

**TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**Thursday March 8, 2012**

---

---

PRESENT: Terry Lansdell, Charlotte  
Dee Evans, Charlotte  
Marvis Holliday, Van Pool  
George Schaeffer, Charlotte  
Anthony Wesley, Charlotte  
Rob Cornwell, Davidson  
Michael Warner, Charlotte  
WALTER HORSTMAN, MATTHEWS  
JEAN VEATCH, CORNELIUS

STAFF: PAULUS FORD, Duretta Weicken, Theron Barrino, Kirk Scott, Judy Dellert-OKeef, Shannon Dabney, Larry Kopf, Carl Nelson, Ramond Robinson, Pamela White

MEETING TIME: 4:00-5:30 PM

---

**I. Call to Order and Approval of the February Meeting Summary**

Co-Chairman Terry Lansdell called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m., the February meeting summary was approved as written.

**II. Public Comment on Agenda Items:**

Ms. Doris Reese Spoke to the committee about the bus schedules and routes. Ms. Reese encouraged the committee to go out and talk to the public to gather ideas for the needs of customers riding the system.

**III. Information Items**

A. State of CATS

Carolyn Flowers CATS CEO reviewed CATS FY2013 operating budget, the 2013-17 Capital Investment plan and the fare increase overview with TSAC.

Anthony Wesley asked if CATS has researched all revenue options and the last resort is to have a fare increase. Carolyn stated the fare increase is the last resort but CATS continues to search for ways to generate more revenue and CATS marketing and communications group are currently looking at revenue options for the future.

D. Evans stated the twenty-five cent increase will affect the paratransit riders nominally since they are on limited incomes. Carolyn reminded that CATS has restored funds to DSS so that paratransit riders have that option as CATS continues to look at the paratransit pricing model. Carolyn stated that CATS is trying to wrap the paratransit operating services into the bus operations side so that CATS can get those efficiencies then CATS can plow back revenue into offsetting some of the cost increases to the paratransit fare side.

Christine Bryant asked if CATS would be able to have temporary exceptions for advertising during the DNC. Carolyn stated CATS is working with the DNC to find a way to generate advertising opportunities under the MTC policies.

Walter Horstman stated in the chart of CATS base fare growth versus CPI, it looks like CATS let fares lag in the CPI during 1997-2007 and now in current times it looks like CATS is trying to make up for those lags. Carolyn stated in past years sales tax was 7.5-11% so CATS could absorb the CPI of the sales tax receipts and now with sales tax going the other way CATS and most other transit agencies that have had to depend on sales tax are now having to make a choice of going to the market or cutting service because the Federal Government does not give us operating assistance. The State gives CATS a small share of operating assistance and the State budget in the last three years has been reduce for transportation. Two years ago APTA published a survey showing 86% of transit agencies in this country raised fares and cut services at the same time. Right now CATS has only raised fares and were able to sustain same level of services and that is what CATS wants to continue to be focused on.

Terry Stated with CATS having the ability to only raise fares and sustain service in past years isn't that how CATS is viewed in the long term for receiving grants and funds. Carolyn stated yes a system is viewed favorably when competing for funds if a system has maintained services. A system wants to ensure to provide a balance of service in all modes to everyone. That is why CATS insured access of mobility with the paratransit system and found a way to keep going forward with the Blue line which was accredited by the State.

Jean Veatch said there are 800,000 bus hours and CATS projection is a 1% increase in hours and 2% increase in ridership how will the 28,000 revenue service hours be reduced if the fare increase is not accepted. Carolyn stated

the 28,000 revenue service hours are already projected in the budget and CATS will have to find different ways to approach cuts in service if necessary. Larry Kopf stated the 28,000 revenue service hours are the equivalent of 100 hours of service which is as much as a major local route.

Terry asked if CATS is able to allow a greater increase in revenue through the advertising program. Carolyn stated CATS is locked into a five year contract however a million dollars in revenue has been projected for next year and projections of increase in revenue each year following. Carolyn explained it was difficult to project revenue for the first year because CATS was just starting the advertising but it is easier to project next years of revenue as CATS already has several contracts lined up.

Mike Warner asked with the freeze CATS has on hiring, how CATS adjusts to increasing workloads with people perhaps burning out. Carolyn stated it is a concern that people would burn out over a period of time and how to address that. Some people have taken on extra responsibility and most of the staff has stepped up. With the new blue line project there is a lot of careful planning it is a balancing act. CATS' does have some activities like the rodeos and also tries to do something at the end of the year to help boost morale and produce fun. Mike suggested and asked the TSAC committee to recognize staff in some way if cuts are necessary.

#### **IV. Service Issues**

There was question about an email that committee members were receiving about ADA ID badges. Larry stated he had just learned of the email and wanted to digest it before he would give comment on what members should do or if they should do anything. Larry stated he would report about the email at the next meeting.

Terry reported there was a bus with a broken cord that was creating a problem for riders but the operator managed the problem right way.

Anthony asked if there was any word on if CATS would increase the train schedule at night on the weekends. Larry stated there would be a meeting with the service change committee next week and he would get information to Anthony then.

George Schaeffer wanted to know if cars have to stop when a school bus is unloading on the opposite side of a divided street like on Providence road where there is a median. Larry stated he would find out if by law cars must stop or not when a median is between the unloading bus and cars.

Walter asked if the Real Time system that CATS had at CTC would be restored. Larry stated the cost of the maintenance on the system was too high after the original company was bought out and CATS' is currently negotiating cost with the new company owner and are closer to restoring the system.

**V. Chairman's Report**

Terry reported on the last MTC meeting saying the media reporting on the Red Line information from the State was not as bad as it was made out to be and there may be a new North Meck High school Village rider which is being negotiated for the next school year.

**VII. CATS Manager of Operations Report**

Larry reported the CIAA had good ridership on the Gold Rush and Light Rail systems with about 25,000 riders Saturday and Sunday each day. Larry continued reporting that STS Service has had an issue with an overload of calls causing riders to get bumped and there were a lot of complaints but CATS has now added some overtime to accommodate the standby riders. Also CATS will be having its annual bus, maintenance and rail rodeos. The bus rodeo is the end of March and the maintenance and rail rodeos are in April and committee members are invited to attend. CATS will send out an email to committee members with the rodeo dates.

NEXT TSAC MEETING: THURSDAY APRIL 12, 2012 4:00 PM