

**Transit Plus Advisory Council  
December 17, 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, Laurel Henschel, Terry Hogans, Elois Reed, Nilda Rivera, Arlene Washington, Mae Wingo

**ABSENT:** Gerald Balezentis, Janice Briggs-Simmon, Kelley Santi

**GUESTS:** Rev. William Jackson, Anita Spight, Patricia Martin – TPAC Applicants; Kevin Meyers, Rebecca Rabatin, Mark Ward and Patrick O'Brien – Transdev; Ben Wheelock and Joe Pietrek – Via; Jeff Sponcia – MCDOT; Fran Musci, Megan Newman, Paula Schultz and Lisa Walters - Transit Plus; Jesus Ochoa – Service Development for MCTS

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes of the November 19, 2024 meeting were approved. Motion by Arlene Washington and second by Jim Bahneman.

**COMMITTEES:**

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

**Membership Committee:** Applicant Patricia Martin and Rev. William Jackson were interviewed today, the vote to add new members will occur in January.

**Public Relations Committee:** David Buck reported that a state inspector removed a Hop streetcar from service and Transdev has been notified.

**Nominating Committee for 2025 Officers:** David Buck ran unopposed for Chair and Terry Hogans ran unopposed for Vice-Chair. Both have been elected to their respective positions beginning January 2025.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**Same Day Ride Pilot:** Fran Musci reported that ridership in the program is growing slowly – trip totals as follows: September – 10 trips, October – 10 trips, November – 22 trips. As of December 16, there have been a total of 21 trips.

**TPAC Bylaws:** All members have received a copy of the 2024 revised Bylaws.

**TPAC Virtual Meeting Access:** The new link seems to have resolved the accessibility issue. We will use this link moving forward.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

**TPAC Appreciation Lunch:** Menu: Fried chicken and sides plus dessert. All members should plan to attend in person so we can thank you for your volunteer efforts on our behalf. This will also be the last meeting prior to Lisa Walters' retirement.

**MCTS Move 2025:** Jesus from the MCTS Service Development Team briefly discussed plan for route updates to take place in Fall 2025. The goal is to adjust routes by adding service where needed and drawing back service on routes that are less utilized to make it a budget neutral transition. Jesus encourages riders to give their input to help guide the decisions of the planning team as they implement the changes. There are several upcoming listening sessions:

January 14 – Milwaukee Public Library – East Branch at 5:30 PM

January 16 – Oak Creek City Hall at 1:00 PM

January 22 – Silver Spring Neighborhood Center at 5:30 PM

January 25 – Village of West Milwaukee Community Center at 10:00 AM

February 4 – MCTS Administration Building from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

If people are unable to attend one of the listening sessions, they can complete an online survey at <https://www.ridemcts.com/routes-schedules/move> There is additional information at this website pertaining to the proposed changes.

**MOBILITY MANAGEMENT REPORT:** Fixed route bus fare cap increases as of January 1, 2025. Reduced fare will be \$1.00 for the first ride with a 90-minute transfer. The fare caps at \$2.50 per day, \$11.00 per week and \$37.50 per month.

Northern Illinois University will be offering a certification program for Orientation and Mobility Trainers in Milwaukee. This program will be offered in Fall of 2025 and is a three-semester course. The Milwaukee area will benefit greatly with more O&M Certified Trainers available.

The Mobility Management Team is booking Freedom on Wheels group training sessions for 2025. If anyone is interested in a group session or individual travel training, reach out to Paula.

**TRANSDEV REPORT:** Patrick O'Brien reported that they have been working on hiring and staffing is increasing to a more acceptable level. They are expanding staff on the dispatching team and are extending driver training by two days, so they have more opportunity to shadow a veteran driver. Transdev is expecting 14 new buses in the first quarter of 2025. Upon arrival, they will retire 7 vans.

**VIA REPORT:** Joe Pietrek reported he is pleased to see that ridership is growing and we are working on ways to spread the word about this pilot program. Jim Bahneman says that he had a great experience on his same day ride to the doctor. He is doing his best to spread the word himself.

**TRANSIT PLUS REPORT:** Fran Musci reported that ridership for November was 19,921 rides, down slightly from October.

In October 2024, 33,674 trips were provided. There were 116 missed trips (arrive outside window trip not taken). On-time was at 93.22%. Productivity was at 1.50. There were 117

complaints received in October. Highest categories: On-time – 21, Door to Door – 13, Ride Duration – 12, Late Appointment – 12, Pick up / Drop off Problem – 11. There were two formal commendations.

Service continues to fall short of Transit Plus expectations. Transdev provided an improvement plan with additional actions that will begin in December and into the first quarter 2025 to improve overall performance. Key measures will be hiring an Assistant General Manager, scheduled to start January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, and a Customer Service Manager who will own the customer interactions, complaint follow-ups and communication.

Transit Plus was awarded two 5310 Grant requests. They were:

Mobility Management: Paula's team will continue to be funded to help train new MCTS drivers and riders of both paratransit and fixed route bus.

Account Based Fare Collection: This means, at some point, we will no longer need to collect tickets. Paratransit riders will be able to use a WisGo card just like fixed route riders. WisGo is used by transit providers in other communities such as Waukesha, Beloit, Racine and Oshkosh so the same fare card can be used in those locations. We will begin working on the logistics of this program, which will take all of 2025, with hopes of implementing in 2026.

## **OPEN DISCUSSION:**

Kevin Meyers stated that there was an error in the June 2024 minutes. Kevin stated that he did not ask the question if TPAC members were reimbursed for their transportation to meetings. David Buck thanked Kevin for bringing this to the Council's attention and that the error was duly noted.

Helen White had a concern about Transdev's handling of trips for IBVI compared to that of Beyond Vision. Helen stated that the vans are ready and waiting outside Beyond Vision but are late to IBVI. She also complained that IBVI routes change all the time, and the drivers are not assisting riders in the morning. She said that they ring the doorbell and go back to the door. Patrick O'Brien advised that door to door service is a must and that riders should call and report instances when this is not provided so that Transdev can have a one-on-one conversation with the driver. If the problem is not properly reported it cannot be corrected. Transdev is increasing cadet training from 2 days to 4 days. Drivers should also dress for the weather and wait at the door for the rider to come out and be walked to the van. Patrick urged everyone to also ask for the assistance they need. He also stated that there is no difference between Beyond Vision and IBVI and that Transdev wants to improve service for everyone and is working on improving routes. They want to make cohesive routes. Routes are made ahead of time, but dispatchers and drivers should try to improve routes in real time.

Rebecca Rabatin had a concern about bus stops and where to go to get bus stops modified. Fran Musci advised her that she should contact Dan Adams of MCTS Service Development. Fran stated she would get his phone number and email address to her.

Reverend Jackson complained that he was recently late for a business meeting. Patrick O'Brien explained that trips can be booked with a pickup time or an appointment time. Riders need to choose either one. If a rider books by an appointment time, Transdev will let you know what time they will need to pick you up at so that they can get you to your appointment on time. Fran

Musci also commented that dispatchers should not make decisions that would make you late for your appointment.

Arlene Washington wanted to know if riders had to put in their credit card information in advance for the same day plot. Fran advised that yes, credit card information can be provided in advance. Arlene also stated that she has had trouble when calling Transdev to ask for an earlier pick up. Patrick O'Brien stated that they encourage dispatchers to look for an earlier ride, but that they cannot guarantee any early adjustments can be made to rides.

Kevin Meyers wanted to know how van rides are compared to fixed route. Is it a report? Fran Musci advised it is based on a daily percentage, not a report.

## **ADJOURNMENT**