

TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary
Thursday December 9, 2010

PRESENT: Rick Sanderson, Charlotte
Anthony Wesley, Charlotte
Christine Bryant, Huntersville
Rob Cornwell, Davidson
Kevin Spitzmiller, Charlotte
Dee Evans, Charlotte
Terry Lansdell, Charlotte
Scott Jernigan, Charlotte
Marvis Holliday, Vanpool
George Schaeffer, Charlotte

STAFF: Ramond Robinson, Duretta Weicken, Kirk Scott, Sterling Faggert, David
Murphy, Vince Brown, Theron Barrio

MEETING TIME: 4:00-5:30 PM

I. Call to Order and Approval of the November Meeting Summary

Chairman Rick Sanderson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. The November meeting summary was approved as written.

II. Public Comment on Agenda Items:

There was no public comment.

III. Action Items:

A. Chair & Co-chair nomination & election

The committee voted for Chairman and Co-chairman for the Transit Services Advisory Committee. It was with a majority vote that Rick Sanderson was re-elected as Chairman and Terry Lansdell was re-elected Co-chairman. Each will serve a year starting January 2011.

B. Service Policies

Larry Kopf told the committee, due to recent developments CATS has to determine ways to cut the budget. One way to cut the budget is to buy fewer rail cars. CATS recently looked at the loading standards in the Service policies and it was determined a change to section 2.0 rail vehicle loading standards was necessary to help with the costs of the BLE and budget issues. Larry continued to explain that the passenger per vehicle for regular service was changed to 150 passengers per vehicle at one time, this helps with the need to buy fewer rail cars and helps the budget issue. CATS will now need to get TSAC's endorsement to submit the proposed loading standards change to MTC.

Kevin Spitzmiller asked how decreasing the passenger per vehicle will affect the service frequency. Larry stated the system will run 10 minute.

Terry Lansdell stated he struggles with the BLE changing to 2 car platforms and asked what 2 car platforms will do to the frequency to the north end as the demands may be closer to 3 car train capacity. Larry stated at this time the current plan for BLE is to keep 3 car platforms it has not been decided to build 2 car platforms at this time. Terry asked how the current 2 car platforms on the south end of the line will accommodate the 3 car BLE trains. Larry stated CATS will need to run 2 car trains except for special events when 3 cars trains will run to the North. CATS will continue to seek other grants and funding to build the 3 car platforms to the North and to identify funding sources to retrofit the South end of the line to 3 car platforms.

Terry stated right now CATS is planning an 8-10 mile line for the BLE and possibly using 2 car trains, how will CATS go forward with the line and how long will it take to move forward? Larry stated CATS will continue to seek other grants and revenue funding to provide 3 car platforms

George Schaeffer asked what the safe standing capacity is for the trains. Larry answered CATS does not have a safe standing capacity but the most passengers we can get on a train is about 194. David Murphy stated 194 passengers is the absolute maximum per train.

Kevin asked if CATS goal is to run the Blue line as single car trains, is there another option to run it as two separate lines to take advantage of the North side 3 car platforms. Larry stated only during special events.

The committee voted to endorse the change and submit the recommendation to MTC.

IV. Information Items:

A. Financial Sustainability

Dee Pereira

Dee Pereira CATS Finance Manager stated On November 17, 2010, CATS staff met with the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) for a workshop to begin a review of the current 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan. The discussion focused on revising the Plan to reflect the current economic environment while maintaining the long-range vision of providing a safe and convenient public transportation system and offering transportation choices and greater mobility for the region.

Dee explained during the workshop CATS presented MTC with financial scenarios of the Transit Corridor System Plan and that CATS' faces challenges of how to fund the vision and balance the short-term financial constraints with the long-term need to fund infrastructure for a growing region. There is insufficient funding to deliver the current 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan with the limitations of the sales tax revenue growth experienced the last three years; and the new long-term projections of sales tax funding leaves CATS with a \$400 million dollar gap over the next nine years. The reduced growth in the sales tax significantly impacts the ability to advance multiple projects simultaneously without additional revenue.

Dee stated CATS' vision for fulfilling the Transit Corridor System Plan has not changed. The realities of today's economic landscape and the reduction in local sales tax means the system cannot continue to expand on the timeline originally planned in 2006. CATS will maintain its existing service with its existing resources and ensure transit equity and environmental justice for the transit dependent population. As funding is acquired, CATS will continue to develop its rapid transit plan to further its commitment to the region to provide choices over congestion and assistance to improving the environment.

Anthony Wesley asked if CATS could increase the percentage of sales tax collected so CATS and the City can receive help with the financial deficit now. Dee stated the sales tax is authorized by the state so Mecklenburg County does not have authority to increase the sales tax.

Scott Jernigan asked what changes will be made to the BLE stations due to budget cuts. Larry stated the changes have not yet been determined.

Dee Evans asked if other funds would be sought to assist STS with the riders that have come from DSS. Dee Pereira stated CATS will maintain the ridership with current funds but in the future if the ridership increases CATS will have to

seek other grants. Larry stated that CATS has a legal obligation and will be looking at how to meet future needs of STS.

George Schaeffer asked what percentage of CATS total funds comes from sales tax. Dee stated in the past sales tax accounted for about 60% of revenue but now it is about 50%.

Terry asked how is CATS doing with the equity scales for the cross subsidies for CATS jurisdictions. There is a feeling with the Northern towns that they are not getting their dollar back. Dee state CATS pulled operating documents for the past two years and capital expenses for the past 10 years and what CATS saw from the document was that every town and everyone within in the jurisdiction is getting their percentages.

B. February Service Change

Ramond Robinson CATS Service Planner presented the following proposed February service change to the committee.

- 13 Nevin Road-Add additional PM service on Sunday.
- 19 Park Road- Reduce service frequencies during weekday. Eliminate trips to Southpark Mall during weekdays.
- 21 Double Oaks- Reduce PM Service on Sunday.
- 22 Graham Street- Extend service to Johnson Oehler Road.
- 26 Oaklawn- Change route to NC Music Factory and Harris Teeter Distribution Center.
- 34 Freedom Drive- Add additional Saturday and Sunday service.
- 41X Steele Creek Express- Extend route to Steelescrot area to support public parking.
- 43 Ballantyne- Add additional Saturday Service.
- 56 Rivergate- Extend route to CMC-Steelescrot.

Ramond stated CATS will have public meetings to inform the community of what CATS is doing and these changes will be implemented on February 7th 2011.

Anthony suggested running Saturday service on route 55 so people can get to work. Ramond stated CATS will look into that.

Terry Lansdell asked if there were any shelters on route 21. Ramond stated there are canopy shelters on Graham Street and Oaklawn.

V. **Service Issues**

All

Terry encouraged CATS staff to include grant funds to continue to improve and maintain bus stops and street guidelines by doing this it is an opportunity for CATS to show customers CATS still care.

VI. **Chairman's Report**

Rick Sanderson

Rick Sanderson TSAC Chair stated the November MTC meeting was a workshop of financial sustainability scenarios and asked the committee to forward meeting topics to him for the TSAC 2011 meetings.

VII. **Operations Report**

Larry Kopf

Larry introduced Kirk Scott as the new Assistant General Manager of BOD. Larry continued saying CATS will be running the Holiday bus schedule. CATS is still experiencing budget deficit and will continue to search for savings.

George asked what the cost difference is between regular and Saturday bus schedules. Larry stated CATS it could be as much as \$45,000 savings by running Saturday schedules during the Holidays.

NEXT TSAC MEETING: THURSDAY JANUARY 13, 2011 4:00 PM