

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TAAC COMMITTEE

Wednesday, August 1, 2018

Committee Members Present: Chair Patty Thorsen, Vice Chair David Fenley, Darrell Paulsen, Ken Rodgers, John Clark, Heidi Myhre, Diane Graham-Raff, Margot Imdieke Cross and Richard Rowan.

Committee Members Absent: none.

Committee Members Excused: Sam Jasmine, Christopher Bates, Tzia, Robert Platz and Kari Sheldon.

Council Staff Present: Greg Tuveson, Kelci Stones and Clarissa Schleichert from Metro Transit, David Russell, Peter Willenborg, Christine Kuennen, Andy Streasick, Greg Schuck and Alison Coleman.

Public Present: Joe Russell.

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Thorsen called the regular meeting of the Council's TAAC Committee to order at 12:33 p.m. on Wednesday, August 1, 2018.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Fenley, seconded by Rodgers to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Imdieke Cross, seconded by Fenley to approve the minutes of the June 6, 2018 regular meeting of the TAAC Committee. **Motion carried.**

BUSINESS & INFORMATION

1. State Fair

Greg Tuveson, Assistant Manager of Street Operations and Kelci Stones, Senior Market Development Specialist spoke to the TAAC committee. Stones said in 2017 we had a fantastic year. We had 16.4 percent of the market share of those who actually went to the State Fair. They took public transit, Metro Transit. Then we had over half a million rides. The goal this year is to maintain the ridership levels within the constraints we are dealing with. We have some challenges ahead of us.

We will go right into the overview of the service. The fair is going to stay the same as it has over multiple years. It is going to be \$5.00 across the board. Four and under will be free. Similar to the State Fair's structure of four and under free. We will have discounts for the bus bargain tickets. There are two components. There is the app version and then there is the online version. The online ticketing version starts today. it goes until the 23rd. That is when those discounts are available. They are \$4.50 for a single ticket. Nine dollars for a group of two. Then \$15.00 for a group of four. After the 24th those tickets go away online, but the discounts remain in play all the way through the fair on the app. That is a great opportunity for customers to get their feet wet with technology, if they are not familiar with it. They will get a discount with it. MVTA will also be using the app for the bus bargain tickets as well as honoring the ones that are sold online as well.

In overview of our service. We have 19 locations this year. We have reduced it by one. There is the Newport Park and Ride that was discontinued. The customers that would have gone to that are being encouraged to go to either the Cottage Grove site or the Signal Hills site. Or the Oakdale site if it works for them on the weekends.

The biggest change for our customers this year is that the service changes have changed slightly during weekdays. This is to deal with our driver shortage and our express operation needs. We are going to start at 9:00 on weekdays at most locations. Parade/Dunwoody is going to start at noon. It gives Dunwoody a chance

to get customers in the lot when the students are not using the lot. Oakdale will also reduce itself no longer during the entire fare but just weekends only. We have a regular route service that feeds the State Fair Grounds. The A line will be operating at 10-minute service. The routes 3 will go in as well as the 84. The route 960 will also start at 9:00 as well. It is reduced from 15 to 30-minute service this year. Rather than operating on Hennepin Avenue, it is going to move to Nicollet Mall. It is centrally located for those people who may work downtown. It is a great way to grab the 960 from that location.

We will have a booth at the Grandstand in our same location on the main floor. We are also at the Eco Experience Building/Kick Gas. That is collaboration with MNPASS and other organizations to promote public transit use and all sorts of activities to encourage getting out of your car or sharing a ride. The marketing materials are similar to what they had in the past. We have a collaborative brochure with the partnership with the State Fair as well as the Opt Out providers that we work with. It has all the information that the customers would need as well as available online.

We have skyway add panels in downtown Minneapolis and downtown Saint Paul. On those panels is a brochure that can be grabbed. There will be direct mail pieces that will be sent out to neighborhoods that are impacted the most by some of the changes that we are making this year. Giving them their options and where to go to get service during the period of times they may want to use it. Then we will have sidewalk things on our rail platforms at the end of the platforms. Transit fleet advertising with the existing fleet that we have on the sides, fronts and backs to promote our State Fair business at a very low cost to us. And then digital billboards. They will be placed strategically within the corridors where our park and rides are located to encourage and remind those people who live within those areas that we are here and to use the State Fair service.

Tuveson said the overhead banners that have been strung across will be vertical this year. To improve safety. Before the Fair started we had high winds that knocked one over and we saw that it needed to change for public safety. That is one of the new changes that we are going to identify with.

As far as the State Fair Transit Center gate assignments. The Route 960 remains in its place and is nearest to the front ticketing gate. With the discontinuation of Newport, it allows us to improve our operations within the transit center by taking the shared bus by the Bloomington gate and splitting them up to provide better bus pulling out movements. Southwest is right behind Gate 3 in Gate 2. This will not be a problem anymore as Bloomington will slide to Gate 4. The only other change with that is Bottineau will go to Gate 7. Which is just two places further than it used to be. The wayfinding signage will be changed but the overall experience for our operators will be safer and easier to operate with.

Our estimated number of buses that we use for this service. Our a.m. service weekdays are 60 buses. The weekday p.m. service is 73 buses. There are 58 articulated buses. The a.m. service on the weekends and holiday service is 74 buses. The p.m. service on weekends is 81 buses. There are 65 articulated buses.

Every year with the State Fair we have a big event that takes a lot of support staff. Our total estimated hours spent providing the service is 5,316. The bus operator's total estimated hours are 11,939. Express service costs are covered by collected revenues. No subsidy is required to operate this service.

Why do we have reduced hours and sites? Metro Transit staff operator shortage. The I-35W construction service. We have had to run on arterial roads instead of the freeway. Dunwoody student parking causes 12:00 p.m. start time on weekdays only.

There is going to be one banner on each side of each gate hanging vertically. They will be a little bit higher than they were before. They will be allowed to move with the wind. You will have a better chance to see these at a distance than before because they can move.

Of the 19 locations all of them are wheelchair accessible.

Ken Rodgers said what is your plan for assisting customers with visual impairments?

Stones said I don't have an answer to that. Adam Mehl, the Project Manager probably has a better response. We could probably get back to you with an answer. I know that we have addressed visually impaired on the website. I think that there is something that has been done for the content to make it easier to view. I don't feel confident in giving you an answer that I am not 100 percent confident with. I request the opportunity to get back to you on this.

Thorsen said could you please have Adam Mehl send us an email where we can put it out on our website as well?

Stones said he is out of the country until next Thursday. So we are a week and a half from that response. Customer Relations might also have a response.

Rodgers said could you please get that response to us as quickly as possible?

Stones said yes.

Tuveson said that the Lorenz shuttles may not have all accessible vehicles. Lorenz is a private provider.

Stones said all of the 19 Metro Transit locations have accessible vehicles.

Indieke Cross said that we should have someone from the State Fair come to the TAAC meeting and address this issue. They are the ones who sign the contract for the buses.

Graham-Raff said there has been a conflict between stroller users and people who use wheelchairs. Do the drivers for the bus routes have any special guidance or training because there is a much larger population of folks who are using the express bus. But it is also more important to make sure that those people who are using wheelchairs can get on the first available bus.

Tuveson said the training for the operator for any route as you board the one who needs the ramp or the lift who sits in those seats first. Then the rest get on. With our training sessions coming up we can provide that information. For the site captains at each site. When they identify the need to have them board first and have those seats occupied.

2. Metro Mobility Program Update

Christine Kuennen, Senior Manager of Metro Mobility, Peter Willenborg, Metro Mobility Summer Intern and Andy Streasick, Manager of Customer Service at Metro Mobility, spoke to the TAAC committee.

Kuennen said I want to touch base with the committee on several projects that we are involved in. As I move through the topics I will invite different subject matter experts to sit with me. For this first slide I will be updating the committee on the topic Premium On Demand analysis. This is Peter Willenborg, our new intern. We scoped his internship to work on this for us. He will speak on the findings and the data and how he gathered that data. We want to make sure that we have a good program in place with our options, our Premium On Demand option. Our taxi service. Especially as we start to look at other providers. Maybe moving on to the Premium on Demand system whether it be TNC or anybody else. Even as we are doing do diligence in examining our program we realize we need to dive in and do some work. A good business process. Or systemic process in place to do that. We need to start gathering some information.

We took a good swath of our data and started to survey our customers and learn some things from our June service that none of them will be of surprise to you. But I think it would be good to hear that we had a good method to look at our program and set a base line so that we can begin to work on continuous program improvement. So the icon on the slide is to really discuss the continuous improvement. To identify what an issue is. That is the process that we went through. We work some plans around the findings. Execute on those findings. And then review again. So that is the system we are putting in place with all of our program. To put the Premium On Demand.

Peter Willenborg spoke to the TAAC committee. For this project our goal was to reach five percent of the Premium On Demand customers each day. Say there are 300 rides in a day. We would try to contact 15 of those rides. We would ask a series of questions over the phone to the people who took those rides and try to gather information. We asked about the customer's overall experience. Complaints from the Premium On Demand for the Metro Mobility online database about the Premium On Demand service was also included in the data. In the end this was carried out over the course of June and 400 rides around there were gathered for this analysis.

Specifically, what I would ask the customers over the phone. First, I would ask them if they took the trip. I asked them how many days in advance they booked the trip. Or if it was the same day. Was the pick up on time? How much the customer was charged for the trip. And if the customer had any problems at all. Then if they did, I would ask for more information on that and try to group the problems into a set of categories and produce an easier to read analysis.

In the end, I found that in total, on the 400 or so trips that I called about, about 43 percent had at least one problem. Eleven percent of the trips had a complement. However, I didn't specifically ask about complements.

So this data is a little bit skewed. Some of the most common problems I found through the phone calls. First of all, service issues, which comprised 23 percent of all the problems. Basically, what I defined as a service issue, was something that caused a disturbance in the riders of some sort. For example, if a driver was uncomfortable with a guide dog, or there was a lack of understanding on the part of the customer to be able to get a ride. Basically, any problem that doesn't link to another category easily.

The second biggest problem was late pickup. The third biggest problem was driver behavior. A rude or unhelpful driver perhaps. The fourth biggest problem was rejection. The fifth biggest problem was no show. There were also some issues with customer service. There were a lot of reports of people who were being left on the phone for a long time. People being hung up on. Just relatively unresponsive customer service on the part of Premium On Demand. In general, there were more problems on weekends. There were fewer problems on Monday and Tuesday. The problems increased throughout the week. What I mean by more problems was a percentage of problems on the rides each day. The rides are taken into account for that.

Some certain issues that stuck out. On Friday afternoons the problems seemed to go up. There were more driver behavior and ride rejection issues. Basically, the ride was cancelled or rejected by the company or driver due to reasons such as lack of available drivers or vehicles. On Sundays there were more late pickups. Wednesday's or Saturdays there were more serious issues.

Kuennen said we do plan to make this report public. This is a recent summary. The timing of this meeting is even before the provider has seen or had a discussion with us. So we want to make sure that we are bringing the provider into a conversation about our findings. Put in place some processor program improvements. Data share a little bit more closely with the provider. Then we publish something that relates to that. Then we come back to this committee.

Willenborg said potential service improvements. First of all, what I found was Premium On Demand services are very important to some people. There should be adjustments made. Improve that service over all. Something like more careful monitoring or oversight on the part of Premium On Demand. It would help with issues such as driver behavior. I know one issue that came up a lot was some drivers struggle with credit and debit cards. Charging people with those. So we should be able to solve that problem very quickly.

Clark asked how detailed is your information? Do you have quotes from specific riders?

Willenborg said it is very detailed. Whenever I call the rider and they tell me they have a problem, I would ask specifically what the problem was. They give me a description. If I know when the problem was and what kind of problem it was.

Kuennen said the detail would not be in the report. This is a summary of the analysis.

Clark said I think the important thing is to get very detailed. Something could be extremely rare and extremely important.

Willenborg said some of the issues are very fixable. There is monitoring and oversight. The customer service issue, some ride rejections and no shows perhaps. Hopefully try to minimize those issues as much as possible. On the part of Metro Mobility, there could be more transparency and the process of the POD service, how to book a ride and how to use it. Some people did have issues with that. There is only so much you can do for an issue such as late pickups and some service issues. There are some things that we can do.

For technology improvement. One thing was potentially for Metro Mobility to grant access to its customer contact data base to the POD service. This would allow the service to document complaints that it receives itself. A platform that allows for the sharing information for that service and Metro Mobility. This would have increased transparency, which would help Metro Mobility's monitoring of the service and its ability to implement improvements.

Kuennen said I will add to the technology improvements that we are looking at. There is the potential for ride booking to move to an online booking, which I will talk about soon. That we would be partnering with our other providers and our alternative providers too. So you can book and see those rides within the application. So we are working on that.

I think what you are hearing from Peter is a validation of some of the comments that we have heard at this committee before. We do have some planning in place. The very first thing is to bring these findings to the provider. Work in cooperation with the provider on some of these program improvements as well as work with our outreach team. The issue we are trying to provide more information to our customers about what the

expectations of this service should be. How to book it. Who is responsible for customer service, etc. Partnering with our outreach team to bring that forward.

What I would like to do is as we move along with key pieces here we will come back to the committee along the way. iHail is the application that the provider uses. So there is an open source API that they have provided to us that we are giving to our Trapeze providers.

The purpose of this presentation today is to provide information to the committee on analysis work that we are doing. The findings that we are taking actions on. I don't have a detailed action plan for you because we are not there yet. We are in the process of working each of these pieces through. In particular, I think the important piece is working with our provider. That will be the very next step. I would like to come back to the committee and provide an update as we have an action plan.

Moving on to the next piece for you. I have asked Andy Streasick to help with this because he leads with this project. The fixed route transfer project that we were working forward on. Trying to find ways that we can incentivize use of the fixed route system for our Metro Mobility riders who would like to do that. We have been working with Metro Transit since the early part of this year to scope a project. Initially we had identified Brooklyn Center Transit Center and Maplewood Mall as two key locations that would provide a lot of opportunity for our riders. A lot of accessible and frequency service and we did some outreach to customers and the travel shed of these cities.

We came to a conclusion that we really needed to shift and broaden our scope. What I am here to talk to you today is what that process would look like for us. And how we found what we found. Why we are changing our scope. The scope that we are moving to would be not fixed on a transfer. It had been previously where we would provide a free Metro Mobility ride if the customer transferred on to a fixed route ride at either Brooklyn Center Transit Center or Maplewood Mall. We found we want to shift away from that, broaden it with just a free ride. Untie the concept of a transfer from the project and just make it generally a free ride. And really focus more on information gathering than ride behavior. I will turn to Andy who can talk about the work that he did and how he came to these findings that brought us back to change our scope.

Streasick said it became pretty clear that when we went through data here and listened to what customers had to say that our initial notion of the feeder to fixed program wasn't something that was going to have a lot of takers. Hence the redesign. What we did in terms of looking at who to reach out to is, I picked a couple of areas where we could bring in some riders who take longer trips that are accessible to the fixed route system. If we function as a feeder that could do a shorter trip to the fixed route, has the potential to both shorten customer's ride overall and relieve some of the stress on the Metro Mobility system, while also boosting the ridership of fixed route. That way, something that they are interested in.

However, first of all I was able to reach out and contact 275 individuals of which 27 were interested in pursuing the program. However, of that 27, the vast majority of those are already regular fixed route riders. Whenever as possible. We limited our search to folks who are conditionally eligible for paratransit. So at least sometimes these folks are able to take the city bus. But at looking at numbers here, eight people were folks who don't regularly take the city bus. So we were looking at a situation similar to those of you who have been around long enough to remember when the Council was doing some travel training. It is a similar piece of evidence of what we had there. Of our riders on the Metro Mobility side that are capable of taking the city bus. They really fall into two categories. People who are capable of taking the city bus and already do so whenever they are capable of doing so for a variety of reasons. And people who are capable of taking the city bus but have no interest in doing so and are not likely to do it.

Given that feedback we restructured what we were looking at. What we are looking at now in terms of furthering that incentive and potentially increasing fixed route usage is as Christine said, broadening this. Rather than having it be a feeder to fixed program, it focuses on a couple of very specific locations. We are looking at further incentivizing the cost by removing the cost of fixed route transit travel. We are still looking to have about 100 participants. But we will fully subsidize the cost of Metro Transit travel. So they will get a monthly pass from us allowing them to ride on fixed route for free rather than the \$1.00 fare that folks that are Metro Mobility eligible would typically pay. They will be able to use that for any trip on the Metro Transit system. Not just a couple of locations that we were looking at as a feeder to fixed program.

In terms of who we are targeting. We already reached out to a couple of hundred folks. We didn't want to let the 27 people who voiced interest be left out in the lurch. We are going to reach back out to them over the next week or so and explain that our lens has shifted a bit and we are going to be looking at, instead of a feeder to

fixed, a fully subsidized Metro Transit pass. We are still having part of this project, we are going to connect people with customer advocates. So people who have expressed interest in having some training for either additional fixed route usage or for those small number of people who aren't using the city bus but are interested in so doing. We are going to connect those folks with customer advocates as part of this. One of the things that Metro Transit is very interested in is that we are going to pull them just the same as if we are going to in the feeder to fixed. As the pilot is going on. What your perceived barriers are to fixed route usage and how that may shift as folks get more and more exposure to Metro Transit.

As part of my initial on boarding survey here, we did ask folks: "What do you perceive as the issues that prevent you from using Metro Transit?" Metro Transit is very interested in that and would like to use it to shift where they focus and how they focus on accessibility. That is something we will continue to use and continue to ask folks as we reach out to them here. Then we will obviously be tracking what a free all you can ride pass does to people's Metro Mobility ridership. There are parts of the country including many of our peer cities where fixed route transit is totally free for people who are paratransit eligible. That is something that the Council is not doing right now. If Metro Mobility saw over an extended period that ridership on the paratransit system was heavily reduced or substantially reduced by fully subsidizing fixed route fares. That is certainly something that I would advocate for. I think Christine would as well. If numbers back that up.

A potential long-term ramification of this in terms of who we are looking at to participate and who we are reaching out to. We have the two groups of folks who were part of the initial pilot to include people in a travel shed, traveling in a corridor served by the Brooklyn Center Transit Center. Then folks who are in a travel shed by Maplewood Mall. Those folks are the folks to whom we have already reached out, although there are about 100 more folks yet that we still need to reach out to around the BCTC. We are going to finish doing that. We are going to reach out to folks in a travel shed around the 46th Street station. With the idea that under the scope of our initial project with the feeder to fixed it made a lot of sense to prioritize suburban users with longer trips. Under the new model it makes more sense to reach out to some inner city users and the 46th Street station is a really good travel shed to look at that.

If I get 100 users. They are who are interested and good candidates, I think we will probably stop there. We are reaching out to those folks over the next couple of weeks. If we do not yet have an adequate number of users at that point, I am going to start reaching out to Metro Mobility riders who are conditionally certified and who are part of the assured ride home eligibility. Meaning that these are heavy users of Metro Mobility who are eligible to see if they have an interest in participating in the program.

Kuennen said, if I could just add to that. The partnership with Metro Transit on this project has been very supportive. They are extremely interested partners. I think that the great outcome of this will be even more attentive examination of the accessibility of the fixed route system around customers who really do need that accessibility in order to not use Metro Mobility. And have that offered. So I think that I am really encouraged that we are able to broaden the scope. In particular to include the 46th Street station because that would open up of course arterial BRT. The frequency of the Blue Line and that whole system.

With that I will move on to the next project. I want to give an update on the online booking. Last fall I said we were going to be coming, by the end of last year. I am not sure I updated this committee, but we had an incompatibility with our current version of Trapeze. When we tried to test our online booking. We had to place that on hold until we had moved to the newer version of Trapeze. That was done in late June. They are putting the final technical pieces to make that version 16 as stable and comprehensive enough to support staff taking on this past web that is compatible with version 16. We are very close to that now. Trapeze has released a test version with options that we have asked for, developed on our version 16, for our technical testing. Our IT team has started to look at that. The key features, I think the improvements that we will see for this version. It is mobile compatible. Smart phone users, iPad users, as well as computer users will be able to book rides. Being able to cancel rides, book rides, track vehicles through a feature Trapeze calls "Where's my ride?" Makes the application a little bit Uberest, where you can see your vehicle tracking to your location in real time through this application.

The timing of this is that if technical testing goes well, we will have user testing in August. We have a group of users that Andy will be reaching out to, along with our IT people, to conduct user acceptance testing. We have a soft launch planned on August 25. Where we would put the production version on our website and allow people who know enough to find it and use it. Then we will have a public communication launch on this in September. We have content planned in our newsletter in September describing this. We are really around the corner to finally provide online booking again.

Just a reminder, it has been two years when the previous version had to be taken down for some cyber security things that Trapeze has fixed. They had it fixed last summer but we couldn't take on the version at the time because the current version that they were developing and releasing was incompatible with our base version of Trapeze. So now we have that optimized for our version 16 and we are very excited about it.

Then here is an interesting piece that I decided to go ahead and include this in the presentation today because I wanted to make the committee aware that we are working on what will be a no pay policy. Metro Mobility currently does not have a no pay policy. Other properties do. They range from absolutely no ride if they don't pay, to so many no pays and you are suspended from the service. Right now we have instituted with our fare increase last October, a policy. We told our providers that with the new GoTo card systems we introduced. We had some failures in the system with the GoTo card unit in the buses. We were not confident that every time a customer had not paid the fare that it was not the customer but a technology failure. We didn't want to risk interrupting someone's ride or promised ride because they were trying to pay and simply couldn't.

So we instituted this policy that said "At point of sale, regardless of if the customer can pay, we are going to provide the ride." I think it was a good decision at the time. It protected the customer against technology failure while attempting to pay. But since that time, when we promised the providers that we would analyze data of customers that were not paying because they said it existed out there. That customers were intending not to pay and were still expecting a ride.

We looked at this data and so far in 2018 we have several thousand dollars lost from customers intentionally not paying. So it is time to examine what should be our no pay policy. The current policy is to just go ahead and accept the ride, regardless of the customer's intent to pay mirrors Metro Transit. The driver states the fare once and the customer boards and away they go. But we know the impact of that. Our system is different where other customers on board are being impacted. There is a cost associated with it that is different. We are going to do that. We are looking at experience. Across the country what makes sense to us seems to be an extension policy that fits with a no show suspension policy or something like that. I wanted to bring that to the committee and let you know what is coming. I am giving you an opportunity to give input on that.

Streasick said one point of clarification. I want to make sure everybody understands. What we are talking about here is documented substantiated intent to not pay. So we will continue at point of sale to give the customer the benefit of the doubt with regard to GoTo difficulties on sides twosies of accidental let the GoTo card run down to zero in that one negative transaction. That is not what we are talking about with regard to any kind of suspension. We are talking about people who either chronically present an empty GoTo card or who just get on the bus and say "I know that you have this policy that says you have to take me now. You can't refuse me at the point of sale." Which is a significant number of people.

Kuennen said having had a lot of experience at Metro Transit with this issue I don't see that changing. I think that they have gone through an extensive effort to train drivers to make sure that there is not conflict over fare. The policy does say state the fare once and let the ride remain. To the point of conflict, with different drivers handling it differently. I am not interested in creating a policy that will introduce that kind of conflict into our system. I am more interested in an after the fact data look similar to a no show where you would have a suspension that follows the chronic behavior. That customer is not allowed to book a ride until they have settled up or something like that. We are interested in feedback either now or later as we move along.

Rodgers said I know the Premium Same Day On Demand taxi rides has very different variations. You can request multiple days in advance now. That is through Metro Mobility. But you still can only request your ride with Transportation Plus on the day of the ride. Are you aware of that? Is there discussion about that?

Streasick said that part that we are aware of is that taxi service cannot book a ride before the day of. What we have been told is the ride is in their system and can be recorded before hand. So they don't know specifically what vehicle is going to be dispatched. What we have been told is that the ride is there. It is locked in. So for example, if we have a weather day or high demand day where the taxi provider needs to stop accepting rides, the fact that you have booked that ride ahead of time prevents you from being locked out.

Rodgers said I have made a couple of attempts at several rides in advance with Metro Mobility. That is not a problem. Those are done fine. When I go to put that ride in, the reservationist at Transportation Plus tells me they can only enter a ride the day of. Even though the rides are there. They are not in the books. I still have to call to activate that ride. They sit in what they call a "Will Call." Even though there is a time on it that I gave Metro Mobility when I made the reservation. There is no time at Transportation Plus. They tell me it is in will call. Until you call to activate it, it doesn't get booked.

Streasick said if you have a situation where they were unable to do your ride, that you booked in advance with Metro Mobility.

Rodgers said I had booked a ride for 5:00 a.m. to go to the airport. I thought it was taken care of the day before. But at 5:00 a.m. when there was no ride and I called I found out that I had to call the day of to activate the ride.

Kuennen said I want to remember it when look at integrating their iHail and the Trapeze booking. Trapeze has a product called Trip Broker that we also own and will be implementing that should allow (this is the technology improvement that I am examining) should allow a ride booking through Metro Mobility to be passed all the way through their application. So I will ask our provider about how that would actually function as far as what it would look like in their system if we did that.

Myhre said sometimes on Metro Mobility my GoTo card malfunctions. I don't want to be left on the curb because your policy says you are not paying.

Streasick said we are aware as with all technology the GoTo feature does not work 100 percent of the time. Even for onzees and twozees if we get a tag that explicitly says this card has a zero balance or a negative balance we are still going to have people riding. That is not going to be cause for suspension. Any kind of tag that says anything else like failure to scan and user error. Anything indicative of a reading issue with that card and communication issue with that card. That is not a customer no pay at all. Much less an intentional one. We are going to continue to treat that like a card failure. A technology failure. We will continue to reimburse our provider for that so they are not on the hook for that as private providers. It's a cost of doing business. We may get to the point of pulling back and recouping those costs from your card after the fact. We are not at any point looking at suspending somebody because of technology failure with our equipment.

Clark said he heard that the Metro Mobility computer system was ancient. Is that true?

Kuennen said I would not consider it to be ancient. We did have to do a version upgrade in order to take on the products with the optimized and up to date smart phone. The functionality of the online booking system. In order for us to take that on we did have to do a version upgrade with our base Trapeze system. Trapeze is the industry standard. It is one of the best in the country that we now have. We are in version 16. So we are up to date.

Paul Colton, fleet manager for MTS came to my office just before this meeting and asked me to add an additional question. He is in the process of examining 25 vehicles, SUV style, to replace our sedan fleet. He would like to look at options over the course of this coming month and would be interested in working with a subcommittee from TAAC in helping him review those options. So if you could consider that and then let him know. You would be examining the different choices. Kuennen will send a reminder question to Chair Thorsen so she can work from that email. I will ask him what his make up of the subcommittee would be. How many people, that sort of thing.

Streasick said for this particular opportunity, I had a longer conversation with Paul. This particular opportunity is just our ambulatory passenger fleet. So folks who exclusively use wheelchairs and scooters on Metro Mobility, wouldn't be a good focus group for this particular opportunity because you won't be able to get on the vehicle.

3. TAAC ByLaws

Patty Thorsen, TAAC Chair, spoke to the TAAC committee. There were three of us that viewed the ByLaws. We did it last summer. It had not been updated since 2012. There were a lot of changes that had taken place between that time. So we felt it was important to come back and propose a revision to the ByLaws. The first person was Dana Rude, who was David Russell's predecessor. The second person was Kjensmo Walker, who was my predecessor. Then I reviewed the ByLaws. I was Vice Chair at that point.

First, we went through and updated organizational name changes. In 2016, the Minnesota Legislature updated our expanded responsibilities that we have. In part because of the Green Line coming on line. So we got Light Rail vehicle design and transit station design feedback opportunities. Task Forces. We added seniors to the ByLaws language issue. Terms of membership. There is a place where I left off one member from the membership. Section 2 of Article 3, we talked about terms. Basically, what we are saying in this section is that term membership rotates. That is for two reasons. One is to make sure that there is institutional knowledge on the ropes all at once. Secondly it is equally important to get new blood in the committee. Richard, if you come

on, you have questions that may or may not have come up before. By your asking them, we would either get response to a question that hasn't been addressed or the answer could have changed since we last addressed it.

There was a discussion about the color changes in the ByLaws. Also, Rodgers cannot read color. They need to know what the changes are.

Chair Thorsen asked if brackets were the preferred way of doing it.

Rodgers said no. if you want to suggest a change, you can put your suggested change within brackets. Start it off with your initials and a colon, indicate what changes you want to make or suggest. That is a bracketed sentence by itself that doesn't belong but inserted within the document and we can identify those comments.

Fenley said for the situation you just described, the removal of something, what do you use?

Rodgers said brackets, initials, colon, state remove whatever you want to remove, end quote and bracket.

The changes that we are going to introduce, are we able to make those changes ourselves or does that need to go to the Met Council for approval? Who has the final approval of authority?

Chair Thorsen said let's say that everything had been fine in here today. Two-thirds of the people in this room that were present when the document had been reviewed, the document would need two-thirds approval and then upon adoption by TAAC, these ByLaws and any amendments thereto, shall be submitted to the Metropolitan Council for its review and approval.

Fenley said as far as my understanding is as long as our proposals fit within the scope of the statute that govern TAAC. It says at the end that the Met Council has the final say on this. If we go outside the scope, the founding statute, then I could see them removing it.

Paulsen said we have reviewed these ByLaws maybe five times. Usually what happens is they will adopt this at their regular monthly meeting. As long as there is no substantial changes to our structure and the way that we operate, everything will be approved.

Thorsen said that we will address the content issues at the September meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Blue Line.

This item was not presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT

David Russell said I am the new liaison, taking over for Dana Rude. This is a role I have had in the past. One of the things we have been discussing is regurgitating data. Three thousand rides this month. Three thousand one hundred rides this month. Is that information interesting to you? Is that a good use of your time? Is it a good use of my time to present that? Is there something more relevant that you would like to hear? The percentage of on time performance. What does that mean that we are doing a percentage? What would you like to see? What is relevant? What is pertinent?

Rodgers said I do not mind percentages being used. But I want numbers. I want raw data to back those numbers. A 96 percent sounds pretty darn good. But when you are talking about on time performance, that means that there is four percent or a number of people that didn't get on time rides. I want us to focus on the number of people, not the percentages. The percentages are fine to be there, but I want the raw data.

Russell said so how I got that data is what you are looking for.

Rodgers said correct.

Paulsen said I would like to see that if there is a way to say we have more rides because of the weather, or share some of that during seasonal changes. I want to see if there is a way that some of that data shows driver retention, driver moral. If you have a happy driver and you retain that driver longer, why are we able to do that? Is that directly tied to the number of rides?

Doug Cook said I was asked last time to bring some more current numbers regarding the "Leave Behinds". Who were unable to board wheelchairs and scooters on our bus system. I contacted our Transit Control

Center. They are in charge of taking those calls when drivers call in. These numbers are from January to mid July of this year. The numbers they gave me were 431 people who were unable to board. They broke it down for me into three categories. The total was due to overloads. That was 321. Overload means that we can't load the bus anymore because the bus is packed. Then 100 of those were where the seats were already occupied by other wheelchairs, strollers or senior citizens and the people were not getting off. The third category is strollers. Out of the 431, there were 10 strollers.

Rodgers asked how long did the people who were left behind have to wait for another bus?

Cook said I don't know but I will try to find out.

Fenley asked how the data was collected.

Cook said the operator calls in with the information. They are required to call in as part of their procedures. If the drivers do not call in they need to be retrained.

MEMBER COMMENT

Indieke Cross said there have been incidents of violence on Metro Transit buses. I would like to know if there was an increase in Metro Mobility use or requests after those incidents. I was wondering if there was an indication that people felt unsafe with Metro Transit. I wanted to know if there is some way to combat that. First, I would like to determine whether or not if there was any kind of increase in Metro Mobility requests, Metro Mobility usage after those incidents hit the airways and we were watching it. Bus drivers get beat up on the nightly news.

Kuenen said I don't know the answer. I can look into it. I haven't heard talk about that. When we did reach out to our customers for the fixed route pilot, we did have a couple of people talk about safety on board. That would have been in June. I don't know if there is a direct correlation. I know that high profile incidents have an impact in a number of ways. It might be hard to tie it directly to that since we have seen systemically ridership increases since August or September of last year from previous years. We are sustaining ridership growth a month at about six to seven percent. I would have to look to see if there is a blip increase directly following the news stories.

When we look in the topic of barriers to the fixed route system. Safety and security is one that we had an interesting debate. When we looked at the Brooklyn Center Transit Center as a location because that is a transit center that has some public troubles with crime. There were quality of life issues and other kinds of crime and whether or not we should make that a point of exclusion or not. Or our pilot. But in the end we decided that no, we need to improve the accessibility and the safety and security for all of our customers in that location. There are programs in place to do that. We did not want to exclude what will be a very dynamic transit center. With the new BRT coming and just a lot of improvements to the service in that region. We wanted to make sure we take advantage of that. Then deal with the system safety and security as a side element.

Rodgers said to Claire Schleichert, you mentioned that your office sometimes looks into complaints when they are raised and identified from someone from a protected class. Occasionally I caused a call and identify an issue. I always identify as a blind individual. How do I know that those get tagged as a protected class that go forward, that you are seeing those?

Schleichert said I do. Because I see your name come through. I don't know that I am seeing all of them. There is an element of human error. There was a period I can speak to that there were a number of new people in the Customer Relations department. Some of those were getting missed. When they do get missed, the ATM's (Assistant Transportation Managers) will see that there are blind customers or someone in a wheelchair that made comments and they will send them back to Doug's supervisor and then they redirect them to the proper department. The people in Customer Relations are very well trained. If they hear a racial component or a disability component. Even if it says lift and it doesn't say disabled that may come across our desk. Lift means a potential disability and we want an extra eye of scrutiny on that. We have made it very clear to that group. If you see anything that may somewhat be related, we want it to cross our desk as well. When you call in ask for it to be sent to the Office of Equal Opportunity, Diversity.

If you do ever have a question about that, when you call in, you can say, "Are you making sure to send this to the Office of Diversity, because I want that noted." They would make sure to note that. There are codes that when they look at the computer there are 13 drop downs. There is one that goes to Street Operations. There is one that goes to the garage management. There is one that goes to OEO/Diversity. That is a drop-down

option. When that gets chosen, our office gets forwarded on that complaint. Darryl, if you see that happen on the bus where the driver doesn't call, I would encourage you to call Customer Relations and report that.

Paulsen asked if there was bus operator training in the spring, when the weather gets warmer and in the fall.

Schleichert said that is a good point, especially in the summer when the weather gets warmer and the ridership with people with disabilities increases. I will bring that back to Christie and Steve who are head of our bus operations. Maybe we can shoot out a bulletin with additional information when the temperatures increase and we see more ridership.

Myhre said I got to see the new window thing next to the driver. Where they are protected. She showed me and told me about it.

Schleichert said we have had some people with wheelchairs report difficulty getting around that barrier. The way the barrier is installed, it is making that space a little smaller. If you run into that, call in a customer complaint. We don't know it is an issue until it is brought to our attention. Those are helpful for us to determine what barriers we are going to go with.

Imdieke Cross said you just mentioned a barrier that we have never reviewed. At some future meeting, could we discuss this?

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

Alison Coleman
Recording Secretary