to be brought up to speed before full work will be finished. Suspension policy will be guideline policy with specific issues for suspension. Yuri will send out former work on policy to new members.

Public Meeting update: 136 surveys received, 19 attendees at 6 meetings. Information in meeting packets that details surveys and methods and responses compared to past surveys. Overall, generally people considered the fare changes fair. Staff will recommend proposed fare changes to City council.

List of Projects: RFP draft for new management will be sent out to volunteers for MMTP.

Transit Master Plan (TMP) Update: Still in draft phase. No specific deadline because no contract presented by NCDOT.

ART Monthly Operating Statistics: Tremendous growth in numbers attributed to more accuracy from automatic passenger counters. Operating report to be received at a later date.

5:09 PM Future Agenda Items

Advertising policy (spring): Going to explore who can advertise on buses. Bruce and Julie Mayfield did research on policy.

Second comment period between agenda items 7 and 8.

5:10 PM Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: February 2, 2016