

Minutes of the Fourth Meeting

THE WASHINGTON COUNTY TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Date: July 24, 2013
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 249
Washington County Highway Department
900 Lang Street
West Bend, WI

Advisory Committee Members Present

R.J. Bast Director of Operations, GoRiteway Transportation Group
Operator, Washington County Commuter Express
Justin Casperson..... Director of Parks and Recreation, Village of Germantown
Justin Drew Director of Planning and Zoning, City of Hartford
Debi Genthe Executive Director, Interfaith Caregivers of Washington County
Daniel R. Goetz..... Supervisor, Washington County Board
Chairperson, Washington County Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee
Richard P. Gundrum Supervisor, Washington County Board
Chairperson, Aging and Disability Resource Center Board of Washington County
Mike Hermann Director of Parks and Recreation, City of Hartford
Operator, Hartford City Taxi
Steve Johnson..... President, Specialized Transportation Services, Inc.
Operator, Washington County Shared-Ride Taxi
Mark Piotrowicz..... City Planner/Operations Manager,
West Bend Department of Community Development
Jim Schmeling..... Manager, City of West Bend Vehicle Maintenance Department
Joshua Schoemann Administrator, Village of Richfield
Daniel W. Stoffel Supervisor, Washington County Board
Commissioner, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
Thomas H. Wenzel..... Vice President, Tavern League of Washington County
Thomas Wondra..... Highway Commissioner, Washington County Highway Department

Guests and Staff Present

Kenneth R. Yunker Executive Director, SEWRPC
Eric D. Lynde..... Principle Planner, SEWRPC
Kevin J. Muhs Senior Planner, SEWRPC
C Terrence Anderson Planner, SEWRPC
Doug Johnson Administrative Coordinator, Washington County Administration Department
Karen Schmiechen Urban Planning Analyst, Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Joseph Steier, III Transit Manager, Washington County Highway Department
Herb Tennes Chairman, Washington County Board
Michelle Wagner Consultant,
Washington County Highway Department & Aging and Disability Resource Center of Washington
Rusty Borkin Organizer, Common Ground

Mike Mulaney.....Washington County for Common Ground
 Jim Wesp.....Washington County for Common Ground
 Tammy Wolfgram..... Common Ground
 Sarah Mann.....Reporter, West Bend Daily News

ROLL CALL

Mr. Stoffel called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. He indicated that roll call would be taken through the circulation of a meeting sign-in sheet.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 8, 2013, MEETING

Mr. Stoffel indicated that the first item on the agenda was the consideration and approval of the minutes for the previous meeting of the Advisory Committee held on May 8, 2013. Mr. Wondra made a motion to approve the previous meeting’s minutes. Mr. Piotrowicz seconded the motion, and the Advisory Committee unanimously approved the minutes.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF PRELIMINARY DRAFT CHAPTER IV, “EVALUATION OF THE WASHINGTON COUNTY TRANSIT SYSTEM”, OF SEWRPC COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PLANNING REPORT NO. 317, “WASHINGTON COUNTY TRANSIT SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT PLAN”

Mr. Stoffel drew the Advisory Committee’s attention to the next order of business, consideration of Chapter IV, “Evaluation of the Washington County Transit System”, of the SEWRPC Community Assistance Planning Report No. 317, “*Washington County Transit System Development Plan*”, which had been distributed to the Advisory Committee. He asked Commission staff to review the chapter with the Committee. Mr. Yunker explained to the Committee that Chapter IV is based on the information presented during the previous Advisory Committee meeting on May 8, 2013, but includes more detail and a few new analyses. Mr. Muhs described the results of evaluations of the service travel speeds and on-time performance of the Washington County Commuter Express and Washington County Shared-Ride Taxi, which were not presented to the committee at the previous meeting. Mr. Muhs also noted that in recognition of the initial operating funding and continued marketing funding provided to the County for the Commuter Express service from Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) grants, Commission staff planned to analyze the impact of the Commuter Express service on congestion and air quality.

[Secretary’s Note: Once this analysis is complete, it will be presented to the Advisory Committee for their review and consideration.]

There being no further discussion on the chapter, a motion to approve Chapter IV was sought by Mr. Stoffel, made by Mr. Wondra, seconded by Mr. Goetz, and approved unanimously by the Advisory Committee.

PRESENTATION OF PRELIMINARY MATERIALS FOR POTENTIAL SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE WASHINGTON COUNTY TRANSIT SYSTEM

Mr. Stoffel drew the Advisory Committee's attention to the next order of business, the presentation of preliminary draft materials for potential service improvements and alternatives for the Washington County Transit System, which had been distributed to the Advisory Committee. The presentation is included as Attachment 1 to these minutes. Mr. Muhs gave the presentation, summarizing the potential alternatives and service improvements.

During the presentation on service alternatives for the Commuter Express service, the following questions and comments were raised:

1. Mr. Goetz asked whether the Commission had contacted the bus companies that provide intercity bus service between Green Bay, Wausau, and Milwaukee. He suggested that those buses could stop in Washington County in order to provide more commuter service between the County and the City of Milwaukee. Mr. Yunker indicated that Commission staff have worked and will continue to work with County staff to encourage those intercity bus companies to consider a stop in Washington County.
2. In regards to the potential reverse commute service, Mr. Stoffel inquired as to whether the service would only stop downtown under the alternative that would reverse the exiting Downtown Route would only have downtown stops. Mr. Muhs responded that there could be additional stops on the way to Washington County. Ms. Genthe asked if the potential service would be useable for different work shifts. Mr. Muhs responded that it would be necessary to coordinate with employers and their shift times to ensure that the service was convenient for its passengers.
3. Mr. Bast inquired as to whether public transit vehicles had to be wheel chair accessible, which would affect any discussion of operating services with smaller vehicles. Mr. Steier confirmed that wheelchair-accessible vehicles are required. Mr. Bast noted that it would not

be possible to use the 33-foot minicoaches that are currently in the GoRiteway fleet, as they aren't wheel chair accessible.

4. Mr. Stoffel noted that service to the industrial park in Hartford is not shown on the slide discussing a potential service to Hartford. Mr. Muhs noted that it would make sense to serve Hartford with reverse commute service and that Commission staff would analyze this as part of one of the evaluation of various potential reverse-commute services.
5. During the discussion of extending the Downtown Route to serve the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) campus, Mr. Stoffel asked if it is possible to analyze demographics for any UWM service. Mr. Yunker indicated that it may be possible to contact UWM to obtain statistics on students regarding housing locations, whether the students are full-time or part-time, and other relevant data to determine the feasibility of a service to the campus.
6. While discussing a potential service to General Mitchell International Airport, Mr. Wondra noted that the Commuter Express does not run on weekends or holidays, so it might be necessary to provide service on those days in addition to extending service hours on weekdays.
7. Mr. Johnson noted that the Kohl's corporate office in Menomonee Falls could be a worthwhile destination if Kohl's employees are interested in the Washington County Commuter Express. Mr. Stoffel suggested that their satellite parking lot near W. Good Hope Rd. and N. Appleton Ave. could be a good stop for the service.
8. During the discussion of a potential service to the City of Fond du Lac, Mr. Bast inquired as to what type of vehicle would be used to provide the service. Mr. Wondra noted that a yellow school bus is currently used by a private operator providing service to parochial schools in Fond du Lac. Mr. Muhs noted that if public transit is provided to Fond du Lac, it is necessary for the vehicle to be wheelchair accessible per the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
9. While reviewing potential service changes to the Medical Center route due to its lower passenger levels, Ms. Genthe suggested that adding Mayfair Mall as a destination could

increase demand. Ms. Schmeichen further suggested that the Zoo Interchange project could increase ridership on the route because of increased congestion.

10. Mr. Wondra noted that any increase in service levels needs to consider the current fleet size because the County can afford only a limited number of additional trips. He remarked that logistics and timing are the additional issues on top of cost.

During the presentation on service alternatives for the Shared-Ride Taxi service, the following questions and comments were raised:

1. In regards to Port Washington merging its shared-ride taxi with Ozaukee County taxi (as a comparison to the service alternative under which the County and Cities of Hartford and West Bend shared-ride taxis are merged), Ms. Genthe inquired what happened to the 50% reduction in ridership as a result service changes due to budget cuts. Mr. Johnson remarked that private taxi may be providing service to some lost ridership. He further noted that as a result of the Ozaukee County and Port Washington shared-ride taxi merger, the service has gotten more efficient.
2. In regards to the potential merger between the Washington County and Ozaukee County Shared-Ride Taxi systems, Mr. Stoffel inquired as to whether consideration of decreased overhead is reflected in the financial cost of operation. Mr. Muhs noted that further study of the cost will be included in the alternatives chapter, and that what was presented to the Committee is a rough estimate. Mr. Piotrowicz asked if there would be issues with Federal funding if the two counties merged their systems. Mr. Yunker indicated that he did not foresee any issues, but that further study of the issue would be included in the alternatives chapter.
3. During the discussion regarding the addition of a second taxi depot in the County, Mr. Goetz noted that this improvement would likely be received positively by the public.
4. Regarding the potential extension of service hours for the Shared-Ride Taxi, Mr. Goetz indicated that there have been requests for service from second and third shift employees of the hospital systems in the County. Mr. Wenzel noted that there are also requests for extended service hours for Tavern League members' employees and patrons. He cited the approximately 200 safe rides last month Manitowoc County as a fair comparison to the

demand that could be expected should the Washington County Shared-Ride Taxi have extended hours.

5. Mr. Schoeman asked how you connect the alternatives with the needs of employers in Washington County to assist in closing the skills gap. Mr. Yunker responded that it is difficult to determine how effective each alternative would be in providing that assistance, but that it is possible to look at housing and jobs data and work with organizations like the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation in order to meet needs.

The following general questions and comments were raised during the discussion of potential service improvements and alternatives for the Washington County Transit System:

1. Mr. Stoffel inquired as to whether increased Federal funding automatically increases with an increase in service. Mr. Muhs responded that funding is complicated, as Federal money for a particular fiscal year is based on the service provided during the calendar year two years prior. However, the State of Wisconsin distributes transit assistance based on the anticipated service levels for the next year, meaning that any planned increase in service would result in the County having the same percentage of its expenses covered by combined State and Federal funding as it would have without an increase in service. In addition, a new service like a new Commuter Express route serving the City of Hartford might be eligible to receive Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds that would be available in 2019 and would cover 80 percent of operating expenses for three operating years. Mr. Yunker noted that in the alternatives chapter there will be an estimate for total cost; required operating assistance from Federal, State, and County sources; and a description of any opportunities of funding programs that could be used under different alternatives. Commission staff will also consider which alternatives are possible within the existing budget.
2. Ms. Genthe informed the Committee that this was her last meeting because there is a new executive director at Interfaith Caregivers of Washington County. She noted that she wanted to encourage the Committee to ensure that people with disabilities are considered in every service alternative and improvement.

NEXT MEETING OF THE WASHINGTON COUNTY TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Yunker stated that Commission staff would provide a draft of Chapter V for the Committee's consideration at its next meeting, tentatively scheduled for September 25, 2013 at 9:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Advisory Committee, a motion to adjourn the meeting was sought by Mr. Stoffel, made by Mr. Gundrum, seconded by Mr. Piotrowicz, and approved unanimously by the Advisory Committee at 10:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth R. Yunker
Recording Secretary

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