

# **Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TAAC COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, May 4, 2016

**Committee Members Present:** Chair Kjensmo Walker, Julianne Bina, Adora Sage, Ken Rodgers, Robert Platz, Kari Sheldon, Heidi Myhre, Nichole Villavicencio, Bob Anderson, Margot Imdieke Cross and David Fenley.

**Committee Members Absent:** None.

**Committee Members Excused:** Christopher Bates, Pamela Zimmerman and Patty Thorsen.

**Council Staff Present:** Adam Mehl and Pam Steffen from Metro Transit, Leslie Kandaras, Andrew Krueger, Andy Streasick, Sheila Williams, Mai Thor, Dana Rude and Alison Coleman.

**Public Present:** Ben Plunkett, Cindy Tarshish and Dan Marckel.

## **CALL TO ORDER**

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Walker called the regular meeting of the Council's TAAC Committee to order at 12:32 p.m. on Wednesday, May 4, 2016.

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

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

It was moved by Villavicencio, seconded by Sheldon to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2016 regular meeting of the TAAC Committee. **Motion carried.**

## **BUSINESS & INFORMATION**

### **1. Legislative Update**

Leslie Kandaras spoke to the TAAC Committee. They are in the final few weeks of the Legislative session. They are waiting to see how the tax bill, the transportation bill and the bonding bill come together. Those are the three major pieces that are still in the works and will determine the end game for the end of the 2016 session. With regard to the transportation bill the Transportation Conference Committee is meeting today and is expected to meet tomorrow. They are trying to figure out what they are going to do with that conference committee that began in 2015. The House and Senate are still quite far apart. They will know a lot more this weekend, probably more so in the next two weeks about the direction that that process will go. At this point they will continue to monitor it. Last week Governor Dayton reinstated his support for a comprehensive transportation package. That received some media attention. They are in a holding pattern waiting for what the conference committee will do. They meet this afternoon and will meet tomorrow. They are hopeful that it will start to take shape in the coming days.

The other element is the bonding bill. This week the Senate released their bonding bill which is a little bit larger than the Governor's bill and significantly larger than the House bill. The Senate proposal is \$1.5 billion in bonding. The Governor is at \$1.4 billion. The House is at \$600 million.

With regards to Met Council priorities, the Senate bill includes a couple of smaller transit pieces that are not in the Governor's proposal because the Governor remains committed to a comprehensive transportation solution which would include capital funding. A lot of the corridor projects that the Governor supports he supports through that comprehensive transportation plan that would include a metro area sales tax. The Senate took a slightly different tact and in their bonding bill they include some funding for Gateway, the Red Rock Corridor and some improvements including the Mall of America transit station and the I-35W / Lake Street highway transit access project in Hennepin County. There are a couple of elements in the Senate bill that continues to

move through their process. The Senate Finance Committee is hearing the bonding bill today and they could take it up as soon as this week on the Senate floor.

The other big chunk of work that is going on right now relates to the supplemental budget. This is not a budget year. But because of the budget surplus there has been some interest in doing a supplemental budget. Since it is optional the government won't shut down if the supplemental budget doesn't pass. So there is not the same pressure to get it to pass as there would be to get a regular budget done. In the Senate the Senate passed one comprehensive supplemental budget bill, which is about \$463 million of the \$900 million projected surplus. The main priority areas in that bill are education, broad band access, and programs to address racial and economic disparities.

One item of interest is the Autonomous Vehicles bill. In the transportation article of the Senate supplemental budget bill they did include the language that was in the Senate Autonomous Vehicles bill. That is in the Senate Supplemental Appropriations bill. The House took a different tactic. They passed three separate supplemental budget bills. None of which touched on transportation. There is not a companion in the House supplemental budget bills to the autonomous vehicle language in those vehicles but it was introduced in multiple committees in the House.

The session has to end on May 23.

Funding has not been appropriated for the state's portion of the Southwest Light Rail extension project. That is another issue that has received some headlines last week. A coalition of members said they wouldn't support a final bonding package unless Southwest is somehow dealt with. In order for them to support a bonding bill they would like to see the funding piece handled. The Governor's comprehensive transportation bill which includes the metro area sales tax would also be a source of funding should that pass.

We get federal funding for half of the total cost of the project. With Southwest, the federal government included the necessary funding corresponding to the stage we are in in the president's budget. The Obama administration continues to support the Southwest project through their federal transportation administration budget proposals. There is a concern that if the local funding is not secured we would not be eligible to receive the federal portion of those funds. The federal government will not give us the money until we are at a point where we can match it with the local funds.

## **2. Overview of ADA**

Cindy Tarshish spoke to the TAAC committee. She works for ADA Minnesota. She gave a brief overview of the ADA laws that are in place that helped bring about the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. It started with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. There was the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Federal Fair Housing Act was not covered in the ADA Act. It leads up to the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 and 2009 where they had to change a few things and get them right again in regards to who was considered a person with disabilities and what their rights were.

She will be talking about the five titles of the ADA. Title I – Employment. Title II – State and local government. Title III – Public Accommodations. Title IV – Telecommunications. Title V – Miscellaneous.

Title I is for any employer that covers 15 or more employees. The Human Rights Act covers more than one employee. Title II is for any entity that receives state, local and federal dollars for their programs or services. That would cover courthouses and libraries. Title III is for stores, restaurants and movie theaters and other places that are open to the regular public. Title IV is for telecommunications like 711 relay and closed captioning. Title V is miscellaneous which would cover attorney's fees, insurance and other things that doesn't fit in the other categories.

The main purpose of the ADA is the civil rights legislation for people with disabilities. It is their law. The focus has always been to eliminate discrimination in all aspects of the Titles I-V, which is employment, public services, transportation, public accommodations and more. The purpose is also to expand integration of persons with disabilities into the communities. It was never intended to be an entitlement program. There were no dollars attached to it.

Things the ADA does not cover: religious entities, housing, federal government, Indian tribal properties and private clubs. They do have to follow the state building codes. The federal Fair Housing Act covers accessible housing. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 covers the federal government. The casinos are covered because they

are in Minnesota and they are open to the general public and they have to follow the State of Minnesota building codes. Private clubs are not covered, like the Boy Scouts.

The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability against qualified individuals with disabilities. The definition of a disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; a record of such an impairment or regarded as having such an impairment and the association with a person with disability. The ADA Amendments Act of 2008-2009 covers abnormal cell growth (cancer). If the person has a record of an impairment they are covered also. The association with someone with a disability could be that a person has a child with a disability. They could not be discriminated against when getting a job.

Title I covers employment for private employers, state and local governments, employment agencies and labor unions. The application must be accessible, screen readers if the application is online. All aspects of hiring, evaluation, training, benefits of employment are accessible to all employees.

The employee with a disability still has to do the job. A qualified individual with a disability is an individual with a disability who satisfies the requisite skill, experience and education requirements of the position the person holds or desires and who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of such position.

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to allow for equal access to the job application and interview process: a modification of adjustment to the work environment or the way things are customarily done; a modification or adjustment that enables employee to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment.

Some forms of reasonable accommodation are: making existing facilities accessible; job restructuring; part time or modified work schedules; acquiring or modifying equipment; changing tests, training materials or policies; providing qualified readers or interpreters; reassignment to a vacant position.

Actions that are not required: removing an essential function or hiring someone else to perform the function; lowering production standards; reassign to a different supervisor; promotion to a higher position; provision of "light duty" items; excusing misconduct; providing "personal use items", such as eyeglasses, wheelchairs or prosthetic limbs.

Principles of reasonable accommodations: Must be effective; only applies to disability-related barriers; doesn't have to be the best; not primarily for personal use; employer can go beyond ADA requirement.

Requesting reasonable accommodations: responsibility to request rests with the individual; request can be in plain language, do not need to know legal terms; request can be made on the behalf of an individual by a third party; recommend requests be made in writing (verbal O.K. but back up in writing).

Title II – Public Services. It is public funding. Departments, agencies of state or local governments. Activities, services or programs of public entities: motor vehicle licensing, local public bus service, town meetings, public schools, state parks, court buildings and state legislature.

Program access: Integration is fundamental to ADA into programs and services; most integrated setting; reasonable modification to policies, practices and procedures.

Communications: effective communication; auxiliary aids at no extra cost: interpreters, readers, assistive listening devices, captioning, TTY, 711 relay service, audio cassette and Braille, large print. There are no surcharges in ADA. Websites need to be available with screen reader.

Facilities: new construction should be free of architectural barriers that restrict access or use. Alterations – altered portions of existing buildings need to be accessible.

Transportation - all of the following must be ADA compliant: fixed route bus service (new buses after August 26, 1990); para-transit; rapid or light rail; commuter rail; facilities-key stations.

Title III – Public Accommodations: No individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations of any place of public accommodation by any person who owns, leases (or leases to), or operates a place of public accommodation. This is effective January 26, 1992.

Public accommodations are: places of lodging, establishments serving food and drink, places of exhibition or entertainment, places of public gathering, sales or rental establishments, service establishments, public transportation terminals, places of public display or collection, places of recreation, places of education, social service center and places of exercise or recreation.

Exemptions: private clubs – members exercise high degree of control over club operations; membership selection is highly selective; substantial membership fees; non-profit; not founded specifically to avoid civil rights laws. Religious entities are exempt.

Public accommodations: people with disabilities should have full and equal benefits, opportunity to participate, integrated setting, eligibility criteria, auxiliary aids and services need to be provided at no charge, modification to policy, practice or procedure.

New construction: 2010 ADA Standards; state and local codes; all new facilities must be accessible.

Alterations/renovations: changes that affect usability; accessible to maximum extent feasible; path of travel – access routes and amenities; costs are disproportionate if they exceed 20 percent of the original alteration.

Existing facilities: readily achievable barrier removal; easily accomplished without much difficulty or expense. They should have an accessibility plan and money set aside to do some of the renovations.

Title IV – Telecommunications: Communication for people with hearing and speech impairments; relay service; TTY; 711 relay service; closed captioning; FCC enforcement.

Title V – Miscellaneous: congressional coverage; insurance and employee benefits; protection against retaliation and coercion; attorney's fees; technical assistance.

The US Department of Justice oversees Titles II and III of the ADA.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) would be Title I Employment.

The U.S. Access Board deals with access

The Great Lakes ADA Center has seminars, webinars and information

ADA Minnesota is where she works. You can call her for information.

### **3. Mobile App Project**

Adam Mehl spoke to the TAAC Committee. He is a Market Development Specialist for Metro Transit. The launch date is August 10, 2016. They are currently working on a number of features. This will be the first phase of the mobile app. It will be mobile ticketing for all modes. You will be able to use your mobile phone to pay for rides on the bus, the metro, the A Line, Northstar and special events. They will have other items including user account features and the web store. It will have trip planning tools. It will be screen reader compatible with Android and Apple. This is an app that will be rolling out for public agencies.

Why mobile tickets? There is a game changing feature of the app; reduced cash usage; faster boarding; decreased cost to collect fares; more opportunity to increase bus ridership; equity improvements – PayPal integration; reduced barriers; increased data collection; secure visual inspection. You will be showing it to either the bus operator or a fare inspector on the light rail or the Northstar.

Who is mobile ticketing for? Millennials and the tech savvy, cash users, low-income customers, non-commuters/pass holders. For those who take the bus or rail every day, the GoTo card will be the primary medium they are going to promote. For the mobile tickets they are looking to get someone going to the store, game, state fair, etc. There will always be cash.

Something they are working on that is not within the app feature is police reporting the text/SMS messaging through your smart phone reporting. It will be available to anyone with a smartphone or other cell phone. They could report via text a safety issue or other issue. They will place something in the app in phase two that could do this.

Phase 3: Winter 2016. They will be working with the Ride Scout 3.0. It is a fully integrated trip planner. It will offer things like multi modal trip chaining. You could take a bus trip and also take a CARTOGO or an Uber for the trip home. You will get options that will plan that trip in one single trip plan. You could say you want to check your options. How long would it take me to take a bus and how much will it cost?

They would create an app and they would offer a Standard Development Kit (SDK) and they would say this is what we have out there (agencies and organizations that want to be a part of this app) you need to make these minimum requirements and they would take it and add it to their app. They would have options that work for everyone. They would have to make sure they are meeting all of those needs. They are looking at Transit Link. No matter what your situation they would have something to work for everyone. They have to say that some of their options are not accessible for everyone. There is a place in the app that says "Show me accessible options only". It is an extension of the trip planner application. You can set your preferences that say "do not show me non accessible options." It will then only provide you with options that work.

They will also be looking at Push Notification Alerts. They are for route detours. They are working on things like Geofencing so you could set preferences that would alert you that your bus stop is coming up in half a mile or it notifies you that your bus is coming in 10 minutes and you need to get going to catch it.

They are looking at ride matching and the Guaranteed Ride Home program. Those will be integrated into the app so you will be able to do the work to find your ride match or make a Guaranteed Ride Home claim in the app.

Beyond Phase 3. Tag and go payment: You will tag the phone on a reader and not have to show your phone later. They will also have the GoTo features on the phone. The app is a complementary service to the other payment options.

#### **4. Community Gathering Update**

Andy Streasick spoke to the TAAC Committee. The upcoming Community Conversation will be held on Tuesday, June 14, 2016, from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. at the Minneapolis Central Library at 300 Nicollet Mall. The last one was on March 14, 2016. They had a far greater turnout than anticipated. There were so many people that there was standing room only. There was overflow into an adjacent room. There was an article about it in Access Press. The feedback indicated that people liked having a roundtable small group session. Since they started enlisting the help from the Communications department, in doing the small group conversations and then opening it up for discussion they had about 100 people. The feedback they got for the structure was overwhelmingly positive.

There were five key things that came up. One was driver training. They said how come the drivers are not from this country? How come none of your drivers speak any English? The drivers have a lot of training, which is administered in English. They speak the language well enough to go through the trainings. They need to be able to read a map book which is in English. They need to be able to follow directions in English.

Drivers complete first aide training, abuse prevention training, defensive driving, passenger assistance training, and then a very Metro Mobility specific policy and procedures training about what Metro Mobility is and how it works and why they do things the way that they do them. There is ongoing monthly safety meetings where additional trainings take place and refreshers on points of focus. They have heard a lot of complaints that drivers have become dependent on the GPS and have gone away from using the map books. That should be a main go to tool. Occasionally they will initiate trainings and train the trainer sessions that come out of particular passenger concerns. They had a training on how to deal with the deaf/blind community.

There was a request for better routing. There will be more time spent on the bus because of more people on the buses. When they get a complaint about routing, it was because it wasn't routed that way the day before. As soon as one driver starts to run late, schedulers are pulling rides off of that bus to try to make those pick up times work. They apply those rides to different runs, which changes the routing.

The riders wanted to see a day in the life of a trip. What happens and how it works. So they are making a video. They have a rough draft. They are going to debut it in the next Community Conversation. Then they will put it online.

Another thing they talked about was on time performance. They changed how they calculate on time performance to put greater weight on appointment times. Within the past two months they are finally seeing some great results from that. The provider is still not where they want to be but they are up to about 93 percent on time for appointment times. Their goal is 95 percent.

They also talked about a broader coverage area for Metro Mobility. They want increased hours and increased areas of coverage. The short answer is "no" right now. There are no plans to do that. Metro Mobility is always meant to be comparable to fixed route. If fixed route expands and starts to grow into areas it does not serve

currently with local all-day service, Metro Mobility will mirror that immediately and start to cover those areas. But they have no plans to go out and do any additional extra non-mandated service beyond what they already do under state law. To expand they would have to significantly raise fares for the non-federally mandated trips or start to deny non-federally mandated trips. Currently those STS trips go on standby. They would rather to not do that. They talk about Transit Link. Right now that service is very limited. There is no service on weekends. It was designed to be like commuter runs. They stop around 7:00 or 8:00 p.m. For people who are concerned with service area because they live in or travel to somewhere that is out of the Metro Mobility service area, Transit Link has an option.

The last thing they talked about was the desire to have improved communication with riders and have better dialogues. When they were putting their public meetings or public forums together themselves it was Andy or Andrew giving a 10 minute powerpoint presentation and then opening it up for questions. They sent out a newsletter telling people it was coming. They would tell some disability service agencies that it was coming. They would get between two and a dozen people to show up. The amount of work that the Communications department has done would create a dynamic exchange where customers are talking to them about what they want and what they are experiencing and asking them questions about why things are the way they are.

They still send out newsletters in times of transition. There is one that is about to go out telling people about the GoTo card. They are not going to do another print order for the tickets. They want people to be aware of that ahead of time. They will continue to do three of these Community Conversations a year. They are talking to their software vendor about the launch of a mobile app that they are anticipating for possibly later this year that will show a "where's my bus" feature. It will show in real time where the bus is. It will give people the option to use their phones to get information about where their ride is.

They asked about getting refunded on their GoTo card if they are picked up late or they missed their appointment time. They are to contact the Service Center and they will refund the money on the GoTo card.

A Metro Mobility rider wanted to take a group of seniors with him to a game on Metro Mobility. He was told that he could take one person as a paying guest and another as a PCA. But no more than two people.

People asked if they could bring non-service animals with them. They can if they have them in carriers. The animal must be under the control of the passenger or their PCA.

They asked about mailing lists. They do have a news update that they push out regularly. They use that in times of bad weather where the National Weather Service is forecasting extremely adverse conditions to let people know that Metro Mobility will be running late and the passenger may want to consider postponing their trip if it is non-essential. This has helped people who have trips that they cannot postpone experience a more reliable ride if others cancel their rides.

The drivers don't know anything about a person's disability unless a passenger requests it. This could be if a person was deaf or blind.

Children under six can ride for free. Children over six can ride for free if they are the PCA for the passenger. If a child needs a car seat the passenger has to secure it themselves. The driver would check to see the car seat is secured properly. The driver does not carry the occupied car seat to or from a vehicle. The driver can carry the empty car seat to and from the vehicle.

The maximum on board time is all about the calculation formula. It is mileage by triangulation times four plus 30. That gives the trip length in minutes. It is no longer the case that it used to be. The rule was a flat 90 minutes. If you were on the bus more than 90 minutes that was a violation. If you were on the bus less than 90 minutes you were fine. If you feel you were on the bus too long you can call the service center and they can tell you if you were. After a ride is booked any reservationist could tell you what the mileage is. Ninety percent of the trips are less than 15 miles.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **1. Blue Line**

No report.

### **2. Green Line**

No report.

### **3. Orange Line**

Nichole Villavicencio spoke to the TAAC committee. Right now they are working on the designs of the stations. This line goes from downtown Minneapolis to Burnsville. This month they will be working on the American Boulevard station and the Knox Avenue alignment. They are looking for feedback for people who live in that area. They are going to be working on the 98<sup>th</sup> Street station. In June they are going to be working on the Nicollet Avenue station, the Burnsville Parkway station and the 76<sup>th</sup> Street station. In July they are going to be working on the Knox Avenue station. They will be updating the 12<sup>th</sup> Street station. Then there is the downtown station improvement. Villavicencio has some concerns about some station designs.

Villavicencio asked the TAAC members to go online and look at the designs.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

#### **MEMBER COMMENT**

Pam Steffen said that at the June, July or August meeting the Orange Line staff will be presenting to TAAC.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

Alison Coleman  
Recording Secretary