

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
April 28, 2022

The Transportation Advisory Committee met on April 28, 2022 at 12:00 pm in the Mass Transit Training Facility. The following were present:

Attendees:

Anna Kautzman	Marc Adelman, Transportation Services Director
Judy Keesee	Eric Wright, Div. Director of Transportation Services
John Moody	Steven Hennessee, State Project Mgr., participated
Ralph Price	in the meeting via Zoom
Earl Reynolds	Lib Rood, Senior Transportation Planner, KFH
	Group, Inc. participated in the meeting via Zoom

The Transportation Committee meeting, held on April 28, 2022, was called to order at 12:12 pm by Chairperson, John Moody.

Public Comment

No public comments were received.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Ralph Price made a motion to approve the agenda for the April 28, 2022, Transportation Advisory Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Earl Reynolds, all members in attendance were in favor and the motion passed. Ralph Price moved that the minutes of the January 11, 2022, Transportation Committee meeting be approved as presented. Judy Keesee seconded the motion, all members were in favor and the motion passed.

Employee Status Update

Marc Adelman updated the Transportation Advisory Committee concerning the employment status of bus operators. He indicated 30 full-time driving positions can be filled but over the past few months the transit system has only employed between 21 and 22 full time drivers. Since September 2021, all drivers (part-time and full-time) received an additional \$3 per hour for hazard pay when driving. He mentioned that on June 30, 2022, the additional \$3 per hour pay arrangement will end.

In May two (2) additional full-time drivers will come on board and start training, which will increase the number of bus drivers to 24. The number of filled full-time driving positions impacts operating expenses including wages and retirement. Marc Adelman indicated that the number of drivers employed also influences the number of reservations that can be processed, cash fare levels and the ability to expand bus service. Lib Rood commented many transit managers have informed her that they also maintain a driver shortage.

Financial status and ridership report update

Marc Adelman indicated that during the last Transportation Advisory Committee meeting he provided somewhat negative information regarding the FY2022 financial position for the transit system. However, due to unanticipated additional state funding received this fiscal year the transit system's financial situation has improved significantly with respect to the local match requirement.

Currently, the transit system is under budget with respect to cash fares by 14% or \$35,878. Operating expenses are under budget by 6.9% and salary and wage expenses are under budget by 10.2% or \$121,353, primarily due to the driver shortage. While the transit system is currently under budget by 40% for vehicle maintenance, due to supply chain issues the buses that were ordered last summer are not in production yet and this delay will serve to increase vehicle maintenance cost since older vehicles cannot be replaced as planned. Steven Hennessee of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation commented that he will work with Marc Adelman to file an extension for the bus grants.

The operating deficit is under budget by 5.7%, or \$134,911 since fewer drivers are employed than budgeted and less reservation-based service was provided compared to last year. Federal operating aid realized to date exceeded the budget estimate by \$170,317 through March 2022. Federal operating aid is higher than expected for this period, but this surplus will not be maintained through the end of this fiscal year since the transit system received multiple federal operating assistance grants at different funding levels for FY22. Certain federal grants used during the first half of FY22 financed operating costs at 100% and the remaining grant will only cover 50% of the operating deficit.

A total of \$500,000 was estimated for state funding levels for the FY22 budget however, Danville Transit was allocated a total of \$543,135. Through March 2022, an additional \$32,351 was received in state aid. Also, last week Danville received an additional \$360,259 in state operating aid that was not anticipated and not budgeted for FY2022. Due to the additional funds, the local cost is currently under budget through March 2022 by \$527,522. Marc Adelman reviewed current ridership data and compared the information to pre-pandemic levels for the Committee.

Ridership and financial data identified below show figures for the first nine months of FY21 and FY22.

- Full fare coin fixed route trips decreased 2%
- Full fare token fixed route trips increased 23%
- Half fare coin fixed route trips decreased 2%
- Half fare token fixed route trips increased 38%
- Averett University's bus service trip activity increased by 26%
- Total paid fixed route trips increased 2.9%
- Tokens sold increased by \$3240

Financial status and ridership report update (Continued)

- Tokens received decreased by \$251. Passengers are buying more tokens this fiscal year but are using them less often.
- Fixed Route Token Usage: During FY21, 31% of trips completed were paid using tokens compared to 38% in FY22 during the same timeframe.
- Reservation-Based Service Token Usage: During FY21, 69% of the total trips completed through March were paid using tokens compared to 62% for FY22 during the same timeframe.
- 72% of tokens redeemed through March 2022 were used for reservation-based service.

Transit Development Plan Update

Lib Rood, of the KFH Group participated remotely during the meeting via Zoom to discuss the passenger surveys for the Transit Development Plan Update. Hard copies of the final draft of the passenger surveys were distributed to the Committee for review. Lib Rood commented that her firm will provide surveys to passengers the week of May 16th. All the Committee members were in favor of moving forward with the surveys.

FY2023 Operating Assistance and Capital Grant Update

Marc Adelman updated the Committee on the federal and state funding levels anticipated for FY2023. All capital projects requested for FY2023 were approved by the state for funding.

FY23 CAPITAL GRANT FUNDING				
PROJECT	FEDERAL	STATE	LOCAL	TOTAL COST
BUS STOP SIGN REPLACEMENT	\$16,800	\$3,360	\$840	\$21,000
RENOVATE TRANSFER CENTER	\$78,800	\$15,760	\$3,940	\$98,500
REPLACE AUTOMATED SCHEDULING SOFTWARE <i>– covers costs for 4 years</i>	\$224,000	\$44,800	\$11,200	\$280,000
TWO (2) 28 PASSENGER BUSES	\$243,339	\$48,668	\$12,167	\$304,174
THREE (3) 14 PASSENGER BUSES	\$266,587	\$53,317	\$13,330	\$333,324
MINIVAN FOR DIVISION DIRECTOR	\$27,200	\$5,440	\$1,360	\$34,000
TOTAL	\$856,726	\$171,345	\$42,836	\$1,070,908

FY2023 Operating Assistance and Capital Grant Update (Continued)

FY23 OPERATING GRANT FUNDING		
	FEDERAL	STATE
FY23 OPERATING ASSISTANCE	\$1,727,560	\$839,402 – <i>FY23 Budget estimate \$500,000</i> <i>FY22 State allocation \$543,135</i>

Danville Transit’s staff recommended that Ecolane, an automated scheduling software company should be selected to replace the transit system’s existing scheduling system. A draft contract was provided by the company for the city to review that will involve Danville’s Information Technology Department. Marc Adelman indicated that state operating levels for FY2023 will increase from \$543,135 to \$834,402.

New bus advertising contract

Marc Adelman informed the Committee that owners of Media Transit, the company that provided bus advertising services for the transit system for approximately thirty years will be retiring. In recent years they paid the city \$4800 per year for the contract agreement. A Request for Proposals was recently issued through the city’s purchasing office and two proposals were received to provide bus advertising services. Effective May 1, 2022, Streetlevel Media will be awarded an agreement with the transit system to provide this service. Streetlevel Media currently provides bus advertising services for the following transit systems, Wilmington, North Carolina, Fayetteville, North Carolina, High Point, North Carolina, Winston Salem, North Carolina, Greensboro, North Carolina, Piedmont, North Carolina, Greenville, North Carolina, Durham, North Carolina, Greenville, South Carolina and Davidson County, North Carolina. The total fee arrangement for year 1 is a minimum of \$23,938 to be paid in monthly payments beginning month 3 of the contract term.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:04 pm.