

**Transit Plus Advisory Council
May 21, 2024 Minutes**

PLACE: Milwaukee County Transit System Administration Building, 1942 N. 17th 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: Terry Hogans, Elois Reed, Kelley Santi, Anita Spight, Helen White - TPAC Applicants; Kevin Meyers, Peter Oakman - guests; Brian Kading, Paul Buharin and Patrick O'Brien – Transdev; Darnell Shorter – ATU Local 998, Fran Musci, Paula Schultz and Lisa Walters - Transit Plus

CALL TO ORDER:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the April 16, 2024, meeting were approved.

COMMITTEES:

Driver/Reservationist Recognition Committee: no report

Membership Committee: Two new applications for TPAC membership have been received from Kelley Santi and Nilda Rivera. Kelley Santi was attending her first meeting. David Buck reported that Arlene Washington will be the Vice-Chair of the Membership Committee.

Public Relations Committee: David Buck reported that there is a new strain of COVID and urged everyone to get their boosters for COVID and the flu. He also advised that Summerfest is coming up in June and July and the State Fair in August.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Van Contract Transition: Fran Musci reported that Transit Plus is meeting with Transdev every day to stabilize service. On-time performance for April was 89.77%. April had 230 missed trips. May is rebounding. So far, the on-time performance for May is at 93.09%. Other key performance indications still need to be met. There is a new driver pick. New schedules are effective May 26, 2024. The new schedules should better align driver availability with rider demand. Dispatcher schedules are also changing. A change to the phone system was made at the end of April. When telephone option #2 is pressed, the call will always go to dispatch. There have been fewer complaints about dispatch phones.

IVR/"My Transit Manager" App: Fran Musci reported that the IVR system has been up since March. People are getting reminder calls. There may not be an imminent arrival call if the van arrives early. There have also been occasions where dispatch has moved someone's ride after the rider received an imminent arrival call. On June 3, 2024, the My Transit

Manager app will be launched. So far there are 60 early adopters of the app. The app enables riders to get phone, text, and email notifications. Trip notifications are provided the day before and minutes before. You can see where the van is on a map. Caregivers can watch someone's rides. Let us know if you want to start the app early. Outreach sessions and information on our website will be available on the app.

PARATRANSIT TAXI TASK FORCE: Fran Musci reported that a Request for Information (RFI) was put out. The RFI asks potential vendors if they could provide the features of the service we are looking for. Responses are due on Friday. The Task Force will look at the responses to see who may meet our requirements. It will then be figured out how to proceed with a pilot.

NEW BUSINESS:

July TPAC Meeting will be Virtual: Fran Musci reported that due to the Republican National Convention (RNC) the July TPAC meeting will be held virtually. Members and guests can join the TPAC meeting by telephone or computer.

Summerfest Service: Paula Schultz reported that paratransit van service will operate at Summerfest the same as last year. Pickups and drop offs will be performed at the mid-gate. Fixed route will operate three shuttles from the College Avenue, Hales Corners and Brown Deer Park and Ride lots. The full fare is \$10.00. Reduced fare is \$5.00. Riders will pay when they get off the bus. The Connect 1 stops at the Couture which is at the north end of the festival grounds where Discovery World is located. Local Routes 15, 18 and the Green Line drop off on Water Street.

June Service Changes: Paula Schultz reported that MCTS June service changes start on June 3, 2024. On weekdays Route 18 will alternate between IBVI and Beyond Vision. This is a big change compared to the two buses a day IBVI currently has. This will provide more flexibility between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Weekend and evening service will remain the same as now. A press event will be held on June 3rd. Donna Brown-Martin and other County officials will ride the bus to IBVI.

Account Based Fare Collection System: Fran Musci reported that Transit Plus is working on trying to see if there is a way to get rid of Transit Plus tickets. Currently Transit Plus tickets can be purchased by mail, on-line or at the MCTS cashier window. Tickets are an effort to print, sell and count. At times tickets have gotten lost in the mail. The current Transit Plus ID card do not have a chip in it for fare payment. We would like to try and make purchasing fare comparable to the fixed route bus and are trying to find out if there is a way to use technology such as the UMO/WisGo app or Trapeze scheduling software to put money on an account to use on the bus or the van or pay with a credit card. Neither option will be easy, so this may not happen quickly. A book of Transit Plus tickets is \$40.00. However, with the UMO/WisGo app, riders can put any amount of money on their account. Bus riders can use a WisGo card or a smart phone app to pay their fares. Money can be put on the WisGo card on-line, at a local store or at the MCTS cashier window. Transit Plus is thinking about the possibility of arranging billing agreements with Managed Care Organizations. If WisGo is the option, there would need to be scanners on the van. Either handheld or mounted scanners or use of the driver's tablet. Gerld Balezentis stated that he uses the WisGo card on the bus and likes the idea of the card being interchangeable with the van. Terry Hogans would like to have a call-in option to put money on a card.

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT REPORT: Paula Schultz reported that presentations at schools are winding down. Senior centers and senior housing will be the summer focus of presentations. Let us know if you want us to bring a bus for a presentation.

TRANSDEV REPORT: Brian Kading introduced Patrick O'Brien who is his new Assistant General Manager replacing Latisha Scott. Patrick advised that he had a long history in transportation, EMS and for First Transit in Du Page County and Chicago. He will be moving to Milwaukee. Brian Kading further reported that there was a driver pick last Friday which will be implemented this coming Sunday. This should better align driver schedules to demand for service. There will be more drivers between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. A pick is made twice per year. The last pick took place in November. Drivers pick their schedules by seniority. Peoples' drivers have shifts throughout the day. The dispatch phone system was switched to a queue. A dashboard was installed in dispatch to monitor the number of calls holding and hold times. The system is working up to expectations. Phone complaints have decreased. April had service issues. So far, on-time for May is above contract KPI at 93%. Keep putting your feedback on the app. They are coaching drivers about negative feedback and sharing positive feedback with drivers. This helps improve morale. Summerfest will be held over three upcoming weekends. Transdev has hired a lot of new drivers but will make sure they are trained where to go. Driving in and out of Summerfest can be intimidating for new drivers. Transdev will have Road Supervisors on-site at Summerfest during peak times for loading and unloading passengers. Paul Buharin stated that staffing changes will help with sustained service improvement.

TRANSIT PLUS REPORT: Fran Musci reported that 30,748 trips were provided in April. This is 700 more rides than in March. Ridership is increasing. There will be a public meeting on Saturday, June 1, 2024, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Independence First to share concerns about overall paratransit service. MCDOT will be there. I will be there as well as Paul Buharin and Patrick O'Brien. TPAC is still the County instituted vehicle for riders to talk about their concerns.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

Kelley Santi had a concern that Froedert Cancer Center was scanning purses and locking their doors at 5:30 p.m.

Arlene Washington had a concern that this past weekend drivers were not using the safety belt on the lift and that drivers are not getting out of the van to help her get on the lift. She also had a long ride to and from a clinic recently.

Jim Bahneman stated that the IVR is working wonderfully. Drivers need to be trained on how to get in and out of American Family Field.

Laurel Henschel stated that dispatchers and schedulers need to know that pickups and drop-offs can be made on both the east and the west sides of 2801 W. Kinnickinnic Parkway. Last week getting picked up on the east side of the building was a problem for her.

Helen White stated she was having a problem with the app on her phone.

Anita Spight complained that last Thursday the van arrived late for her trip to Froedert and she

couldn't be seen. Fran Musci apologized for this lapse.

Terry Hogans stated that on May 6th he was not on a route for his return ride from work. His co-workers on the southside bus had already left. There was a lot of confusion and disconnect between the driver, dispatchers, and schedulers.

Elois Reed stated that dispatch staff do not know how to talk to people. They need to be more courteous.

Darrell Shorter stated that drivers have a concern about ride duration. Drivers are working overtime. Transdev is not yet fully staffed.

ADJOURNMENT