

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
December 6, 2016**

The Transportation Advisory Committee met on December 6, 2016 at 12:00 am in the airport's Eastern Conference Room. The following were present:

**Attendees:**

Alexis Ehrhardt, Chairperson	John Moody
Ralph Price, Vice-Chairperson	Marc Adelman, Transportation Services Director
Judy Keesee	Lisa Bivens, Administrative Assistant
Councilman Larry Campbell	

**Approval of Minutes**

Ralph Price moved that the minutes of the August 10, 2016 meeting be accepted as presented and John Moody seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Review of Financial and Monthly Ridership Reports**

Marc Adelman completed a PowerPoint presentation which involved a review of monthly ridership and financial status report data for the period July through October 2016. Of significance, Reserve A Ride ridership has increased greatly by 38% for the first four months of FY17. Fixed Route ridership has decreased 9% during the same timeframe.

Passenger fares realized for the period are very close to budget. In addition, overtime charges are over budget by 88% due in part to driver availability and increased drivers wage rates which went into effect the first of August. State operating aid compared to the forecasted budget figure is greater by 37% year to date. As mentioned previously, the city was informed in June that Danville Transit would receive \$405,000 in State operating aid and only \$295,000 was budgeted for this fiscal year. This increase in aid served as the basis to adjust drivers wage rates.

Adelman also provided information and discussed issues related to using propane vehicles versus diesel vehicles. He indicated that several factors can influence whether the use of propane powered vehicles would be more cost effective than other vehicles such as the availability of the federal rebate for propane fuel. Adelman also discussed overtime related issues with the Committee. He indicated that the increased overtime expense is directly related to increased passenger demand for the reservation based service and driver availability. During the first three months of the fiscal year ridership was up 44% for the Reserve A Ride service year to date and during that same time there were four vacant full time driver positions.

Adelman discussed the following strategies to improve driver availability and reduce overtime with the Committee;

- August 2016 - Full time drivers received a 15% pay increase in addition to their pay for performance increase. In addition, to improve the incentive of bus operators to remain full time employees were informed that if they elect to change their full time status to part-time status then their wages will be reduced to \$11.38.
- October 2016 - Completed the first hiring event with the Virginia Employment Commission and the Virginia Workforce Center, (10 candidates interviewed)
- November 2016 - Eliminated the requirement for full time candidates to maintain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) to obtain an interview and gain employment
- New hires without a CDL may drive one of three buses in fleet (under 16 passengers)
- New hires without a CDL have 90 days to obtain a CDL through the Department of Motor Vehicles
- Capital replacement plan for FY18 recommends replacing some 20 passenger buses with 14 passenger buses to increase recruitment of applicants without a CDL
- He recommended creating an Operations Assistant position to monitor evening service
- He recommended limiting reservations received from all non-disabled passengers to 300 per day

#### **Recommendation to cap reservations for non-disabled passengers**

Adelman indicated that the primary reason a cap for reservations is needed for all Reserve A Ride passengers including those over sixty years old is due to limited resources associated with buses and drivers. Service levels need to be held constant so that the transit system can catch up with recruiting drivers and better contain the overtime situation. Per the recommendation of the Transportation Advisory Committee public information meetings will be advertised and held to communicate this information. In addition, letters will be mailed to senior transportation passengers that could potentially be affected by the cap. *A motion was made by Lawrence Campbell and seconded by John Moody to cap ambulatory passenger reservations to 300 for the demand response service as discussed. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

#### **Mainline Trolley bus service recommendations**

Adelman discussed a summary of survey responses that were received related to the proposed Mainline Trolley service and recommendations made by the Mainline Trolley Sub-Committee. In addition, the proposed route was reviewed by the Committee.

#### **Mainline Trolley Survey response information:**

- Total of 457 responses received, Majority of respondents live within the city limits
- Majority of respondents are in close proximity to the planned route
- Majority of respondents are between 25 – 60 years old
- It is likely that many customers would use park and ride lots to access the service
- Customer activity would likely be greatest on Saturdays
- Customers would likely use the service more often between 10 am and 10 pm
- Customers would likely use the service weekly or monthly (estimated park and ride use, trip purpose activity and survey responses to question #10)
- Customers would likely use the service for trip purposes that would occur weekly or monthly (i.e. shopping, dining, special events)

**Mainline Trolley Survey response information (continued):**

- Majority of respondents would be willing to walk between 2-3 blocks to access the route

**Mainline Trolley Service Recommendations:**

- Offer service on Saturdays from 10 am until 10 pm
- Offer service one Friday per month from 5 pm – 12 am for special events
- Market service to organizations/businesses to promote group trips
- Total hours for Friday evening and Saturday service = 727.5 hours
- Estimated total operating cost at \$25 per hour - \$18,187
- Conservative estimate for passenger revenue for first year - \$7,000
- Anticipated additional federal operating assistance available to cover ½ of the operating deficit
- Estimated local contribution for service - \$4000 to \$7000

*After discussion a motion was made by John Moody and seconded by Ralph Price to experiment with Mainline Trolley service as discussed beginning July 1, 2017 relative to staffing levels being sufficient. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

**Update on plans to initiate bus service for Averett University**

The Smartscale grant funds were allocated this fall for Danville Transit to purchase two, twenty-eight passenger propane buses utilizing 100% state funding. One bus will be used to provide service for Averett University to the north campus starting next fall. The other bus will be used as a spare.

The first reading for City Council to consider allocating state funds for this project will occur on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Adelman said that since the last meeting he has had several conversations with Charles Harris and Aaron Howell of Averett University regarding the proposed route. Presently, the bus route is planned to serve Averett University's Main and North Campuses, the YMCA and the Transfer Center to give students an opportunity to connect with the fixed route service. This bus service is scheduled to begin in August 2017.

**Update on Mass Transit building and parking lot expansion**

A progress meeting is scheduled for December 6<sup>th</sup> with the architect and Quality Construction to discuss the status of the building project. Currently, the footings have been poured for the building. The building is anticipated to be completed next summer.

**Review and approval of the FY2018 operating and capital budgets**

Marc Adelman completed a PowerPoint presentation to update the Committee on the proposed FY2018 operating, capital and New Freedom grant applications.

### **FY 18 Operating Budget Highlights**

<b>Operating Revenue and Expense Line Items</b>	<b>FY17 Budget</b>	<b>FY18 Budget</b>	<b>Anticipated Difference</b>
Passenger Fares - Increase due to Averett and trolley service	\$330,000	\$362,000	\$32,000
Rental Income - Reduction due to loss of Greyhound service	\$25,000	\$14,000	(\$11,000)
State operating aid - Based on actual allocation received for FY17	\$295,250	\$405,808	\$110,558
Federal operating aid - Eligibility based on anticipated FY18 deficit	\$706,960	<b>\$830,549</b>	<u>\$123,589</u>
<b>Projected Total Net Increase in revenue</b>			<b>\$255,147</b>
Wages - Includes new position, extra service and performance pay	\$828,310	\$969,927	\$141,617
Overtime - Increase due to current turnover situation	\$44,000	\$90,000	\$46,000
Vehicle Maintenance - Increase due to current cost/ extra service	\$170,900	\$205,080	\$34,180
Utilities - Increase due to new building	\$38,200	\$44,000	\$5,800
Insurance - Increase due to fleet expansion and new building	\$34,400	\$40,000	\$5,600
Fuel charges - Increase due to extra service	\$169,000	\$177,200	\$8,200
Uniforms - Increase due to additional drivers	\$3,500	\$5,500	<u>\$2,000</u>
<b>Projected Total Net Increase in Operating Costs (includes FICA and Retirement)</b>	<b>\$1,788,490</b>	<b>\$2,041,897</b>	<b>\$253,407</b>

Adelman said the transit system is on target to realize \$330,000 in cash fares for this fiscal year. It is estimated that the cash fares could hit \$362,000 in FY2018 with the anticipated revenue of approximately \$25,000 for Averett's service and revenue generated by the new trolley service. However, during FY18 rental income will decrease due to the loss of the Greyhound operation. It is anticipated that the state operating aid will be same as this year and an increase in federal aid is expected due increased expenses.

### **FY 18 Operating Budget Highlights**

The FY18 operating budget reflects that overtime fees will decrease. However, operating expenses will increase next year due to the planned service expansion for Averett University and the Mainline Trolley operation. In addition, operating costs are expected to increase since the new building will be in use next fiscal year.

Adelman identified a program of capital projects for the Committee's consideration which are identified below;

### **FY18 Proposed Capital Program of Projects**

<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Total Amount</b>	<b>Federal Funding</b>	<b>State Funding</b>	<b>Local Funding</b>
Sealcoat parking lots on Spring Street and at garage	\$17,250	\$13,800	\$2760	\$690
Adult Education Bus shelter Project on Memorial Dr. construction, sidewalk/ADA improvements – Shelter	\$40,000 \$11,000	\$32,000 \$8,800	\$6400 \$1760	\$1600 \$440
Coin Counting Machine	\$10,070	\$8056	\$1611	\$403
Satellite Propane Tank installed at 522 Spring Street	\$66,270	\$53,016	\$10603	\$2651
Construction Admin – Propane Tank Project	\$3850	\$3,080	\$616	\$154
Two 14 passenger propane buses – <b>Fleet Expansion</b>	\$207,760	\$166,208	\$33,242	\$8310
One 20 passenger propane bus	\$111,214	\$88,971	\$17,794	\$4449
One 14 passenger gas bus – 5310 Senior	\$80,029	\$64,023	\$0	\$16,006
One 20 passenger gas bus – 5310 Senior	\$88,163	\$70,530	\$0	\$17,633
Replace sedan with minivan	\$34,913	\$27,930	\$5586	\$1397
Replace minivan with lift equipped van	\$53,848	\$43,078	\$8616	\$2154
Digital replacement of analog radio communications equipment	\$57,000	\$45,600	\$9120	\$2280
Signage for Averett and trolley service	\$5,000	\$4000	\$800	\$200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$786,367</b>	<b>\$629,094</b>	<b>\$98,908</b>	<b>\$58,367</b>
<b>FY17 Capital Budget</b>				<b>\$62,483</b>

The program of projects for the capital grant application was reviewed. One project of significance is the Adult Education bus shelter project. The cost estimate for this project includes the need to complete sidewalk modifications for the bus shelter in order to meet requirements associated with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**FY18 Capital budget (continued):**

The cost estimate for the Adult Education bus shelter and sidewalk project was provided by the Public Works engineering office. Another project of significance discussed involves the installation of a propane tank at 522 Spring Street. In order to use propane buses in fixed route service it will be necessary to install a refueling station across from the transfer center. The estimated cost for the Adult Education bus stop project is approximately \$51,000 and the anticipated cost for the propane refueling station is \$66,270. In addition, to improve flexibility with the fleet Adelman recommended that the sedan and minivan be replaced with a minivan and van that can transport passengers who use a wheelchair. Discussion continued.

***A motion was made by Judy Keesee and seconded by Ralph Price to move forward in seeking funds as described in the FY18 operating and capital grant applications. All were in favor and the motion passed.***

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 pm.