

**Transit Plus Advisory Council  
April 16, 2024 Minutes**

**PLACE:** Milwaukee County Transit System Administration Building, 1942 N. 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Large Conference Room & via Microsoft Teams Meeting

**PRESENT:** David Buck - Chair, Jim Bahneman – Vice-Chair, Gerald Balezentis, Laurel Henschel, Marcia Perkins, Arlene Washington, Mae Wingo

**ABSENT:**

**GUESTS:** Janice Briggs-Simmon, Terry Hogans, Elois Reed, Anita Spight, Helen White - TPAC Applicants; Stephanie Jones, Kevin Meyers -guest; Brian Kading and Latisha Scott – Transdev; David Locher - MCTS Service Development; Lisa Walters and JoEllen Douville - Transit Plus

**CALL TO ORDER:** Moment of silence for the passing of Grace Graves. A celebration of Grace’s life will be held at Villa Terrace on May 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes of the March 19, 2024, meeting were approved.

**COMMITTEES:**

**Driver/Reservationist Recognition Committee:** no report

**Membership Committee:** Applicant Terry Hogans was interviewed before today’s meeting. Laurel Henschel had called but was unable to get in.

**Public Relations Committee:** David Buck reported that there was a ribbon cutting at the Couture on April 11<sup>th</sup> for the new transit concourse that will serve The Hop’s new L line. The concourse will also serve MCTS’ Connect 1 BRT beginning June 2nd. Fares on Connect 1 will be charged beginning April 5<sup>th</sup>.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**MCTS North/South BRT:** David Locher of MCTS Service Development provided a presentation on the upcoming Connect 2 which has been in the planning since June of 2023 and is expected to be launched in 2028. The North/South BRT will be built along 27<sup>th</sup> Street. The current purple line along 27<sup>th</sup> Street is one of the most used MCTS routes. The North/South BRT will run 18 miles from Bayshore to Ikea and will link riders to businesses and jobs. There will be 32 station areas. There will also be a local route that will run during the same hours as the BRT but will make more stops. The BRT will feature quick-board stations, bus only lanes, signal enhancements, level boarding, kneeling ramps, off board fare collections, and Quantum securement. The capital cost for the BRT is estimated to be \$148 million made up of 80% federal funds and 20% local funds. Sidewalks and sidewalk ramps are being completed to make the route more accessible. Accessibility features such as braille and audio will also be added. An

environmental review and an ADA review of the design is upcoming. Community input on the BRT is being sought.

**TPAC Meeting Time:** The Council voted unanimously to extend their monthly meeting time to 3:30 p.m.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Van Contract Transition:** Lisa Walters reported that service is still being stabilized under the new contract. On-time performance for March was 93.40%, just over the target of 93%. Overall, we are seeing sustained improvement, but still have periodic days when on-time performance goals are not hit. Transdev is still working to hit other key performance indicators such as timely appointment time drop offs and ride duration. They are hiring drivers and addressing driver no call/no shows. Fares are no longer free in the BRT zone. They are working on a new driver route pick to better align staffing with peak demand periods. Transdev has also restructured their phone tree. The phone tree used to have reservations as option #1 and dispatch #2 during the day and then the option for dispatched changed to #1 when reservations was closed. Now dispatch is always option #2 no matter the time of day. If someone presses #1 when reservations is closed, they will get a "closed" message instructing them to press #2 for dispatch to check on their ride.

**TPAC By-laws:** Laurel Henschel reported that there are not many revisions needed to the by-laws. Laurel advised that Section 3 of the by-laws require the Council to be diverse and must have members with different disabilities, residing in different parts of the County, different functional needs and abilities, different ages, different races, different socio-economic status, and a mix of riders and guardians of riders. Laurel suggested that the Council have a way to track its diversity to be sure the by-law requirements are being met. Laurel also explained that a quorum is a majority of the currently appointed members. She also explained that the Executive Committee is comprised of the Chair, Vice-Chair and the Chair of each Committee. The Chair may call for meetings of the Executive Committee. The Council can establish no less than three or more than five Committees. The by-laws also call for a Parliamentarian.

**TPAC Membership Committee:** David Buck will serve as acting Chair of this Committee until such time when someone comes forward with an interest in serving in this role.

**IVR and My Transit Manager App:** Lisa Walters reported that the IVR was launched on March 20th. Overall, the response has been positive. Some issues have come up that are still being worked out. My Transit Manager is scheduled to be launched in May. The app can be used online or with a smartphone. The app will allow riders to track vehicles, receive notifications by email, text or in the app. It is available in English and Spanish and it is screen reader compatible. Transit Plus is scheduling outreach and training and developing an FAQ for the app. We are looking for volunteers to be early adopters of the app. David Buck advised that he is an early adopter.

**Paratransit Taxi Task Force:** Lisa Walters reported that the next meeting will be on April 28. The Task Force is looking at program parameters such as types of rides, number of rides, trip purpose, etc. and is trying to launch a "pilot" program within the next few months.

**MOBILITY MANAGEMENT REPORT:** Jo Douville reported that Freedom on Wheels

presentations were provided for WCS Core, Project Search, DVR, Pulaski High School, Obama High School, and Goodwill. ADA training was recently provided for 24 drivers. Travel Training is being scheduled for twelve participants of South Division High School and Wauwatosa East High School combined.

**TRANSDEV REPORT:** Brian Kading reported that Transdev is fully staffed except for drivers. They held a job fair and hired 45 drivers. Fourteen of these will be starting training this week and 15 to 20 next week. They will be having a new pick to accommodate peak time and weekend schedules. The new pick will take place next week and will be implemented in the third week of May. Transdev is providing \$25.00 gift card incentives for drivers who work extra. The feedback from My Transit Manager on the drivers is mostly positive. This should increase morale and decrease bad behavior.

**TRANSIT PLUS REPORT:** Lisa Walters reported that 30,042 trips were provided in March. This is 700 more rides than in February. It is common to see an uptick in rides in March. This year the increase occurred a little earlier in February due to a mild winter. Connect 1 free rides and free paratransit rides in the BRT zone ended April 15th.

#### **OPEN DISCUSSION:**

Laurel Henschel asked why drivers aren't staying. Brian Kading advised that turnover in Milwaukee is consistent with the industry. He stated that they care and want to have the right people. They are keeping their senior drivers.

Arlene Washington complained that the drivers did not get out of the van to assist with the ramp.

Stephanie Jones stated that a driver put her and another rider on the lift together. She also had a concern about the cancellations on her record.

Janice Briggs-Simon complained that a dispatcher hung up on her.

Helen White complained that she has not been getting assistance from drivers and that she was dropped off at the wrong house. She stated that Anna, Angela and Music Mike are good drivers. She also reported that she overheard #141 arguing with the dispatcher on the radio because he was supposed to be off at 5:00 p.m. Brian Kading advised that the driver should have put the radio on "private".

Anita Spight complained that her 5:00 p.m. ride had been unscheduled and that she did not get picked up until 6:30 p.m. She was told that 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. was peak time and that drivers had called off. She also stated door to door is not happening.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**