

Minutes

Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority

January 11, 2010

Place: Room 204, County Administration Building
Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Others Present: Greg Donofrio-Kalamazoo Citizen; Carol Fricke-TAB; Dale Hein; Garry McCormick-MTAB; Michele McGowen-FOT; Claudette Reid-City of Portage; Bill Schomisch; Jack Urban-FOT; Judy Whitehurst-Gryphon Place; Timothy Wittmann-Perteet, Inc.; Lori Pyatt

Chairperson Teeter called the meeting to order and welcomed Public Media Network who would be filming the Annual Meeting.

1. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Paul Ecklund, Diane Kempen, Jack Mekemson, Greg Rosine, Char Sumney, Linda Teeter, Jan VanStratt, David Worthams.

Members Absent: None

2. REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made, supported and approved.

3. REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the December 14, 2009 Minutes as presented was made, supported and approved.

4. REPORT FROM NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Mr. Ecklund read the report into the record (a copy of the report will be on file with the minutes). The officers being nominated were:

Linda Teeter – Chairperson

Greg Rosine – Vice-Chairperson

Jack Mekemson -- Secretary

5. ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS FOR 2010

A motion to adopt the slate of 2010 Officers was made by Ms. Kempen and supported by Mr. Worthams.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: All Present Nays: None Absent: None

The motion carried.

The elected officers thanked the Board Members for their support.

6. APPROVE 2010 MEETING SCHEDULE

Mr. Hein stated that the second meeting of each month would be called if there was sufficient business to conduct. Answering questions from the Board, Mr. Hein said that the second meeting of the month could be in Committee of the Whole format with action items added, depending on the agenda. He added that he would look into how the County would handle December 27th, since that was the Monday following Christmas Day.

A motion to adopt the 2010 Meeting Schedule was made by Mr. Worthams, supported by Mr. Ecklund, and passed unanimously.

7. COA REPORT FROM PERTEET, INC.

Mr. Schomisch introduced the speaker from Perteet, Inc., Timothy Wittmann. The Comprehensive Operational Analysis was funded by Federal and State planning funds through KATS. The previous analysis had been completed over ten years ago. (Ms. Sumney arrived at 5:37.)

Mr. Wittmann began by saying that the presentation was a draft and further refinement was probable. He then covered the following:

- the Goals of the COA, which included short term goals which could be completed at no cost, and longer term goals which would be possible as additional funding became available;
- the time frame that was followed;
- the groups and individuals who were involved in the process;
- service needs that were identified;
- an overview of the system such as Weekly Passengers per Revenue Hour and an Average On-Time Performance of 73%, which reflected the national average;
- a map of the ridership and most frequently used stops;
- short-term and long-term proposed service changes, including creating a Transit Corridor—he included a brief explanation of each proposed change; and
- suggestions regarding bus stops and transfers.

After the presentation, Mr. Schomisch stated that the Portage Routes could be reconfigured to utilize the same two buses while covering four new routes. He reiterated that the Short-Term recommendations used existing resources, with no additional cost.

Several Board Members raised concerns that one of the proposed changes would negatively affect an existing organization (and another organization that was proposed for that area); having riders walk in hazardous weather and road conditions was also a concern because some riders traveling to that organization had a disability. Mr. Wittmann said it would be a tough call because much of the feedback conveyed that the route had too many deviations, which made the ride much longer than a drive would be. There were two other bus stops near the stop in question, and it was well known in the industry that folks were willing to walk 1/4 mile to get to a bus stop (folks were already walking from another route to the facility). It wasn't a matter of right and wrong, it was just a matter of beginning to address the concerns of all riders. One alternative would be using Metro County Connect. Another alternative was to look deviating once in the morning and once in the evening in order to help the majority of riders who used that particular stop.

Mr. Ecklund was concerned that reducing 'flag-stops' in the winter would force riders to stand at a stop which hadn't been cleared of ice or snow. Mr. Wittmann stated that looking at the placement of bus stops to insure they were accessible at all times of the year was key, yet for a system this size, it was unusual to see so many flag-stops.

Ms. Kempen expressed excitement regarding the long-term suggestion of increased frequency on routes she used; she thought this would increase ridership on those routes.

In answering Mr. Rosine's question, Mr. Wittmann said that, while on-board interviews were not held, almost all operators and many riders were consulted. What operators had heard from riders was recorded as well. The recurring themes were:

- increase on-time performance,
- later hours,
- increase frequency of busiest routes, and
- provide Sunday service.

Mr. Wittmann indicated that comments made during Transit Talk sessions were reviewed. Discussion ensued regarding Route 26. He also clarified:

- the long-term possibility was that Vicksburg/Schoolcraft could have two morning trips inbound and two outbound trips in the afternoon.
- “Stop Level Ridership” numbers reported ridership at every bus stop on a given day as opposed to total ridership per day.

Ms. Sumney suggested looking at stops in Galesburg and Augusta.

Mr. Schomisch indicated that that an analysis of bus stop locations would occur after the COA. If flag-stops were eliminated, a review of all bus stops would be required. Brief discussions ensued regarding:

- transportation to the Veterans' Hospital
- regionalized service,
- Park-and-Ride connections (this had worked well in Lansing and Seattle; in the future, this could be combined with the Vicksburg/Richland express rides), and
- how changes to the State Gas Tax Revenues could affect system improvements.

Mr. Schomisch acknowledged that actual improvement may not happen until Fall '10, as route changes normally occurred in the fall. The COA was just a first step in a long process. He added that the final report's long-term recommendations would include cost projections.

Mr. Schomisch said that when the demand/response services report was completed, the sub-contractor could present that report to the Board. Ms. Teeter stated that would be welcomed. She added that the COA was funded by the TAB, not the KCTA, and she invited audience members to make comments.

Portage Councilwoman, Claudette Reid, stated she was excited to see changes in the Portage Routes. She asked how the ADA routes would be affected by the future changes, and how people could see the COA Report and give feedback. She also suggested that the sooner the changes were advertised the better, especially for students (many of whom build their September class schedules around transit availability).

To answer Ms. Reid, Mr. Schomisch indicated that holes in the ADA service area were prohibited, so Metro Van would be handled considering the current service areas. Comments could be made at kmetro.com, and the draft COA presentation could be posted to Metro's website.

Ms. Michele McGowen from Friends of Transit commented that increased frequencies and transfer changes would be very helpful for riders and it was obvious that customer feedback was listened to. She added that it would be nice to see a proposed vs. current system map

side by side. She added her support for looking further into the proposed changes to the deviation mentioned previously.

Ms. Teeter thanked Mr. Schomisch and the TAB for allowing the KCTA to hold the presentation.

8. UPDATE ON CONSULTANT RFP

Mr. Hein stated that clarification was needed from the consultants before a recommendation could be brought forth on January 25th.

9. UPDATE ON P.A. 196

Ms. Teeter stated that the KCTA had been working with the local delegation and legal counsel on this issue. Mr. Hein said it would have to be determined that any changes would not negatively affect other authorities in the state. Ms. Teeter asked Mr. Hein to bring another update on January 25th.

10. PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2009

Mr. Hein summarized the annual report (a copy will be on file with the minutes). The major accomplishments in 2009 included:

- securing funding for the system;
- increased public awareness – some of the increases in ridership (Care –A-Van +6%; Metro Van +9%; Community Service Van +35%) could be attributed to the outreach efforts;
- seeking input from area individuals and organizations;
- merging of Care-A-Van and Metro Van into Metro County Connect;
- a new vendor was awarded the demand/response service contract.

Ms. Teeter stated that the Annual report would be presented to the following:

- County Board of Commissioners-February 2nd, 7pm
- Kalamazoo City Commission-Feb 15th, 7pm
- Portage City Council-Feb 23rd, 7:30pm

A motion to approve the 2009 Annual Report was made by Mr. Worthams and supported by Mr. Mekemson.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: All Present Nays: None Absent: None

The motion carried.

Ms. Teeter stated the Annual Report would be taken to area townships and asked the Board to contact Mr. Hein to help make the presentations.

11. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Hein stated that a request had been received from the Dayton, Ohio authority for a copy of the RFP for survey work. Mr. Hein had also been in contact with a local agency regarding transit services for an upcoming Project Connect; he would report further at the next meeting.

Ms. Teeter stated a communication had been received regarding a legal issue. The paperwork had been forwarded to the County Legal Counsel, Thom Canny who would respond on behalf of the KCTA, since the KCTA's liability insurance was through the County.

12. TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR REPORT

Mr. Schomisch summarized the report:

- The 4% line-haul ridership decline was not a surprise due to lower gas prices; nationwide the industry was seeing an over 6% reduction in ridership.
- Metro Transit's 2010 budget had been approved by the City.
- Holly Jolly Trolley ridership increased 15% over the previous holiday season; it was financed by Downtown Kalamazoo, Inc.

13. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Executive – The committee had met to review the consultant proposals and would meet again in January.
- B. Budget Review – The next meeting would occur February 12th to look at the audited year end numbers.
- C. Public Transit/Human Services – The first meeting of the Oversight Committee would occur January 21st at Metro.

14. OLD BUSINESS

There was nothing to report.

15. NEW BUSINESS

There was nothing to report.

16. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

There was nothing to report.

17. CITIZENS' TIME

There were no comments made.

18. MEMBERS' TIME

- Ms. VanStratt asked Mr. Schomisch about a billing surcharge. Mr. Schomisch said that the 15% Metro Van administrative fee surcharge had been in place for as long as he could remember to address the issue of non-payment. It encouraged organizations to pay up front. It was now added to the Care-A-Van program as well. He said he could call Ms. VanStratt to discuss further.
- Ms. Sumney reported that her tardiness was due to her automobile getting stuck on the ice.
- Ms. Kempen was glad Ms. Sumney arrived safely.
- Mr. Mekemson thanked the Board for their confidence in him to serve as Secretary for another year and thanked Mr. Hein for preparing the Annual Report.
- Ms. Teeter also thanked the Board for re-electing her to the Board Chair position. She also thanked Mr. Hein and Mr. Schomisch for their work with the KCTA.

19. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7pm.

KCTA Chairperson

KCTA Secretary