

TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary
Thursday January 13, 2011

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

STAFF: Darryl Frierson, Theron Barrio, Duretta Weicken, Crystal Felder, John Pierson, Andy Mock, Olaf Kinard, Larry Kopf, Jean Leier, Ramond Robinson

MEETING TIME: 4:00-5:30 PM

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

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

II. Public Comment on Agenda Items:

Linda Newton asked if the new mobile apps would support the visually impaired with voice activation. Olaf Kinard stated the mobile does not support voice activation at this time but hopefully in the future.

III. Information Items:

A. BLE Update

Andy Mock

Andy Mock Assistant Project Manager of the Blue Line Extension gave an update to the committee about where the project has been going in the last few months as CATS and MTC' have had to take a look at the 2030 plan and how to present the plan in a cost effective and time sensitive way. Jeff Parker consultants were hired to develop a way to do that with the current funding restraints from the lower half cent sales tax. With the consultants plan, CATS

will now have to deliver the project sooner and 20% cheaper than originally planned. CATS held a public meeting with proposed project changes and asked the public to do a survey that is attached to the end of the presentation to gather more input and that CATS main focus when determining changes was to maintain project goals and to maintain flexibility for the future. The proposed project changes will be presented to MTC at the end of January for acceptance. Andy continued saying the general categories considered for potential cost reductions were, the project length, parking, vehicle fleet size, vehicle maintenance facility, right-of-way and other small cost items. The total scope of the cost reductions is \$165 million and the total reduction of CATS half cent share is \$52.50 million. Andy stated the immediate next steps were to amend the STV contract, re-evaluate project delivery method and to prepare a revised affordable 30% cost estimate.

Rick asked if the BLE was still at 30% design. Andy stated some elements are at 65% design and other elements are 30% design because the adjustments. Rick asked if the line was going to a design to build contract. Andy stated CATS is evaluating that in the next couple of weeks.

Rick asked how BLE 3 car trains work with the LYNX line. Andy stated 3 car trains will not be needed until 2025. Two car trains will run on both corridors and CATS will be looking to expand the south corridor platforms before the 2025 demand. Rick asked if the BLE is opening in 2016 does that mean CATS needs a full fund agreement within the next year. Andy stated CATS plans to get the record of decision in December 2011 and the application for FFGA is the following year.

Dee Evans said if there is a pedestrian danger in regards to the BLE parking deck will CATS considered building a pedestrian bridge. Andy stated CATS is looking at building a pedestrian bridge at this time.

Terry Lansdell asked how many parking decks are planned for the BLE. Andy stated there will be two parking decks one at University Blvd. one at JW Clay and 2 surface lots, one at Sugar Creek and one at Old Concord Rd. Terry stated if CATS estimates 40 million dollars for the parking decks and surface lots and delays the parking deck at sugar creek and saves 9 million dollars, it seems there will be money in excess. Andy stated originally CATS was going to build a parking deck at Sugar Creek but now there will be the expense of putting in surface lots and buying more right-of-way to do so. Terry stated parking decks on the North Corridor are going to be needed as big as possible to meet demands and reminded that CATS needs to remain aware of mistakes that were made on the South corridor line going forward. Andy agreed that the JW Clay and University Blvd. decks do need to be built with expansion in mind.

Scott Jernigan made a motion that the TSAC committee support the affordable BLE plan and endorse the plan to MTC. The motion was voted and accepted as a Committee endorsement to MTC.

B. Marketing Research Survey

Olaf Kinard

Mr. Kinard, CATS Director of Marketing & Communications, presented the results from the first customer satisfaction survey in three years. This survey was the first time CATS surveyed both bus and rail passengers in one survey. Surveys were conducted based on the proportion of ridership across service type and day part. Customers continue to rate highly the quality of service, value to community, management of the transit system and planning for the future. CATS' customer profile saw a shift toward a younger customer base from a 39 to 36 average age along with an increase in educational accomplishments. On key customer service elements, customers continued to rate the performance at a good to exceeds level across all elements. The ability to access schedules and maps through the website has jumped from 29th to 3rd place. The top ten important customer service elements were also the top ten performing items indicating that customers recognize that we focus on the most important items that attract and retain customers. This was illustrated in the percentage of customers riding more than a year, which increased to 72 percent from 57 percent in 2002. Customers feel CATS could improve in the areas of lighting and safety at stations and stops. CATS will continue to focus on the top ten items, as well as the safety areas where customers indicate room for improvement.

Terry gave thanks to the operators for their service and for making the system a success.

C. Mobile Apps.

Olaf Kinard

Olaf Director of Marketing and Communications stated that CATS is pleased to announce a new FREE app for the iPhone with versions for Blackberry, Droid and web-enabled smart-phones arriving in March 2011. The "Ride CATS" mobile app estimates the next arrival time and the next three arrival times at any transit stop for any CATS bus route or LYNX train. "Ride CATS" is an expansion of the introductory mobile app launched last year for the LYNX Blue Line and is the first of many mobile innovations CATS will be making this year. Olaf continued saying "Today's customer is on the go and CATS new mobile app provides transit schedule information to keep them moving," Not knowing when a transit trip will arrive to pick you up is one of the number one questions our customers ask and is an obstacle to attracting new riders. This innovation makes it easier, faster and more convenient for people to ride public transit. Besides checking on your next ride, the "Ride CATS" iPhone app also features:

- Displaying the next three times a transit vehicle is to arrive at a stop or station
- Saving your most frequented stops and routes for quick access to get the next bus/train trip.
- Showing an entire route and stops on a Google Map with a Complete stop listing with an option to display it on a Google Map
- Planning a trip through Google Transit
- Spanish and English language options
- and it sends feedback to CATS Customer Service

Rick asked if the CATS application reflect real time schedules. Olaf stated the application does not reflect real time but it is very close to real time, within five minutes or so as there are some circumstance that hold up the buses. Rick asked if the application will work with the Verizon I-Phone. Olaf stated it should work with the Verizon phone as well.

Dee Evans asked if STS will ever be using this system. Olaf stated since STS does not operated on a regular schedule, the application would need to be set up for the type of application STS needs such as to assist with scheduling, or as a reminder but at this time the application is not set up that way.

Marvis Holiday asked if CATS uses the social media. Olaf stated it is not up to CATS what media is used because of certain laws it is up to the City of Charlotte what media is used.

V. **Service Issues**

All

Scott Jernigan stated he had concerns about CMPD parking on Fourth Street near the court house and wondered if there was an ordinance that they should not park there. Larry Kopf replied he did not know if there was an ordinance for CMPD to not park along Fourth Street. Larry stated he would talk to CDOT and see if there could be other options for the CMPD vehicles.

Anthony Wesley asked how the Airport Sprinter service is doing. Larry stated the Sprinter Service to the airport is doing well it carries more people than the old route 5 did.

Rob Cornwell asked if the riders on the Sprinter route were airport employees or actual riders. Larry stated CATS does not keep track of that kind of counts but would see if there is other CATS staff that may know.

Rob asked when CATS will look at route 77X timing next and will there be changes to the 77X 5-5:30pm bus as it is overcrowded. Larry stated the next service change is February 7th but that one is complete. Before any changes

are made to the 77X CATS needs to figure out where Mooresville riders are getting on. And any changes to the route will take some time to calculate the volume of riders.

VI. Chairman's Report

Rick Sanderson

Terry reported to the committee that at the last MTC meeting there was a discussion to possibly extend the Red Line contract, Ron Tober was present at the meeting and there was presentation/ discussion on the BLE on how highway 49 will look.

VII. Operations Report

Larry Kopf

Larry Kopf CATS Chief Operations Officer reported to the committee of the various bus services during the inclement weather and reported there were a few minor incidences on those days.

Christine Bryant reported that the driver for the 48X did an excellent job during the ice storm.

Larry continued stating that CATS is still experiencing a down turn with the Sales Tax so all of CATS departments have had to make more reductions in their budgets for this year and CATS facilities division had to make some deduction in the cleaning services. John Pierson explained that most of the deduction in service affected the CATS employees and services to the customer are a reduction of the frequency of cleaning to light rail stations and no cleaning services on the weekends. Larry stated these are temporary cuts and CATS is in hopes of restoring them when the budget allows.

NEXT TSAC MEETING: THURSDAY FEBRUARY 10, 2011 4:00 PM