

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TAAC COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 3, 2019

Committee Members Present: Acting Chair David Fenley, Christopher Bates, Darrell Paulsen, Kari Sheldon, John Clark, Heidi Myhre, Patty Thorsen, Margot Imdieke Cross and Richard Rowan.

Committee Members Absent: None.

Committee Members Excused: Sam Jasmine, Ken Rodgers and Diane Graham-Raff.

Council Staff Present: Metropolitan Council Member Chai Lee, Yumi Nagaoka, Adam Harrington, Christine Kuennen, Jan Dietrich, Sara Maaske, Andy Streasick and Alison Coleman.

Public Present: Claudia Fuglie and Lee Ohnesorge

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Fenley called the regular meeting of the Council's TAAC Committee to order at 12:32 p.m. on Wednesday, April 3, 2019.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Bates, seconded by Sheldon to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Bates, seconded by Thorsen to approve the minutes of the March 6, 2019 regular meeting of the TAAC Committee. **Motion carried.**

The new Metropolitan Council Member Chai Lee introduced himself to the TAAC Committee. I come from a nonprofit background and local government background. I used to work for Mayor Chris Coleman in the communications office. From there I went to work for a small nonprofit on the edge of the city called Nexis Community Partners. There is a Civil Engagement Institute. We have a leadership institute and that is the program I help run. We train people of color who want to get on government boards and commissions on all levels of government from the local to the regional including Met Council bodies to state level boards and commissions. That is a great passion of mine to help diversify the decision-making bodies. It interfaces with my new assignment on the Met Council because one of the things that we are responsible for as Met Council members is to help recruit folks for our different boards and commissions too.

Yumi Nagaoka introduced herself as the new Metro Transit liaison to the TAAC committee. I have been with Metro Transit for over six years. Working in the Customer Relations department. I will be your liaison for the next six months while my partner is on assignment. I am Doug's replacement.

BUSINESS & INFORMATION

1. Metro Mobility Update

Andy Streasick, Customer Service Manager at Metro Mobility, spoke to the TAAC Committee. Government Affairs staff was not able to be here today. I asked them for some information and then compiled some notes. I will go over relevant goings on at the capitol. The House kicked out their omnibus bill yesterday. It is a 900-page document. Relevant to Metro Mobility. The expansion as it would currently move forward based on just the House bill includes only Lakeville. We had talked about that in committee. It had expanded to Maple Plain, Forest Lake, Columbus and Ramsey. In the House language it is back down to just Lakeville, which is how it started. The Senate bill is not expected out until next week.

Secondly, the separation of funding strings between Metro Mobility and fixed route is also in the House bill and moving forward that way. The House bill surprises some folks by being even more robust when it came to the

transit funding than the Governor's proposals. The Senate is trying to hold to a zero increase model. The gulf between the House and the Senate is substantial and as a result, Government Affairs assures me that it would be silly to assume at this point that anything passes. With the kind of gulf that they are expecting, between the two houses it is a wild card. The House bill, over two years, was talking about a little over \$7 billion. Largely funded on a gas tax of an additional 20 cents.

The House has explicitly thrown that out as an option. The bill that came out surpasses the Governor's budget with regard to transit. It is the Senate and the House where the gulf is expected to exist. Given that the Senate has not been interested in any kind of an increase. They have explicitly said that they are opposing the gas tax which is the central hub to the funding.

From an advocacy perspective. Talking to legislators, particularly in the Senate, about the importance of modernizing infrastructure, not just for bus and rail. I-94 got into the news about some potholes and the road condition. All of that carries a price tag. Bringing that forward is the importance of transportation in a growing metropolitan region and the need to fund that.

Myhre said she sat in on the Transportation Committee meeting. The gas tax can only be used for roads and bridges.

Streasick said it is important to point out that the Governor's budget is not a piece of legislation. There aren't a ton of specifics there. But certainly, with the numbers the Governor has been using, the idea is to take a comprehensive look at transportation as a whole and adequately fund Metro Mobility for its expected current growth. And also fund Metro Transit for growth without having to play the two entities against each other by putting it into a single pot.

With the Metro Mobility model, specifically the goal has been to adequately fund it so that Met Mo is sustainable and able to handle its current growth over the next couple of years without having to negatively impact other regional transportation options.

Clark said what are the odds that paratransit will be separated out from other transportation funding?

Streasick said what I am hearing is given the divided nature of our legislature, it would be tough to put money for sure on anything getting done or laying odds. The reality is that with the House and Senate being controlled by different parties, where Minnesota is in a situation that is unique in the country. We are the only state in the country that is facing that now. As contentious as transportation and Health and Human Services seem to be right now, wait until they try to hammer out a budget bill. It is not a politically controversial motion to have Metro Mobility and Metro Transit separated out for their transportation funding sources. But we would have a hard time laying odds on what the likely hood is on anything that is going to pass. Just given the level of the chasm that exists between the two houses at this point.

Clark said what strategy do you recommend that this committee or us individually take with regard to this? What levels of power are there?

Streasick said your power likely lays at the constituent level. Where people are going to their House representatives and talking about the importance of getting some stuff done. Both in terms of funding for transit, transportation and also for separating out Metro Mobility from funding streams.

Chair Fenley said so there are three things. There is expansion to Lakeville for Metro Mobility. There is the policy change which seems like it is more politically feasible that separates out Metro Mobility, which we talked about in length last month. There is also the budget. That is where the political feasibility lays. There are three things that are going on.

Myhre said if we do separate Metro Mobility from Metro Transit funding, are we rewriting how we do Metro Mobility? Or do we still have to follow certain rules and regulations?

Chair Fenley said as far as I know, the Metro Mobility service remains the same. They are currently very efficient and very accountable. So that any money that is given to Metro Mobility would fit into that same level of efficiency and accountability. What the policy change does is it separates out Metro Mobility from the overall transportation funding from the Metropolitan Council, so it can be funded on its own. The service itself will not change. The service might even get better if it is set up to get more direct funding. Rather than getting lumped together with other parts of transit. In my opinion, essentially what this has the potential to do is that rather than getting lumped in with a bunch of transit options that could be viewed as not politically desirable. Metro Mobility

is now taken out of that package. And now money can be devoted directly to Metro Mobility and not be the baby that is thrown out with the bath water.

Metropolitan Council member Lee said I wanted to tack on to the other question about what we can do talk to the legislators. In my three weeks as councilmember. The two persons that are responsible for our legislative relations between the Met Council and the legislature. The first person is our Chair. The second person is our official lobbyist. Those two persons will be speaking with our legislators on behalf of this body and the whole Council. Each of us could decide in our personal and professional capacities that we can also talk to our legislators directly. Whether that is where we live depending on what the other issues we are interested in.

As a Met Council member on this body, the discussions we have here and the recommendations and advice that you all have in this body, I will be bringing back to the larger Council and the way I speak on behalf of this body and also the issues that come up in relation to the issues we talk about here. There are a lot of ways that us talking about and debating issues here will bubble up to special channels at the legislature.

2. Service Development, Route Planning

Adam Harrington, Director of Service Development at Metro Transit, spoke to the TAAC Committee. Our role is to plan the routes and schedules that fixed route service operates for Metro Transit and the Council Contracted Service. We operate across over 100 cities in the seven-county metro area. But we do not operate our service in the Minnesota valley area which is south of the Minnesota River or in the Southwest Transit area, which is Eden Prairie and Chanhassen or Maple Grove and Plymouth. We are everywhere else. We carry about 90 percent of the rides in the region. What I am here to describe is how we plan our service and what some of our main principles are and how we do that.

This first slide is three images that represent various ways of how we look at the metro area and how we plan our routes from the demographics on the ground and the planning of the future whether it be a bus route or a BRT or LRT line. We carry 260,000 rides a day on all of our services. The largest carriers are our bus routes. Then the Green Line and Blue Line light rail services. What is important for service development is that it is across 130 bus routes, two light rail lines and one commuter rail line. In order to deliver that service, we actually have to have 1,500 bus operators to do that.

We have to figure out how to allocate that work across all of those schedules. So one bus route that operates from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. might have 80 to 150 trips on it. We have to figure out how many bus operators it takes to go from beginning to end and back and forth all day long. And then break that down into work assignments for each bus operator. Those are called runs. You might hear there is a bus operator on a particular run. That is the work assignment that that person has all day long. Or if they are part time or on the weekend. That is what they do.

Service development. We look at how we can adjust our scheduled service and plan new service. We implement it on a quarterly basis. We have a contract with our bus operators' union that drives a quarterly schedule, which we can do that. The reason we have a quarterly schedule is so that we can adjust the level of service that we have. It gives the operators the opportunity to choose a different type of work. They might like a different location. It gives us an opportunity to make some really fine adjustments on our service. Maybe the travel time in the schedule wasn't quite right between point A and point B. Or maybe it is a deviation on a route. So, there is a wide variety of things that we do in terms of service development on our fixed route service across all of the cities that we communicate with.

In order to do all these things, we want to make sure all the stakeholders and customers are informed, and we can make more decisions. So we get a lot of information from our customers but we also spend a lot of time. And with our partner agencies whether it be a city, county or MnDOT to make sure we have a coordinated implementation of what those services might be.

One of the important pieces to how we manage our service is based on performance. How many rides do we carry on any given trip or any given route? The slide that is on the screen right now has a map that shows the seven-county metro area. It starts in the middle with a dark blue and gets lighter as you get away from the downtowns of Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Those are defined transit market areas. Based upon population, employment density is on the ground today and auto ownership really drives how ridership would develop around the bus route. So the strongest markets are where there is the highest density and lowest auto ownership. That is where we focus our efforts on.

We have a number of different types of bus routes that we categorize. There are locals that operate very frequently and carry a lot of people. The main routes that you may have heard of like the Route 5, Route 10 or Route 18 in Minneapolis or the Route 64 in Saint Paul. These are the heavy line haul services and we have a certain expectation for how they perform.

In the Transportation Policy Plan, we have minimum threshold of how many rides each one carries on for every hour it is on the street. So we have local bus routes, suburban local bus routes, arterial BRT, Highway BRT, LRT and commuter rail. There are minimums for each one of these. So if a route over the course of a quarter or half a year, we watch that ridership trend, get the data in from our fareboxes and our automated passenger counters that are on every bus. Every time someone gets on or off the bus, the person breaks a laser beam and that counts that person getting on or off the bus. We collect that information by bus stops, so we know where it happens. We don't know who it is, but we know where it happens. That helps us plan that service. Then we can say how does it compare that to our ridership standards? From there we begin to make adjustments on what should be added. It gives us an opportunity to improve service or if there is service we have had for a really long time and it does not live up to the standard, we might cut it back.

So there is the push and pull between ridership drives and how we manage our service. In addition to what I described earlier, which is what is the real time experience of what it takes to drive the bus route itself, from Point A to Point B and the operations end of it? Those two things are important measures for us in Service Development.

Some of the things that are really important for what drives transit ridership. What makes it an attractive option is is it convenient for a regular trip that happens most days of the week? Is the service frequent? Is it direct? We get a lot of requests for special deviations of routes to pick up a couple of people. That may be important, but it is a time delay because we know time is important as well. That helps us with the efficiency of a bus route. Travel time competitive with the cost comparison for our customers. Fixed route isn't designed to be a service for everyone, for everywhere and for every possible trip. Finding the highest volume origins/destinations and trying to match those up.

The other piece of this for this audience, since we just talked about Metro Mobility, is where we operate fixed route service. Metro Mobility needs to provide that service in that same community where we operate. There is a relationship there. Typically, that doesn't change too much. It rarely changes because of those cities around the edge of the metro area, the transit system. If there is a change to that service on Metro Transit, then we will be coordinated with Metro Mobility to say: "Here is where we are at. Here is the performance, it is either good or stable. We need to make a change." We do that coordination.

Chair Fenley said I was just waiting for a lead in on why you are here. We were having a discussion about whether expansion or contraction based on the Governor's policy change, of the ADA zone based on the Governor's policy and this Lakeville change that was in. That is why we asked you here. We were discussing how do they decide when new routes are added or routes are expanded. We are interested in that relationship. Clearly folks with disabilities ride regular route and light rail as well. Metro Mobility tends to take up a lot of this committee's time. We wanted to understand that relationship and how, when you make your decisions, what is the impact with Metro Mobility? That is why you are here. For some context and clarification.

Councilmember Lee said do we reroute routes based on workforce areas in the flow of workforce demand? For example, a couple of blocks on the east side of St. Paul, have a lot of jobs and people are taking the bus there. Then if those factories die out or those businesses move and they spring up somewhere else. Do the bus routes get rerouted so the workforce can go to the new place?

Harrington said it really depends on the situation. If it is a move that has gone from one position to a new position away from the route, maybe that is something we can do. But it depends on how many people are riding. One of the things that we do with any major employer is for them to tell us where the employees are coming from, zip code, street intersection, home address with no names. So that we can understand what is the feasibility of understanding bus route service to that location? Whether that is on the east side of St. Paul or a suburban call center.

For example, Wells Fargo has a call center up in Shoreview. A lot of people from the central cities wanted to get up there. We do provide service. I think we end up carrying about 30 people a day up to that location. But that isn't the same case everywhere. It is a case by case basis. We were absolutely happy to turn into something whether it is a new employer or a move of an existing employer we will often get. It can be a challenge, however, if you have an employer that is within Minneapolis and St. Paul, where there is very good

bus service. Then they decide they are going to move to Brooklyn Park. That is a little bit more difficult for us because you are either asking your employees to do a different commute or you are asking to get new employees. When that comes, we are trying to preserve both. We are always willing to look into it. We can keep serving jobs where they are most needed.

Myhre asked how do they decide on the changes?

Harrington said there are two answers to that question. How do we decide what we want to change? Which is a little bit about what I was talking about. It depends on ridership. Are there changes up or down? Is it stable? The other is when and how do we communicate? I am going to get to that towards the end. That is the culmination with everything we do is communicating with the customer. That happens at the front end where a company says they are going to move and can we help them. We are implementing the schedule in four weeks, that is the back end. And it is already scheduled. I will talk about the timeline of how those things come together.

Bates said I live in Excelsior. We only have express service to Minnetonka. How is the light rail going to impact your decision making?

Harrington said we have loosely structured plans at this point until we get closer towards implementation. The plans that have bus routes connecting into those Minnetonka stations. The Hopkins station and the United Health Care station. There are already plans that are integrated. I can't off the top of my head explain about Excelsior. What that looks like. We do have a plan for connecting bus service at all of these stations. And that when we get to about 18 months or two years out, from when it is actually going to be implemented, we are going to come back out to the public and say: "Here's what we got. Tell us if it still makes sense. Can we make changes? Here's how much it is going to cost." Some of these things are not fully funded. The County will probably help with the funding. You plan this to begin with. We have routes in the plan. When we get towards that end, we will be coming back out to the public and say: "Here's what we have to work with. Here is what we have proposed doing. What do you think?"

Bates said a shuttle would make sense in the Minnetonka community. At the Minnetonka station.

Harrington said I have a graphic on the screen right now. It is a map of the metro area with the transit market areas again. There are a bunch of circles on the screen. They represent how many boardings there are at any single bus stop. There is a strong relationship between the density of development and auto ownership and what the propensity is for people to ride transit. So the point of this is to say: "We think we got it pretty right on defining these areas." Because the strongest ridership is in the high-density area. There is a synergy there. And then the question is if you had a bus route that ran in this other location. Would you be able to do the same thing if you operated it as frequently as some of these routes in the city?

The answer is it depends. Because if it is some new development on the edge of the density area. Maybe it is Richfield, Bloomington, Golden Valley, Maplewood and you can add density along the way. It starts to build momentum. But if you add a new development that is five miles off from anything, it is very difficult to say if I put a route that ran there every 10 minutes, it may not do very well. There is a tension between the continuity of the density of the development that is on the street where people live and where people work and the frequency of serving it.

Chair Fenley said what denotes a transit market area?

Harrington said a transit market area. We divided the region up with market areas. There are thresholds of the density development. Employment population, auto ownership, intersection density. Based on what is on the ground today. By census we have divided these up throughout the region. What it represents is what is on the ground today. It is not a future look. It is not a forecast. That helps us decide how we plan service.

The next slide is about planning service in a cycle. The way we work in service development. We have four departments. One is Data Collection, Data Analysis, Route Planning and Scheduling. It goes in a cycle. We start with evaluating any proposal with existing route. Using the data that we have. How many boardings there are. How much does it cost? What kind of information have we got from Customer Relations? We get thousands of comments and contacts from Customer Relations. People who call 612-373-3333. If it is a route related or schedule related comment, we will get it. We include that in our consideration for how we evaluate our service.

We hear from our bus operators. We have a system called Operator Conditions Report. They submit their comments to us electronically or in person at the bus garage. "I was on this route the other day and I didn't have time between point A and point B. If I only had one more minute, it would be better. Or I picked up a lot of people at this stop the other day. I think it might need more service." Whatever the comments are, we do take them into consideration.

Then the last part of it is we do stakeholder involvement. If we are planning something new. For example, we did the Green Line Extension. We reach out to those communities and asking people for their feedback. So we can move toward something that we can afford to implement. That reflects some of the values of the communities. A couple of examples of that now are C-Line, which is Penn Avenue and North Minneapolis up to Brooklyn Center. That will be our new BRT that is opening on June 8. This will be great because there will be stations, if anyone is familiar with the A-Line on Snelling Avenue in St. Paul stations. They are heated, lit, cameras, shelter, schedule information, prepaid fare boarding. There are buses that have wide doors. The buses kneel to the platforms. The platform is a little bit higher. It is a nine-inch curb instead of a six-inch curb so that gap between where the edge of the bus is less. The curb is much closer. It is easier to use.

We are going to be doing that on Penn Avenue on June 8. We have a very detailed public involvement process. We are in the same process now for Emerson, Fremont and Chicago Avenues for the future D-Line. Those are just examples of what we do for projects that we get stakeholder input and community engagement. Then we come back and do the planned development. Look at it and say: "This is what we heard. Here is what we think we can do." Then we put it to the Council's equity lens and see if it makes sense. See if we are missing something. What should we go back on?

If it is a major route change, meaning major to us is any change greater than 25 percent of the service hours on a route or routes. Then we will do a Title VI analysis. Title VI is a federal law that requires equity between not having disproportionate impact between minority low income groups and surrounding areas. We would do a Title VI analysis. Once we have learned that it is in compliance, we develop a schedule. Move toward implementation and evaluate it. Start all over again.

So that is the cycle. I talked a little bit about Title VI. This is a complicated map I have on the screen. It is a federal law that requires us to not have disparate impact on projects to minority and low-income areas. Now I have a map that shows the geographic areas of the Twin Cities. These that represent areas of concentrated poverty with a 50 percent plus of minority populations. This is the Met Council definition. It is another lens we will look through to ensure that we are considering all aspects of our service.

Operator picks. The term pick reflects the operator picking or choosing their work. Some transit properties call it the choice because it is the operator choice. We call it the pick. They are quarterly. Those dates change every year with the calendar. So we typically have a choice in December. That is one of our longer periods of time. Then March that goes to June. June through August. Then August through December again.

Some of the reasons that we pick these dates. One of the main reasons is school being in session and out of session. Both high schools and elementary schools as well as college. Because we provide extra service on those routes because we have students riding our service. In addition to that we have people who are commuting on a regular basis if they have children in school. Once they are out of school it is vacation time. There is low ridership in the summer, typically.

At the University of Minnesota, we provide extra service to Minneapolis Public Schools, St. Paul, Johnson High School, and a number of colleges we provide a high level of service. Take that out with the June choice, June pick, and then we put it back in in August. August to December is the longest duration. That is a stable time for our ridership pattern. Culturally most people are going back to work. They are getting back to school. But they reestablish patterns and last through December. Then we typically make an adjustment then. So we have another opportunity. December pick is mostly about operations and bus operators having a choice.

Equity is part of the Met Council's Thrive Policy Plan to avoid discrimination of people with disabilities as well as by race by ethnically or by gender.

As it relates to bus stop accessibility, the problem we have is that in the 131 cities that we serve, there is probably five that have sidewalks. We have 12,000 bus stops. Of the 12,000 bus stops, it is probably not every one of them. I don't know if even half of them have accessible pads where you can actually get off the bus in a wheelchair and land on a concrete pad. Even if we did, you might be on that pad surrounded by grass because there is no sidewalk.

Part of the challenge we have is how do we work with those cities to have them install sidewalks or help us put bus stops at corners where there is an actual ramp down to the pavement where you can get to where you need to go in a safe place. The example for me that comes to the top of my head is Minnetonka. There is a bus stop on Highway 5. I ask myself why we still serve it because who would use it? It is a difficult stop to get to. It does provide some accessibility. So it is important to the couple of people who do use it. But it is not really accessible to everyone. It isn't necessarily the best location. But there are a lot of bus stops throughout the region that don't have sidewalks. So it is something we think about. Especially in the urban area where we are looking at which stop to choose or which block to stop on.

In the Minneapolis St. Paul area. Which block do we stop on? What part of that block? Certainly, in the core cities we would have a concrete pad there connecting to the sidewalk. The challenge we have is working with all the other cities and the thousands of bus stops that don't have concrete pads. I fully acknowledge that that problem exists. We are just limited on what we can do about it.

Indieke Cross said you have concrete pads where you deploy possibly your lift if I wanted to get off, but you may not have a curb ramp so that I would be stranded on this concrete pad?

Harrington said you wouldn't be stranded on the concrete pad. You would be stranded at that location on the street. It would certainly be ADA accessible pavement but then you would be on the street.

Chair Fenley said so there are bus stops that are only a bus stop because they are a pole in the dirt. There is nothing else. People are standing in the street waiting for the bus.

Harrington said February was bad. Regardless of your mobile situation. Because the snow removal couldn't keep up with the snow. You don't have property owners who are going to do the snow removal. If the people who are going to fine them for not doing the snow removal can't get to them to give them a ticket because they didn't remove the snow, you get into a cumulative effect. From a Metro Transit standpoint, there is a lot we have learned from a maintenance standpoint on how we can better manage the snow removal.

Myhre said who owns the bus stop? When you need to file a complaint, who do you go to?

Harrington said the failsafe person is the property owner. If you are in any given city you can dial 311 and complain about it. If you are in Minneapolis or St. Paul, you can. It depends on who that property owner is.

Clark said when you look at equity, who services persons with disabilities?

Harrington said the clearest way, the simplified way in my opinion, it has to be evaluated based on where people live. So if there is a neighborhood that is predominately occupied residentially by a minority group, whatever that group is. We will look at it, say are they as equally served as someone else? If not, are they served as good as they want to be served? Or as good as they ever could be served. It is how do they compare to those communities that aren't dominated by a minority group. So we are looking at balance. Is there unreasonable balance? So in the case of where the areas of concentrated poverty are which is poverty of minority groups.

The Council has identified new areas in Minneapolis and the east side of Saint Paul. So the question you ask is are there fewer services here or have they been neglected? Have they not been payed attention to? In favor of some suburb that is not a minority area. My answer is no. Because we provide the highest level of bus service to those core urban areas where people ride. They are one in the same in most cases. Our goal is to make sure we are providing a service. Now we might get ourselves in a pickle if we didn't serve an area of concentrated poverty with the same level of service somewhere else because people weren't riding it. Then there is a different question. We still have to provide it even if they aren't riding it. We are not in that situation. We don't have to worry about it.

Chair Fenley said what John is trying to get at is like other minority groups, people with disabilities tend to have higher rates of poverty. Unlike other minority groups, the disability community can be joined by anybody at any time. It probably could be joined by everybody at one time in their lives. Counting disability groups like counting other minority groups is a lot harder.

Clark said the question becomes one of reasonable accommodation. That is the benchmark of equity. How can you judge whether people with disabilities have equal access compared with other populations?

Harrington said I don't know if you can do that on a regional level. It is much easier to do that at a location specific level. For example, on Golden Valley Road in Golden Valley, we know that there is a stop that is

particular high ramp usage on our buses. So we are sensitive to that. But unless there is a specific location that we know about, it is very difficult for us to accommodate. So I say it is difficult to use these areas of concentrated poverty as a be all catch all because it is not. People don't just stay in their box. They travel around. Even if you are going to another point on this map, let's say Minnetonka, you still need the service. So how do we provide that balance? That is the struggle.

Indieke Cross said in regard to the disability community. Granted there are some high-density areas where individuals under the age of 65 reside who have disabilities. Some folks congregate in high density areas. Our biggest disability population is the senior population. If you are looking at aging. If you are 65 and over. Over 50 percent of that population has a disability as defined by law. So you are talking about half of the population. Do you have it mapped out? I know that there are also high-density areas for seniors. Which might be a little bit easier to identify. There might be more common a place. Do you have that information identified? Is that taken into consideration when you are looking at your service plans?

Harrington said yes. We have the information of high density areas with the senior populations. Yes we take it into consideration. And no, they are not regular users of fixed route transit. So it presents a challenge for us in providing a bus route seven days a week or five days a week at a location where someone may only use it one day a week or two days a week. Many of these places have vans that are brought around. Some don't. I would defer to Metro Mobility some of those cases. To say: "This is an accommodation for you." but we do account for it. But I can't tell you that it is used in the same way because the other transportation solutions might work better.

Dietrich asked about snow removal.

Harrington said if you call Metro Transit regarding not being able to get to the bus because of snow, they will do what they can to try and clear a stop with snow. Our main priority is to clear bus stops that have bus shelters on them because the reason there is a bus shelter is because more people use it. It is a higher valued stop. We are not obligated to clear any other stop in the system. We would like to, but it is just simply a matter of logistics and cost. There are others like city, county and private owners. If you call you might be able to help facilitate that stop getting cleared. It is a state law that property owners clear their sidewalks.

Chair Fenley said it is a question of enforcement. I don't know if the Met Council is going to enforce state law on other municipalities' properties.

Harrington said I would start with calling the city. If you would like to call 311, I would recommend it.

Back to the topic of the presentation.

Harrington said the next slide illustrates the number of steps that we have. Service Development put a schedule on the street because we have 1,500 bus operators. Because it is a complicated system. We schedule everything together. It all takes time. Everything from data collection down to pick production. Service development and implementation. It is about six months from beginning to end. To integrate something.

Customer communication. How do we communicate with our customers? In Metro Transit we have our standards. Which is Online Connect, the electronic newsletter that you get sent to you automatically. Automatic rider alerts you can have sent to you automatically. Depending on which route you want to subscribe for. Both of those things are distributed on the buses on paper. We post our bus stop signs as well. We do a lot of community engagement on the front end of a larger scale change. We have our website. We do social media campaigns. Those are the main venues we use. When we need to we will have staff go on the street at bus stops. Get on buses and make announcements of the changes that may be happening.

Chair Fenley said the Operator Conditions Report. I am very curious about leave behinds. If the accessible seating is taken and users of a mobility device cannot get on the bus, they are left there. Is that something that can and should maybe live in the Operator Conditions Report?

Harrington said no, that is too slow. It lives in the Transit Control Center Report. So the bus operator should call at that moment the Transit Control Center and say: "I can't pick another person up because we are full. Can you send another bus?" That is an Operations Department issue. The Transit Control Center should send another vehicle. Everyone in Operations should be made aware of it. So it is a question of how do we solve this problem right now? If not, how do we solve it? How do we prevent this situation in the future?

Chair Fenley said we want the person picked up as soon as possible. Secondly, we want that to be a data point somewhere. You need more accessible spots on this route.

Imdieke Cross said could we have someone from Operations attend one of our next meetings, so we can keep working on the issue of left behinds.

3. TAAC Appointment Process

Katie Driscoll, Project Coordinator at the Metropolitan Council, spoke to the TAAC Committee. For the whole committee we have about 44 openings and we have about 200 people who applied. I will walk you through a couple of steps of what we are doing across the board for all of our advisory committees this year. The Chair appointed a nominating committee Chair. The Chair of the TAAC nominating committee is Councilmember Barber. She filled out her nominating committee with Councilmember Lee and Councilmember Cummings. That nominating committee will take the applications we received for TAAC and have interviews on April 22. We will be sending out emails today or tomorrow to the people who have applied about when they should come in on April 22.

There are three questions we will ask of these members to bring and do during their interview. Once that happens, the nominating committee will choose their slate of people on the committee and present that back to the Chair, which will then bring it to the full Council for a vote. That is the full run of the process.

The three questions have not been finalized yet. In the past, the three questions have been: Can you elaborate on what interests you about serving on TAAC? What is your experience working with or in the transportation sector, especially in relation to the accessibility of transportation for those with disabilities? Then the third question is: Do you have any ideas or suggestions on how TAAC could do its work differently?

The nominating committee will have to decide if that is still what they want. Our staff liaison is Andy Streasick. He is also there for us to answer questions.

Driscoll said part of the promotional push is for the TAAC Chair. The rest of the openings is for Precincts A, B, C and D and then the vacant E and F. I reach out to people to schedule the interviews. They ask me for any special accommodations.

Streasick said remember that TAAC is a committee that is half appointed by the Council. What we are talking about here is that half of the members are appointed by the Council. Representing a numeric district. People appointed by CCD or people appointed by AARP or whatever the agency might be, the Council does not appoint you. We have before and will be again for the TAAC interviews by phone as an accommodation and a common-sense solution for folks. I talked to Councilmember Barber today. She is totally on board for that. That is something we will continue to do.

Driscoll said we will do that with all of the committees.

4. Metro Mobility Stats

Andy Streasick, Customer Service Manager, Metro Mobility, spoke to the TAAC Committee. I heard that you would like me to move away from percentages. I did try to pull up first quarter yesterday evening to take a look at the first quarter Metro Mobility stats. I learned that much of last month has yet to be finalized. Really what we are talking about is about two months and a week so far. I will get additional stats later on. So for January and February and a little bit of March of system ridership was at 368,332 rides. That is systemwide including the ADA and non-ADA service. But it is just Metro Mobility ridership. Not including the peak demand overflow contracts that we used to have and not including taxi services for the Premium On Demand Service.

Going forward, the Sirius and Delight is going to be a goose egg going forward because we didn't renew their contracts. But I can throw in cab numbers.

The reason they were not renewed is because it was a matter of usage and costs. Not a good use of funds. When you are talking about budget based on what we were getting from it. There is a small number of users. We had literally 12 people who were significantly potentially using it. We reached out to our provider. Asking them to structure differently how they do denials for non-ADA trips. So those 12 people could have the impact lessened. That is where we are at with that.

Of the 368,332 rides 110,045 were done by First Transit East. First Transit South did 60,014 of them. Agency service did 53,789 and 144,474 that were provided by Transit Team in the West zone. If I just break it down and look at exclusively at our ADA rides over that period, we are talking about 272,284 rides of which 77,417

were done by First Transit East. First Transit South did 45,961 rides. Agency did 53,785. Transit Team did 95,121 rides.

By breaking it down to non-ADA rides, the total ridership ends up at 96,038 rides of which 32,628 were done by First Transit East. The South zone did 14,053 rides. Four non-ADA rides were done by Agency. For Transit Team there was 49,353 rides.

These are all the trips that did not meet our service parameters for one of our three big key performance indicators. So either it didn't show up on time to pick somebody up, didn't drop somebody off by their appointment time or had somebody on the bus too long and went beyond the maximum onboard time. Statistics for this period.

The numbers here aren't where we wanted them to be because February was a huge nightmare month. They are lower than what we would expect. Particularly for appointment time performance because the bus got stuck every day. They are aware of it. I fully expect them all to improve substantially. But our on-time performance systemwide was a little over 91 percent. Our onboard time was 93 percent. Our appointment time performance was at 84.5 percent. Our goal is to have 93 to 95 percent for all of those. We fully expect to make our way back to that.

In terms of onboard times. Maximum onboard times violations. There were 7,803 of those. Four at First Transit East. Then one of the things that we have started doing that Christine suggested that I thought was useful. We started looking at how bad the violation is. In the case of onboard times. How much longer than the maximum onboard time? What we don't want to do is have a situation where contractors are saying hey, we missed the onboard time so we might as well throw half a dozen addons to the run. Then the poor persons on the bus go another hour beyond the maximum onboard time. We are checking that out.

Of those 7,803 about 2.3 thousand were in the zero to five minutes over, which is what we like to see. And then another 1.7 thousand in the five to 10-minute range. Then 1.9 thousand in the 10 to 20 minutes range. Then another thousand in the 20 or more range. On the onboard time violations.

The on-time performance for the last two months and a little bit of March, was at 93 percent. For First Transit East, who did about 110,045 rides over that period. There were 7,803 that were onboard time violations. Of those, 2.3 thousand were zero to five-minute range.

If we stick with First Transit East, and go to on time pickup performance. Arriving outside of the 30-minute pickup window is what we are talking about there. Systemwide on time pickup performance for this period was at 91.1 percent. First Transit East had 110,045 rides of which they had 16,866 were late on the pickup. Beyond the 30-minute window. Of those, 5,000 of them were in the zero to five-minute range, 3.5 thousand were in the five to 10-minute range. Four thousand were in the 10 to 20-minute range. There were about 2,000 in the 20 to 30-minute range or 30 or more.

The last key performance metric. We look at appointments systemwide. We did 84.5 percent success on that. First Transit East of that. Their trips with appointment times. They blew the appointment 6,391 times. If we look at by how much they had 1.4 thousand that were zero to five minutes. 1.3 thousand that were at five to 10 minutes. 1.7 thousand that were 10 to 20 minutes. Just under 1,000 that were 20 to 30 minutes. Then 1,000 that were 30 minutes or more beyond the appointment time.

If I drop to First Transit South, it has a similar breakdown for South. They did just over 6,000 rides over this period. Their onboard time violations. If we start with those they had 7,400 of them. For onboard times, 1.8 thousand were at the zero to five minutes. There were 1.4 thousand at the five to 10. There were 1.9 at the 10 to 20. And 1.1 at the 20 to 30. There were 1.3 for the 30 or more.

In terms of over maximum onboard time. For pickup times, on time pickups. There were just over 60,000 rides. They had 12,800 where they picked up outside of the window. The bulk of them was the zero to five minutes outside the window. Four-thousand of them.

I did nothing to take out bad weather days. These are unedited stats. This is straight on time performance. I am sure you are interested in bottom line, did the bus show up on time?

There were 2.6 thousand in the five to 10-minute slate. Three thousand in the 10 to 20. Then just over 1,00 in the 20 to 30 and 30 or more.

For appointment times, it was just under 5,000 violations on appointment times. It was 4,950 for this period. Of that there were just under 1,000 for the zero to five minutes. Exactly 1,000 that were at the five to 10 minutes. Then 1.3 thousand at the 10 to 20 minutes, just under 1,000 in the 20 to 30 minutes and 1,000 in the 30 or more. In terms of late for appointment times.

For agency trips in the period. There were 53,789 rides for the period. The maximum onboard time for violations. There were 9,000 violations there. Of that, 2.3 thousand were in the zero to five. There were 1.8 thousand in the five to 10 minutes and 2.4 in the 10 to 20. With 1.2 in the 20 to 30 and 1.3 at 30 or more.

If you look at on-time performance in terms of arrival times, pick up times for agency. There were 2,100 late pickups of which 642 were zero to five minutes. Four hundred of them were five to 10 minutes. Then 542 were 10 to 20. Just over 200 were 20 to 30 minutes and just over 300 were 30 minutes or more.

For appointment times. For agency. We are looking at 600 in the zero to five, 800 in the five to 10 minutes late. A little over 1,000 in the 10 to 20 minutes late. Nine hundred in the 20 to 30 and about 1,100 in the 30 minutes or more for appointment time.

This leaves Transit Team West Zone. Out of 144.5 thousand, for the period they had maximum onboard time violations for almost 15,000 rides. Of those again, if we look at West, it is going to be 3.8 thousand in the zero to five-minute range. It was 2.9 thousand in the five to 10-minute range. It was 3.6 in the 10 to 20-minute range and it was about 2,000 even in the 20 to 30 range. Just over 2,000 in the 30 or more minute range.

For pickups. Late arrivals for pickups. There were 19,000 of them. For Transit Team we are talking about point four thousand in about five minutes, 3.9 thousand within 10 minutes and 4.3 thousand between 10 and 20 minutes.

For appointment time performance. They had 12,000 blown arrival times or blown appointment times, with 2.6 thousand of them in the zero to five minutes. About 2.6 thousand in the five to 10 minutes. Then 3,000 in the 10 to 20 minutes. And about 2,000 in the 20 to 30 minutes and 30 or more.

I will get cab rides.

Same as last time all I can get for the cab rides is the cab rides requested. A customer calls us and says I want to book a cab ride. We refer them to the cab company and we put a note in Trapeze that essentially books the ride. I can't tell you what time the cab got there. Or if the cab got there. The number you will get for the cab rides is the rides that customers book with us. The number of premium rides that we authorized.

Bates asked if people are using the GoTo cards. He asked about how the routes are run.

Streasick said 30 percent of the people will use cash.

If we could run the routes the way they are set up the night before the ride it would be awesome. If you are the only one on the bus and there is not an add on, and you are routed circuitously we try to tighten up. The vast majority of on time performance violations or circuitous routes. For one reason or another there is an incident on one bus or one bus in running very late and dispatchers remove passengers that are to be picked up, from that bus and throwing them where they sort of fit. So all of a sudden, having a ride that makes sense to picking up more passengers are leveraging to make that 30-minute window to avoid damages. To make sure that as many people as possible are picked up within the 30-minute window. And dropped off on time.

We go in and look at that kind of low hanging fruit of paying. Look how your GPS is running this. We are now in the process of updating maps for Trapeze which is going to help in that regard. While that will help some of the nightmare trips the vast majority of the long trips are more about day of moving passengers from bus to bus because of real time instructions.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Blue Line

This item was not presented.

2. Green Line

Last month, Christopher Bates handed out information from Nkongo Cigolo, Community Outreach Coordinator SWLRT Project Office, about the SWLRT Project. The civil construction contract for the SWLRT project was awarded 11/30/2018 to Lunda and McCrossan who are working in a joint venture.

The contractor is currently working on a schedule of how they intend to build the alignment. We expect to receive the schedule in our office in the next couple of weeks and construction will begin this Spring. Construction will last three years; crews will start testing the trains after electrical components have been installed. Revenue service is scheduled for 2023.

3. Gold Line

This item was not presented.

4. Rush Line

This item was not presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lee Ohnesorge spoke to the TAAC committee. I live in Richfield. I have been using Metro Mobility for about 25 years. Has a phone call for dispatch been monitored between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m.? Do you know the numbers of calls that are received between 3:00 and 6:00 and how many of those calls are being put on hold? Or never contacted.

Streasick said we see regularly in the 3:00 to 5:00 range but that last hour, between 5:00 to 6:00, we have to manually go look at. I know for sure, that when people are calling into dispatch after the reservations are closed for that first hour, seven to 10-minute wait times are the norm. You are still close enough to the peak on the p.m. where dispatch is a madhouse. Trying to get stuff done. Reservations has closed recently. They are not focused on picking up calls the same way they are when it is open. Reservations gets rolled over to dispatch. Once reservations closes, dispatch needs to know that they have to handle calls. As with all facets of Metro Mobility, there have been some staffing challenges. All three providers now are getting back on solid footing with regard to dispatchers. South Zone might still have a little bit of a shortage there. East and West are just recently back on good footing in terms of numbers of staff dispatchers.

We are aware of numbers of dispatch staff is an issue.

Ohnesorge said the Same Day Rides. How many vehicles are the Same Day Ride in the city for wheelchairs?

Streasick said for mobility devices you are talking in the teens. It is a very small number. And even that number is artificially inflated. Because these are cab drivers who regularly take home their taxis. So you can probably have that most taxi drivers work 12 hour shifts. At any given hour of the day, if you assume that half of them are working two to two and the other half are working two to two. At any given hour of the day you are probably in single digits.

With regards to the Premium Same Day stuff the Council is in the process of a launching pilot program with a TNC (Transportation Network Company) like Uber or Lyft. To provide some additional service. We are still trying to figure out what that is going to look like. For our passengers that use mobility devices, we think what we are going to end up doing, we don't know this for sure yet. It is something we are thinking about is potentially using a retired Metro Mobility vehicle as part of that TNC fleet. But we are looking at having some kind of an option that is an accessible vehicle. And of course, even if we can't use that particular model, if we can regain some kind of ambulatory ridership off of the Premium On Demand and on to the TNC model, that will free up one of those vehicles for folks who need the vehicle.

MEMBER COMMENT

Chair Fenley said there is a TAAC POD subcommittee. TAAC Premium on Demand. It is a work group that consists of Darrel, Sam and Ken right now. We created it last month. We had a first initial of what are we going to do get together. We are going to do that again this April. Then we are going to loop in Metro Mobility. Just so we can get a better handle on the Premium On Demand service. So we can look at what are some touch points we can work on?

If you do want to participate on that, send me an email and I will include you in that group.

Clark asked Streasick to give a detailed outline of what you are going to be talking about before we get to the meeting.

Chair Fenley said we are in this limbo where they switched their data collection. How they express their data is not in a digitally accessible format. We used to get spreadsheets. It has probably been a year now. I told Andy

the sooner you get the stats accessible, the sooner you don't have to read everything to the committee. It is laborious. We all understand that. That is what we are working towards now. In order to get a printout of a report, it has to be in a format that is accessible to all of the TAAC members.

Streasick said what would you think of me just essentially sending you out some bullet points every month. It would give you 10 or 12 sentences of data. That would be accessible. That would help frame the conversation a little more so that people would know what they were listening to and looking at.

The TAAC members said that would work. We could give it a try.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 2:37p.m.

Alison Coleman
Recording Secretary