

**CITY OF CONCORD
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE
of the
TRANSPORTATION POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MAY 3, 2022**

The Public Transportation subcommittee of the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) met at 12:00 noon, on May 3, 2022 in the Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall, 41 Green Street.

Attendees: Terri Paige, Chair
Councilor Brent Todd
Councilor Stacy Brown
Dick Lemieux, Chair TPAC

Absent: Kelly McCammon, Citizen

Staff: Karen Hill, Transportation Engineer City of Concord

Guests Present:
James Ziegra – Disability Rights Center, NH

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:05pm.

2. Introduction of invited guests and potential new members

The Chair welcomed James Ziegra and thanked him for joining the meeting again. James gave a quick introduction for members who were absent at the last meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the December 07, 2021 meeting were presented, but it was agreed that a vote to approve would be tabled until they could be reviewed by the committee members.

4. Referrals- None

5. Public Comment - None

6. Updates/Old Business

a. CAT Quick Report

Transportation Security Administration (TSA) ended the order requiring masks on public transportation effective April 18, 2022. Signs encouraging mask use are on all buses, but drivers are no longer required to enforce the wearing of face masks while on the bus.

There was some discussion generated by the Mobility Managers report and the highlighted topics there.

Terri updated the members about the plans for the customer enhancement package that is being researched. It will include real time bus tracking and announcements, next stop announcements, an information/entertainment system and automatic customer counts. Once funding is secured an RFP will be created and distributed to vendors.

A discussion ensued regarding CDL driver payrates and the current climate of stiff competition for drivers in general. Terri noted that this is also the case for dispatcher positions. While hiring has been a little easier this past quarter, finding qualified staff is still a significant challenge.

Terri went over the data reports provided. She focused on the new report that she created to try to capture the impact the pandemic has had on ridership.

Terri also quickly reviewed the distributed budget. The members agreed that more review was needed before a discussion could be had on the budget.

1. NHDOT's CAT Bus Service Study update

Terri reported that she has reached out to the consultant to restart the route change project and begin the planning process for the proposed expansion route from Penacook out to the new Merchants Way development, the Merrimack County complex and on to Franklin and Laconia.

b. CAT Vehicle Replacement Program

Terri reported that the fleet is currently updated and in good shape. She is complementing applying for additional vehicles through the 5339 grant this fall, to deploy on the new expansion route, but she would like to run the route initially with existing vehicles until there is a sense for what the ridership on the route will be. Purchasing a 28 passenger vehicle will not be efficient if only 12-16 passenger actually utilize the service.

c. Relocation of North Main street outbound bus stop (Homeless Resource Center)

Terri reported that the sign was moved by general services, but with very little notice to CAT. Even with the short notice to customers the move went well and the drivers report that the new stop is working much better for them. We received no negative feedback from customers and ridership at that locations has remained steady. Terri will work with the mobility manager and CNRPC to get Google maps updated with the new location. This will be removed from the agenda going forward.

7. Other Discussions

a. Fare Structure

Terri reported that the CAPBM Transportation program received a grant through DHHS which will be used to offset inequities created by the COVID pandemic. Part of the funding will be used to cover projected fare revenue. This will allow all transportation services, including CAT to remain fare free through FY 23.

b. Bus Shelter Cleaning and Winter Maintenance

Terri reports that the bus shelters were cleaned again in March. 8 of the 9 bus shelters in the city were cleaned. They did not clean the State House shelter because general services takes care of that one

downtown. The shelters have signs noting they were recently cleaned. She reports that cleaning will continue as long as the weather and funding allows.

c. Concord to Laconia Inter-City route

Terri reported that she submitted a funding request for the proposed route for FY 2023. The route would run from Penacook to Laconia via Route 3 through Boscawen, Franklin, Tilton. If approved the funding would begin in July of 2022. As reported above, Terri has reached out to RLs & Associates to begin the planning process for launching the route. Discussion was held regarding fares for that route. Terri stated that until she is able to secure the match for that route, fares will be in place.

8. New Business

a. 2020 Census Impact

Terri reported that if the 2020 census reports that depending on how the population density numbers come out in the region CAT could be designated as part of the larger urban compact of Boston. Which means that CAT would be absorbed into the small urban designation of Manchester. This will mean a change in how CAT received funding. It might shift from 5311 rural designation to a 5309 small urban designation. NHDOT has stated that any sort of change like this will not happen immediately, that there will most likely be a 1-2 year transition period.

b. New Service Model – Micro Transit

Terri and the mobility manager for Region 3 -Midstate Transit RCC continue to collect information on and research funding for the implementation of alternative transportation service options like micro-transit. They have been in contact with a couple of different providers who handle Micro-transit programs. They will also reach out to other states, and providers to see how the model is working now that they have had it in place for several months.

9. Upcoming Meetings

The subcommittee agreed to set the next meeting for August 2, 2022 (first Tuesday of the month) at 12:00pm.

10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:02 p.m. (Motion – Lemieux Second –Todd; Unanimous)