

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
June 24, 2014**

The Transportation Advisory Committee met on June 24, 2014 at 12:00 p.m. in the airport's Eastern Conference Room. The following were present:

**Attendees:**

Wade Key, Chairman	Ralph Price
John Moody, Vice-Chairman	Joe King, City Manager
Larry Campbell	Ken Larking, Deputy City Manager
Alexis Ehrhardt	Marc Adelman, Transportation Services Director
Judy Keesee	Lisa Bivens, Administrative Assistant

**New Committee Member - Alexis Ehrhardt**

Wade Key welcomed Alexis Ehrhardt, the new member of the Transportation Advisory Committee. Ms. Ehrhardt filled the vacancy left by James Buckner, who was elected to City Council in May.

**Approval of Minutes**

Larry Campbell moved that the minutes of the January 28, 2014 meeting be accepted as presented and Judy Keesee seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**Review of Financial and Monthly Ridership Reports**

Marc Adelman reviewed the monthly ridership and financial status reports with the Committee.

**FY15 Budget Update**

Marc Adelman indicated that the state has recently released information concerning the FY 2015 operating and capital grant allocations. A total of \$498,530 was budgeted locally for federal capital aid during FY15 and the actual allocation amount identified by the state is consistent with the budgeted amount. Extra state capital aid will be received during FY15 than identified in the city's budget. It was anticipated that state capital aid would finance twelve percent of the total project capital cost for a total of \$75,780 but the state will provide additional matching funds at sixteen percent in the amount of \$99,706. The state also allocated more Section 5311 federal operating funds for FY15 than received during FY14. However, state operating aid will be reduced for FY15 to \$296,304 compared to \$330,000 that was received during FY14. A total of \$320,000 was identified in the city's operating budget for state operating aid for FY15. In summary, the total amount budgeted locally for FY15 state transit aid will be very similar to the overall state allocation since the unanticipated reduction in state operating aid will be offset by an increase in capital aid that was also unexpected.

Over the past two years Danville has received federal and state operating funds through a Section 5317 New Freedom grant that the state also oversees. This grant subsidizes the cost of the senior transportation merger that began in October 2012. Adelman stated that he requested New Freedom grant funding for FY15 based upon an anticipated operating budget of \$170,956 however, the state only approved an operating budget of \$153,860 due to limited available funding.

### **FY15 Budget Update (continued)**

The federal portion of the New Freedom grant provides funding for fifty percent of the deficit and state aid provides funding to finance forty percent of the deficit. However, it is anticipated that surplus federal operating funds may be available through the 5311 rural operating grant to contain the local contribution requirement for expenses related to the senior merger.

### **Proposed Route and Schedule Changes**

Adelman said that since our last meeting various options have been evaluated for serving the new YMCA and American National University. The American National University requested a total of only three bus runs during the morning and afternoon on weekdays so more convenient service could be provided to the campus. A primary goal in trying to accommodate the university's request was to implement route changes that would avoid requiring passengers to walk across Old Riverside Drive to the westbound side of Riverside drive to board and disembark the bus. Another important goal involved ensuring new service would be convenient for passengers traveling to the university with respect to ride time. Likewise, Adelman said he did not want passengers to ride on the bus for thirty minutes before they arrived at the YMCA after they left the hub or after they boarded at the YMCA and returned to the hub.

Another important goal in providing new service for both locations involved the need to maintain reliable service since routes would need to be extended to serve the YMCA and American National University. Also, proposed service changes should take into account the need to maintain service to existing bus stops as much as possible to minimize passenger confusion and avoid a possible reduction in ridership. Adelman added that passenger count information was collected for the bus stop times that would be eliminated due to proposed route modifications. Related data reflected that ridership activity was minimal at those run times and in some cases there was no activity at all. Discussion continued. Adelman reviewed the proposed route changes in detail with the Committee.

To serve the YMCA it is proposed to modify the #2 Third Avenue – Nor Dan route and the #2 Riverside route. Changes to the #2 Third Avenue route would include traveling across the Union Street Bridge after leaving the hub instead of the Martin Luther King Bridge. The route would then make a right turn onto Riverside Drive and serve the YMCA before making a left turn and traveling north along North Main when it would return to its current route path. This modification will add one to four minutes to the route dependent upon traffic flow. It is also proposed to modify the #2 Riverside route by traveling west along Riverside Drive and then crossing over the Martin Luther King Bridge and traveling back to the hub instead of returning to the hub via the Union Street Bridge.

To serve American National University the only routes that could be modified to improve access to the campus are the #2 and #5 Riverside routes due to their proximity to Old Riverside Drive. Currently, the #5 Riverside route travels west along Riverside Drive and then travels to the Danville Mall by making a right turn onto Mt. Cross Road. It is proposed to modify the #5 Riverside route by extending its path along Riverside Drive past Mt. Cross Road on the 8:00 am and 12:10 pm runs and make a right turn onto Old Riverside Drive to serve American National University.

### **Proposed Route and Schedule Changes (continued)**

Other proposed changes to the #5 Riverside route would involve eliminating a right turn onto Piney Forest Road and missing bus stops along Piney Forest, Hairston and Joplin at 12:10 pm.

Currently, the #2 Riverside route travels along Memorial Drive and then exits onto Central Boulevard and Piedmont Drive to serve the Danville Mall. It is also recommended to modify the #2 Riverside route at 5:00 pm by exiting off of Central Boulevard onto Riverside Drive to serve American National University and then get back on route by serving the mall by making a left turn onto Mt. Cross Road from Old Riverside Drive. This change may be difficult for the drivers to remember since this is the only time during the day this service would be provided. It may be necessary to have the dispatcher remind drivers of this change before the 5:00 run.

*A motion was made by Joe King and seconded by Larry Campbell to modify the routes as discussed to serve the YMCA and American National University. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

### **Review of the New Route and Schedule Guide**

Copies of the new proposed route and schedule guide were distributed for review. Some of the changes in the new guide were based on recommendations from the Middle Border Forward Group. As discussed at the last meeting this organization expressed interest for the transit system to develop a more user-friendly guide. The new guide has been changed to include multiple color-coded routes that match the color of routes identified in the system map. In addition, transfer options for different routes were added at the bottom of each route to make it easier for passengers to determine how to reach their final destination. Adelman said that he also received input concerning the proposed changes from the YMCA director, the American National University campus director, bus passengers, administrative staff and bus drivers. Other recommendations to make the guide more user-friendly included changing some of the route names and numbers for different routes. Discussion continued.

Public meetings are scheduled to discuss the route and schedule guide changes. The drivers will distribute flyers to passengers to make riders aware of the meetings. New bus stop signs will be installed at the American National University and YMCA bus stops. A sign will be installed at the Danville Pittsylvania Community Services bus shelter that identifies the stop will not be served at 12:10 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 pm.