

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
December 5, 2018**

The Transportation Advisory Committee met on December 5, 2018 at 12:00 pm in the Mass Transit Conference Room. The following were present:

Attendees:

Ralph Price, Chairperson	John Moody
Anna Kautzman	Marc Adelman, Transportation Services Director
Judy Keesee	Brooks Jones, Mass Transit Division Director
Earl Reynolds, Deputy City Manager	Lisa Bivens, Senior Administrative Assistant

Welcome New Committee Member

Chairperson Ralph Price welcomed new member Anna Kautzman to the Committee. He commented that he looked forward to her involvement with the Committee.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

John Moody moved that the minutes of the August 21, 2018 meeting be accepted as presented and Judy Keesee identified a second for the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Bus Wrap for Black History Month

Adelman said during the August 2018 Transportation Advisory Committee meeting a sub-committee was established to develop a bus wrap to celebrate Black History similar to the one completed in Corpus Christi, Texas. The sub-committee included John Moody, Ralph Price, Alexis Ehrhardt and Earl Reynolds. Members developed a list of persons to be identified on the wrap. Adelman said that based on the recommendations received for persons to be included in the bus wrap he searched for required high-resolution images which were sent to Media Transit to develop a proof. Adelman said when he received the proof he noticed that there may be room potentially for adding a sixth image on each side of the bus so he asked the bus advertising company to complete another proof for review which included Major General Marcia Anderson and General Colin Powell. Adelman asked for input for potential revisions to the draft from the Committee. He also identified that the final proof should be submitted by the end of December to support production and installation deadline requirements.

Adelman said he sent the proof to Vice-Chairperson Alexis Ehrhardt in advance of the meeting since she was not going to be in attendance today. She suggested to alter the coloring of the lettering of the text that is used to identify the name of each person recognized on the wrap.

Bus Wrap for Black History Month (continued)

John Moody asked if there was a list of the people that the sub-committee recommended. Adelman said he did not have the list with him, however everyone identified on the wrap was on the list except for Major General Marcia and General Colin Powell, which were added based on input from Earl Reynolds. Marcia Anderson was the first African-American to receive the rank of Major General. Discussion continued.

Anna Kautzman said she likes the six images shown on each side of the bus and likes the selections especially because the wrap reflects a diverse representation of locally known to internationally recognized African Americans. She agreed that the color of the lettering needed to be changed possibly using red or white relative to the image color.

Judy Keesee moved to accept the images as recommended by the sub-committee. John Moody said they were not recommended by the sub-committee however the advisory body has the authority to make a motion based on the presentation. ***Judy Keesee made a motion to accept the images as presented to the Transportation Advisory Committee. Earl Reynolds seconded the motion for discussion.*** Earl Reynolds said if the draft wrap needs to be referred back to the sub-committee for review to provide a recommendation to the Committee there is enough time to accomplish things. Ralph Price said he did not know if different results would be reached or not but he thinks it is procedure. He added that the sub-committee was given a task that was supposed to be carried out and a recommendation made, but what we are seeing today is the first time the sub-committee has seen it. Therefore, it would be proper for it to go back to the sub-committee even if the results are the same for it to go through the channels as it was originally intended.

Earl Reynolds made a substitute motion for the bus wrap proof to go back to the sub-committee for review and to provide a recommendation to the Transportation Advisory Committee. Judy Keesee seconded the motion. John Moody questioned the timeliness of the process going back to the sub-committee. Adelman said the proof should be finalized by December for the wrap to be completed and installed by February. Earl Reynolds asked Marc Adelman if after the sub-committee makes its recommendation to the Committee could the members respond by email their decision or did there have to be a physical meeting. Adelman said to his knowledge there is nothing that would prohibit the Committee from responding by email but there is nothing in the City code that says email is an acceptable approach to approve projects for funding. Adelman said the only other two images that are high resolution that could be included on the wrap are Jackie Robinson and Edward Glee a Tuskegee Airman.

Judy Keesee asked how quickly could the sub-committee meet. Ralph Price said it would depend on Alexis Ehrhardt. Earl Reynolds said it may be necessary for a member to call in by phone. John Moody reiterated that the full Transportation Committee has the authority if timing is an issue to make a decision now by a motion if that is what they want to do. He asked how long the proof had been available to see? Adelman said the image for Marcia Anderson was just made available this week. He said it takes about a week for a proof to be updated after the images are received.

Bus Wrap for Black History Month (continued)

After discussion, there were two members in favor of the substitute motion and three opposed. Motion failed, therefore the original motion was considered to accept the images as recommended by the sub-committee. Two in favor and three opposed. Motion failed. The bus wrap approval process will go back to the sub-committee for a recommendation. A meeting for the sub-committee will be scheduled as soon as possible.

Review of Financial and Monthly Ridership Reports

Marc Adelman reviewed the monthly ridership and financial status report data with the Committee. He identified that total operating revenue is under budget by 7.5 percent or \$10,231 year-to-date. Operating expenses are also under budget by 2.6 percent or \$21,434. The transit system's local match contribution for all operations is under budget by \$896. He added that a significant item that will influence the local match for FY19 is the recent receipt of additional Federal operating assistance for FY17 since the transit system's eligibility for aid exceeded the FY17 federal allocation by \$76,548.

Averett ridership has increased significantly compared to last year by over fifty percent since the transit system altered its service schedule with the university. Averett also provides service to the Main and North campus locations using vans that generated greater ridership activity last year and the university agreed to switch run times this year to accomplish greater ridership for the transit system due to state performance funding issues. Total fixed route ridership has decreased 2.8 percent from the same period last year. In addition, the Mainline Trolley trips completed also declined for the period August through October 2018 from 399 to 233 trips despite efforts to alter the route and service schedule to improve ridership activity. Adelman said once expenses are incurred for the Black History wrap the balance of funds for advertising will be used as planned to promote the Mainline trolley service in the spring. Total reservation based service has increased two percent in spite of the cap on reservations for the Reserve A Ride and senior operations. The increase in reservation-based ridership reflects activity for the Reserve a ride operation, senior operation and the Handivan service.

Regional Bus Service Update

The planned routes for the regional bus service to expand service to Halifax and Pittsylvania counties was reviewed by the Committee. Adelman said that both counties have been extremely involved with developing the routes. Adelman mentioned that the timetable for the routes also allows enough time to meet American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements to go off route up to three-quarters of a mile to transport persons with disabilities and one quarter of a mile for deviated service for able bodied persons located along the route path. Public information meetings regarding the service will be held in January in both Halifax and Pittsylvania counties.

Adelman said it is very uncertain when we will have sufficient staff to start the regional bus service. The transit system is struggling to fill positions. Since July 2018, we have lost several part-time administrative staff and he indicated the transit system is still not fully staffed with drivers and have been challenged with a thirty percent turnover rate. Adelman said he has told the counties that this service will start when the transit system is fully staffed.

Regional Bus Service Update (continued)

Surveys results related to the regional bus service from both Halifax and Pittsylvania counties were reviewed. Of significance, survey results from both counties were very similar for both counties although far more surveys were received from Halifax County than Pittsylvania County. Discussion continued.

FY20 Operating Budget Review

Adelman reviewed the proposed FY2020 operating budget with the Committee. He pointed out that the overtime line item is increased to \$32,000 due to the employee turnover activity the transit system is currently experiencing. The proposed budget also identified an increase in salary and wages by \$34,000 to assume the Grants Administrative Specialist position from Parks and Recreation made vacant by Cindy Jones retirement. Operating revenue is recommended to be reduced by eight percent due to the decrease in fixed route ridership. The fuel expense line item is increased by fifteen percent since the current fuel expense line item is over budget by eleven percent.

Adelman added that the operating budget line item for maintenance service contracts reflects an increase of \$3,600 to complete quarterly maintenance inspections of the propane refueling station. The total operating budget is anticipated to increase at the minimum of \$93,800. If state operating levels remain the same this increase could potentially also increase the city's cost to provide service by approximately \$30,000. Judy Keese asked if any of the operating expenses were designated for the regional bus service. Marc Adelman indicated the budget does not include any expenses for the regional service and in February the city will make application for a demonstration grant to provide service for one year. If the grant is approved by the state the Transportation Advisory Committee will consider making a recommendation to City Council to appropriate Demonstration grant funding this summer. ***A motion was made by John Moody and seconded by Judy Keese to approved the FY2020 operating budget as presented. All members in attendance were in favor of the motion with Earl Reynolds abstaining from the vote.***

FY19 Project Update

Adelman identified that the bus locator system (www.dtbuslocator.com) has been operational since October 2018. When passengers call in to ask where a fixed route bus is located the transit staff promotes use of the locator system. Adelman updated the Committee on the parking lot expansion project. A Chatham company, Reynolds Clark was hired to complete the design services to increase parking for buses. Several slides showing design options for the parking lot were reviewed with the Committee.

The three new buses for the regional bus service have been delivered to Sonny Merryman, Inc. Currently, the company is installing the fareboxes and the lettering on the sides of the buses. It is anticipated that these buses will be delivered in January 2018. The bus shelter installation at Walmart is complete. The mobile column lift has been installed at the Mass Transit garage. The mechanic is using the lift every day and is very happy with it. Recently, the second-shift evening mechanic resigned his position with the city. It was identified by this summer the transit system will have 30 buses in the fleet with one mechanic employed.

FY19 Project Update (continued)

Currently, an outside maintenance contractor is being used to complete scheduled preventive maintenance activities so the first shift mechanic can concentrate on completing bus repairs. The propane refueling station installation has recently been completed. A fence and cameras are scheduled to be installed in the tank area.

FY2020 Proposed Capital Projects

Additional information was shared with the Committee concerning potential capital projects to be considered for FY2020. The following projects were proposed to be included for acquisition for next fiscal year;

- Automated phone system – estimated cost \$57,342
- Additional fuel dispenser for the propane refueling station – estimated cost \$62,295
- Install canopy and LED lamp for nighttime operations - \$17,855
- Replacement buses – four, 14 passenger buses (which includes bi-fuel conversion) – estimated cost \$360,000

The total estimated cost for all capital projects is \$497,492 and the local cost is estimated based on a four percent matching requirement or \$19,890. Adelman said the state recommended to use a four percent local match for budget purposes but added that it could possibly change. Currently, the state is evaluating options to increase the use of performance criteria as a mechanism to provide state operating funds and to also change the way funding is provided for buses based on whether useful life standards for vehicles are exceeded. Discussion continued. ***A motion was made by John Moody and seconded by Judy Keesee to approve the FY2020 capital projects as presented. All members in attendance were in favor of the motion with Earl Reynolds abstaining from the vote.***

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 pm.