

TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary
Thursday January 12, 2012

PRESENT: Rick Sanderson, Charlotte
Terry Lansdell, Charlotte
Dee Evans, Charlotte
Marvis Holliday, Van Pool
George Schaeffer, Charlotte
Anthony Wesley, Charlotte
Rob Cornwell, Davidson
Michael Warner, Charlotte
Chris McKillop, Charlotte
CHRISTINE BRYANT, HUNTERSVILLE
TOM LOW, CHARLOTTE
WALTER HORSTMAN, MATTHEWS
JEAN VEATCH, CORNELIUS

STAFF: PAULUS FORD, Duretta Weicken, Theron Barrino, Pamela White, Shannon Dabney, Lavernia Boyd, Dietrich Brown, David Murphy, Kirk Scott

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. Rick introduced new member Jean Veatch to the TSAC committee.

II. Public Comment on Agenda Items:

There was no public comment.

III. Information Items

A. Vanpool

Dietrich Brown

Dietrich Brown CATS Vanpool Manager gave an overall review of CATS vanpool program stating the goals of the vanpool program are to provide safe and reliable transportation, provide superior customer service, and to increase the number of active vanpools. Dietrich gave an over view of the Drivers training, customer service role, how to start a vanpool, vanpool ridership, vanpool lease agreement, origination points for vanpools, the top 4 vanpool destinations, the vanpool fare structure and vanpool fare recovery.

Larry Kopf asked if a single person is looking for a vanpool what can they do. Dietrich stated a single person looking for a vanpool can call the customer service line, then the customer service staff forwards the name and info to vanpool staff that will try to find a vanpool for the commute needed also the person can go online at www.sharetheride.com

Jean Veatch asked if people use their own cars. Dietrich stated no vans are provided. Jean asked how many people need to be in the vanpool to bring a profit. Dietrich stated the 15 passenger van can start with 8 people with the expectancy to grow to a full 15 passenger vanpool.

Tom Low asked for an example of fare from Winston Salem to Uptown Charlotte. Dietrich stated in a full size 15 passengers van a fare would roughly be around \$1100.00 a month using the vanpool however the cost is shared by all the vanpool participants. Tom asked if the driver gets a discount. Dietrich stated a driver can ride for free if the group can afford for the driver riding for free.

Anthony Wesley asked if a 15 passenger vanpool starts at 8 riders how long does it take for it to increase in number of riders. Dietrich stated CATS gives two months for the vanpool to increase during that time CATS staff helps to market the vanpool in hopes of increasing the number of riders.

Christine Bryant suggested the vanpool market to Charter Schools. Dietrich stated because vanpool is a commute to work service mandated by the Federal Transit Association so we cannot serve schools.

Tom asked if there is reverse commutes with vanpool. Dietrich stated there are a few reverse commutes but vanpools main focus is the Mecklenburg County.

George Schaeffer asked according to the cost recovery formula it seems the closer in commuters carry a higher cost. Dietrich stated since Mecklenburg County does carry the higher costs since transit is funded by the half cent sales.

Marvis stated having been a vanpool user himself he found the vanpool a great advantage cost wise with long commutes.

Rick stated in the past there was a waiting list for commuters wishing to start a vanpool and asked if that were the case now. Dietrich stated there is no longer a vanpool waiting list.

Tom asked if the vanpools fares were for a five day week. Dietrich stated fares are based on the round trip miles the van travels whether it is a five day or four day week.

Walter Horstman asked what the accident ratio is for vanpool. Dietrich stated before the vanpool driving training, the accidents per mile were high, but since the training program has been in place accidents per mile are lower. CATS believe it is because of the training.

B. Bus Stop Committee

Pamela White

Pamela White CATS service planning gave an overview of the bus stop committee and its purpose. Pamela explained the committee consists of 8 people from various city staff. The purpose of the committee is to review bus stop requests, ridership, safety & security, ADA compliance, population density and bus route locations.

Anthony Wesley asked if a stop has a lot of consistent trash is the stop removed. Pamela stated no instead of removing the stop it is cleaned more frequently.

George stated if the bus stop location is not CATS property, how it is maintained by CATS or does the owner of the property takes care of the stop. Pamela stated CATS still maintains the stops by permission of the property owner.

Rob Cornwell stated there is at Davidson and Griffith that is extremely muddy and wondered if concrete could be poured there. Pamela asked for the specific stop location so CATS could look at it.

Christine stated there are a lot of pot holes and curb crumbling at the Huntersville Park and ride at the gateway. Pamela stated CATS will look into the park and ride property and contact Huntersville to work together on getting the pot holes and curbs taken care of.

Terry Lansdell stated benches cost \$750; Trash cans cost \$600 and poles are around \$200 that is a lot of expense for bus stop amenities and commends the three staff people that maintain the stops. Terry asked where CATS was in the four year update for stops. Larry stated that CATS staff is currently surveying all bus stops and there are usually 20% of the stops surveyed each year.

Terry asked if there was a list of how many bike racks and where they are located on the transit system. Larry Kopf stated he would get that information for him

Tom asked if there is a standard cost for bus stop amenities/ shelters. Larry stated yes that a shelter costs approximately \$5000 and an additional 10-15 thousand to install the shelter.

Tom asked if CATS has agreements for bus stops. Pamela stated CATS does have agreements for Park & Rides but for regular bus stops there is no agreement.

Jean Veatch asked for a list of bus stop in Cornelius Pamela referred Ms. Veatch to the Trip Planner and Larry stated he would retrieve the info for her.

C. Bus Advertising

Lavernia Boyd

Lavernia Boyd Advertising Development Representative for CATS marketing gave a brief overview of CATS advertising program stating the program is managed by Titan for three years with a two year option with a minimum revenue guarantee in the 1st year of \$562,500.00 adding currently business is at \$278,463.00 but at the end of the year there will be booked business over the minimum guaranteed.

Jean asked if the titan net was \$562,000.00. Lavernia stated the \$562,000 is the minimum amount that Titan has to generate to CATS by the end of the contracted.

Rob asked if the \$562,000 net is including the cost of maintaining the ads. Lavernia stated Titan is responsible for the care and maintenance of all ads.

Walt asked what the percentage of the fleet has ads. Lavernia answered 100% of the fleet has some type of advertising on them.

Jean asked if the DNC could have ads on the vehicles. Lavernia stated the contract stated no political or nonprofit ads.

Terry stated when TSAC voted for the ads on buses, he believed TSAC agreed to have ads on the front of vehicles but not to have ads on the back of buses yet today we see ads on back of buses when it was made clear to the committee the backs would be a protected place for CATS. Also the back advertising covers up the share the road sign and customer service phone numbers. Lavernia stated that MTC agreed to 20% of the fleet could have rear ads. And CATS is currently looking into how the share the road logo can be placed or if it will be moved to a better location on the buses.

Jean asked if CATS has been experimenting with other types of ads like videos on back of seats or other unusual advertising. Lavernia stated internally CATS is not looking at video type ads and because of cost CATS is unable to use other types of ads. However CATS is currently looking into upgrade the CTC display signs that give the light rail information to display advertising as well as the transit information.

Walt asked where the revenue from the ads goes. Lavernia state the revenue goes back into general operating funds.

IV. Service Issues

Anthony stated he would like CATS to look into having at least a late night 1:30 am train on weekends. Larry stated he would look into it.

Tom stated he has had people ask if CATS would do a regular uptown from UNCC and into NODA so people could ride instead of drive especially after visiting NODA bars. Larry stated he believed there would not be enough ridership to justify that kind of costly trip.

V. Chairman's Report

Rick reported that MTC did not have a December meeting to report on and then asked the committee members to submit any topics they would like to discuss at the TSAC meetings and to send them to himself, Larry or Duretta.

VII. CATS Manager of Operations Report

Larry stated the DNC has an RFP looking for a management company for the Delegate services and they are also looking for bus providers. Larry stated he believed there would be some restriction for buses and they need at least 250 buses and if they could not get them then CATS would fill in the gap.

Larry continued saying a new agreement has been met with the Union Bus Operators saying some rules have changed so CATS has to update the scheduling software to meet the new rules. Due to work involved in the changes, CATS will not have a February service change but will have a service change on March 5th. Larry continued saying CATS had received the 18 million dollar TIGER grant and those funds would go to the three car platforms needed on the rail line. Also the first night celebration went well this year, there were curfew arrests but they were in the center city.

NEXT TSAC MEETING: THURSDAY FEBRUARY 9, 2012 4:00 PM