

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
August 18, 2020

The Transportation Advisory Committee met on August 18, 2020 at 12:00 pm in the Mass Transit Training Facility. The following were present:

Attendees:

James Buckner	Earl Reynolds, Deputy City Manager
Alexis Ehrhardt, Chairperson	Marc Adelman, Transportation Services Director
Judy Keesee	Lisa Bivens, Senior Administrative Assistant
John Moody	
Ralph Price, Vice-Chairperson	

Public Comment

No public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Judy Keesee moved that the minutes of the May 21, 2020 meeting be accepted as presented. John Moody seconded the motion, all members present were in favor and the motion passed.

Election of Officers

John Moody nominated Alexis Ehrhardt to serve as Chairperson of the Transportation Advisory Committee during fiscal year 2021. Judy Keesee seconded the motion, all members present were in favor and the motion passed.

Judy Keesee nominated John Moody to serve as Vice-Chairperson of the Transportation Advisory Committee during fiscal year 2021. James Buckner seconded the motion; all members present were in favor passing the motion.

Review of Monthly Ridership Report Highlights

Marc Adelman reviewed annual and monthly ridership report data with the Committee. Fixed route ridership decreased 12.8% for FY2020 compared to FY2019. Full fare coin trips decreased 10% and full fare token trips decreased by 22% for the year. Half fare coin trips decreased by 11% and half fare token trips decreased by 16% for the year compared to last fiscal year. Fortunately, despite possible workforce challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, service levels remained the same for the fixed route service for FY20 compared to FY19.

Review of Monthly Ridership Report Highlights (Continued)

Reservation based one-way trips decreased 22% for FY20 compared to FY19, which includes a 25% decrease for Reserve A Ride trip activity. Handivan trips increased 5% during FY20 but disabled senior invoiced trips decreased 31% and ambulatory senior invoiced trips decreased by 10% for the year. Total reservation based service hours for all operations decreased by 16% for the year, primarily due to the pandemic and the cap placed on reservations due to driver availability issues.

Review of Financial Status Report

Token sales for FY20 related to purchases by organizations and passengers declined significantly by 14% compared to the previous fiscal year. Passenger revenue was 13.6% under budget during FY20 by \$48,245 (\$305,355 actual/ \$353,600 budgeted). Adelman explained that the emergency funding provided by the State due to the pandemic for \$57,669 offset the loss in actual passenger revenue compared to the budget figure.

Total operating revenue was less by 5.2% for FY20 than budgeted, which included propane rebate funds and insurance recovery revenue that were unanticipated as part of the FY20 budget. Federal operating aid realized during FY20 was greater than the local budget amount by \$2,815 (\$1,108,555 actual/\$1,105,740 budgeted). A federal operating aid surplus was generated for FY20 because the operating deficit amount was less than budgeted and the state's allocation of federal operating aid (108,016) is based on the anticipated operating deficit. Therefore, more federal aid was available to the transit system than was eligible to receive. Total operating expenses were under budget for the year by 8.6% or \$241,893. Full and part-time wages were under budget by 8.7% for the year. Vehicle maintenance expense was 35.8% under budget. In addition, the fuel expense for FY20 was 24.5% under budget.

Marc Adelman updated the Committee on the current employment status for transit drivers. When the Committee met in May 2020, 24 of the 30 full time driving positions were filled, however presently 29 of the 30 full time driving positions are now filled. He indicated the new drivers' wage rate that went into effect in July 2020 possibly generated additional interest with pursuing employment opportunities with the transit system. Marc Adelman also mentioned that several school bus drivers have recently secured employment with Danville Transit due to the uncertainty associated with school bus operations caused by the pandemic. Despite the current employment status with driving positions, only 20 of the 29 full time drivers are active due to several factors including major medical issues, quarantine requirements, FMLA and training. Discussion continued.

Update on FY21 Funding

Due to the pandemic, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation informed transit systems that the Commonwealth Transportation Board plans to alter the calendar for scheduled Board meetings to approve state funding recommendations.

Update on FY21 Funding (Continued)

Normally, the City of Danville is aware of capital projects and operating assistance funding levels that have been approved by May prior to the start of the new fiscal year. However, at this time, the city is unaware of the total state operating assistance funding level expected for FY21 and capital project funding that will be received for FY21. The state did inform the city that CARES Act Funds totaling \$2,299,879 was approved for the Danville Transit System and to date, state operating aid has been approved for the first quarter of the fiscal year (\$121,801). The availability of the CARES Act funds should allow the transit system to maintain a good financial position this fiscal year.

During FY2020, the transit system received \$487,205 in state operating aid. In addition, the city received senior operating funds of \$20,000 from the state that will not be available during FY21 since the city received this aid three years in a row. Marc Adelman indicated he hopes to hear back from the state next month regarding the status of funding for capital projects that were requested for FY21 and additional state operating funds that will be received for the last three quarters of FY21.

Black History Bus Wrap II

Marc Adelman informed the Committee that Mark Aron, Danville's Multi-Media Manager included a survey on the City of Danville's Facebook page to generate recommendations from the public for persons to be included on the next Black History Bus Wrap. Input received from the survey was distributed for the Committee's review. Marc Adelman said several survey respondents recommended that local individuals be included in the bus wrap. He also identified that some comments received through the survey emphasized that the next bus wrap should focus on representing persons from the Danville area.

Chairperson Alexis Ehrhardt suggested that a sub-committee should make recommendations to the Transportation Advisory Committee, as was completed for the first Black History bus wrap. John Moody and James Buckner volunteered to serve on the sub-committee. It was also discussed to choose twelve names and five additional names in case there are issues obtaining high-resolution images. The sub-committee will inform Marc Adelman when the list is completed and a Transportation Committee conference call or meeting will be scheduled to finalize the persons to be identified on the bus wrap.

Virginia Chapter American Planning Association Conference draft presentation

Marc Adelman said that he was contacted by the American Planning Association (APA) to participate in a virtual conference to discuss Danville's Recipe for a Resilient Transit System. He commented that evidently some APA staff read the *Greater Greater Washington* article that was published in January regarding the resilience of the Danville Transit System and contacted him to participate in the conference. A draft presentation was provided for the Committee members to review. Adelman requested members to offer any comments, recommendations or suggestions for possible revisions to the presentation. Discussion continued.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 pm.