

TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary
Thursday April 9, 2009

PRESENT: PAUL EDMUNDS, DAVIDSON
Jenifer Falls, Huntersville
D Evans, Charlotte
Scott Jernigan, Charlotte
Terry Lansdell, Charlotte
Walt Horstman, Charlotte
Anthony Wesley, Charlotte
Charles Jolla, Charlotte
Don Carnahan, Cornelius

STAFF: Vida Covington, Jim Zingale, Duretta Weicken, Larry Kopf, Pamela White, Olaf Kinard, Dwayne Pelfrey, Glennis Holland, Paul Renaud, John Joye

MEETING TIME: 4:00-5:30 PM

I. Call to Order and Approval of March Meeting Summary

Chairman Paul Edmunds called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. The March meeting summary was then approved as written.

II. Special Presentation

Jim Zingale

Jim Zingale reminded the committee this would be Mr. Edmunds last meeting as he steps down from the Chairman position. Mr. Zingale presented Mr. Edmunds a token of appreciation for his nine years of service on the committee.

Mr. Zingale continued with the COO's report. Mr. Zingale stated that ridership was down about one half percent. Also the mechanic and operators unions have settled their agreements with CATS and that CATS' had laid off six people to help meet the budget downfall. Along with the additional budget cuts it is now anticipated the budget would be good through 2010. Mr. Zingale went on to say one of the six people laid off was himself so this is his last meeting with TSAC as well.

III. Information Items:

A. Committee Bylaws

John Joye

John Joye discussed the bylaws stating there are no clear recommendations on how the Chair position is elected. Mr. Joye stated he will need to study the legalities of the

bylaws to make them consistent and clear then come back to TSAC in June to discuss. Mr. Joye recommended the committee should elect a Chair at this meeting. It was also discussed that Vice Chair, Jenifer Falls will serve as Chair until a recommended set of revised bylaws is presented to the Committee in June. Mr. Joye went on saying the bylaws are not clear if TSAC should be a standing committee of MTC or if it should remain a standing committee of the City of Charlotte.

Paul Edmunds stated he felt because the way the committee is made up with representatives from surrounding towns that perhaps TSAC was under the MTC not the City. And maybe some research into CTAG charter would be appropriate. Mr. Joye stated he would study the history of the bylaws to determine a recommended set of bylaws for the committee and come back in June for committee approval then to MTC for approval. Mr. Edmunds stated term, attendance and number of surrounding cities to be represented by committee members should be looked at by Mr. Joye as well. Mr. Edmunds asked the committee members to e-mail any of their concerns about the bylaws to Mr. Joye or Duretta Weicken.

Vida Covington asked Mr. Joye when he returns in June if he would be presenting the recommended set of bylaws. Mr. Joye stated he will present the bylaws to the committee for approval when he returns in June.

Charles Jolla asked if the name of the committee has changed since the bylaws were written. Mr. Joye stated yes, originally the committee was called Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) and changed to TSAC in 1999 by a resolution from the City of Charlotte.

Paul Edmunds stated the committee had a 1991 version of the bylaws and Mr. Joye had a 2001 version. Ms. Covington stated the more current 2001 version would be sent to the committee for review.

Anthony Wesley asked if the nomination of Chair could be postponed until June. Mr. Joye stated in the absence of the Chair the Vice Chair would act as Chair until the committee shall appoint a new Chairperson. Mr. Edmunds stated the committee determined to elect a new Chair at the June meeting. The Vice Chair, Jenifer Falls will serve as Chair but indicated that she does not want her name to be added to the nominations for Chair of the TSAC committee.

Don Carnahan asked Mr. Edmunds to give the Chairman's outside responsibilities. Mr. Edmunds stated the Chair attends a morning meeting with CATS staff the first Thursday of the month to set the formal agenda for the next TSAC meeting, presents a summary of the TSAC meeting to the MTC the fourth Wednesday of the month at 5:30pm , and attends a meeting with the Environmental Policy Coordinating Committee which is a group that reports to the Board of Commission and advises recommendations for the County about environmental issues, the group meets three or four times per year. Mr. Edmunds stated total outside responsibility time for the Chair is four to six hours a month.

B. No Smoking Policy

John Joye

John Joye explained the legalities of prohibiting smoking at rail platforms, enclosed bus shelters and the CTC bus bay areas. Mr. Joye explained current laws allow smoking be banned in locally owned government buildings and vehicles but this does not allow CATS to ban smoking at light rail platforms, bus shelters and the CTC bus bay areas. While current laws prohibit smoking in buildings, the definition of buildings is unclear. There is a City code that would back up the building definition, which states if a building is 50% enclosed smoking can be prohibited. This would cover two of the spaces customers are complaining about.

Scott Jernigan asked if the light rail platform at the CTC and 3rd. St. would be covered under the City Code. Mr. Joye stated possibly, he would have to do further research.

Terry Lansdell asked Mr. Joye to define where the bus bay ends. Mr. Joye stated the columns at the end where the building runs out of enclosures. Mr. Lansdell asked if everyone standing in the express bus areas would be able to smoke. Mr. Joye stated the lines inside the closure would mark the end of the nonsmoking area. Mr. Joye went on to explain there are two bills in the Senate to ban smoking that proposes defined areas and it looks good for the bills to pass as laws.

Charles Jolla asked Mr. Joye if the city law states building or structure. Mr. Joye stated an enclosed area with a roof and three walls is an enclosed area/ building, it does not say structure.

Paul Edmunds asked if there is a possibility that the City would be able to ban smoking in an open area as well. Mr. Joye stated yes and it would apply to the light rail platforms because they are owned by local government.

Anthony Wesley asked if the CTC light rail station is considered an enclosed area. Mr. Joye stated under the new bill if passed local government will be able to ban and post signage on city owned properties.

Vida Covington asked if CATS would need approval from Bank of America to ban smoking at the CTC. Mr. Joye stated no because CATS leases the property.

Mr. Joye stated that TSAC needed to decide where they stand and take action on the prohibition of smoking.

Mr. Lansdell asked if City Council needs to approve the non-smoking ban. Mr. Joye stated no.

Scott Jernigan asked if a warning for no smoking would be issued for the first offense. Mr. Joye answered yes under City law there must be a warning issued first.

Mr. Lansdell asked if there were at least 75 shelters considered three-sided and if all the enhanced bus shelters would be three sided. Mr. Kopf stated he was not sure of the exact number of three sided shelters but would find out and that the enhanced shelters would be three sided.

Anthony Wesley made a motion to endorse the prohibition of smoking at the CTC bus bays and enclosed bus shelters and to promote the endorsement to the MTC. Mr. Jernigan seconded the motion.

Mr. Edmunds asked the committee if they had any discussion. Ms. Falls asked if CATS would have to wait until the new legislation passes to ban smoking completely in open areas. Mr. Joye stated yes, however, current law does allow prohibition at the CTC and shelters. Ms. Falls asked when the bills would pass. Mr. Joye stated he did not know.

Mr. Lansdell expressed concerns about prohibiting smoking in the bus shelters at this time due to cost of signage and enforcement scenarios until the laws are in place. Mr. Lansdell did not move forward to amend the motion but stated it was his concern on the motion. The motion stands.

D. Evans asked if the cost of signage had been determined. Ms. Covington answered not yet that the committee needed to endorse the prohibition of smoking first.

Mr. Edmunds made a second motion to endorse banning smoking on light rail platforms as well. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wesley. Mr. Edmunds stated the committee passed the motion that TSAC endorses banning smoking at the light rail platforms and to recommend to the MTC the same.

C. June Service Change

Larry Kopf

Larry Kopf presented the proposed June service change telling the committee the approach was to reduce impact to customers while making reductions to low ridership routes, change routes where alternatives exist and to streamline services. Mr. Kopf proposed that Routes 18 & 60 would discontinue Saturday service and Route 204 would discontinue Sunday service. Mr. Kopf reminded the committee about enhanced bus service to the airport, which will increase service and frequency to the airport and stated CATS had applied for JARC (Job Access Reverse Commute) funds for the operations of the service. If CATS is successful in receiving the funds it will also help to balance the budget.

Charles Jolla asked if the Federal poverty level was at \$24,000. Mr. Kopf stated he was not sure but would find out.

Mr. Kopf went on to say the service changes also included the reduction of 10 bus drivers. Mr. Edmunds asked what the budget reduction will do for the operating expenses. Mr. Kopf stated about \$430,000. Mr. Edmunds asked if there needs to be a public meeting. Mr. Kopf stated only if it affects 25% of the service but that CATS will have an open house meeting at the Transit Center to talk about the changes and make the public aware. Mr. Edmunds asked if the changes would take place in June. Mr. Kopf stated hopefully June 1st.

Ms. Falls asked if there would be marketing for the enhanced bus airport trips. Mr. Kopf stated yes.

Mr. Edmunds asked how many new hybrids there are for the airport route. Mr. Kopf stated five.

Ms. Falls asked if CATS has a better bus stop at the airport. Mr. Kopf stated CATS has the same bus stop but a shelter at that location is in discussion.

Mr. Lansdell asked what the next step is for CATS. Mr. Kopf stated it depends on the economy and the sales tax. Mr. Lansdell asked if CATS made fewer stops if that would help with costs. Mr. Kopf said that fewer stops would not have that big of an effect on costs.

Mr. Lansdell made a motion in support of the proposed June service change for the committee to recommend to MTC. The motion was seconded. Mr. Edmunds stated the committee approved to recommend the June service changes to the MTC.

IV. Service Issues

All

Ms. Falls stated she had difficulty knowing what stop to get off at when taking an unfamiliar bus route. Mr. Kopf suggested using the web trip planner or Google Transit and also to ask the bus driver in advance to announce the stop. Glennis Holland a CATS bus driver stated that sometimes a new bus driver is not familiar with all the stops and if the rider gives a landmark the driver will attempt to get the rider as close as possible, but the customer needs to take some responsibility in advance as drivers have a lot of things to consider while driving.

Don Carnahan stated at the Northcross park and ride on the concrete platform there is a water meter cover sunken into the ground that creates a trip hazard. Ms. Covington stated she would alert Facilities.

Mr. Edmunds asked about the follow-up items on the van pool fare increase and the potential funding by Epi-center for late night rail service. Ms. Covington stated there was no update on the fare increase but that it would need to be brought to action by TSAC in the May meeting and that she would get the information about the Epi-Center funding.

Charles Jolla stated he had been contacted and asked to take a survey and was wondering if there were any bylaws to follow when doing surveys. Mr. Edmunds reminded the committee to be cautious that when partaking in a survey that they do not represent themselves as the whole committee.

V. Chairman's Report

Paul Edmunds

There was no chairman's report

VI. Public Comment Period

Comments from the public included better notification of the holiday service schedule for Good Friday was needed, how to get appointed to TSAC and what is the role of the committee.

NEXT TSAC MEETING: THURSDAY MAY 14, 2009 4:00 PM