

MONONGALIA COUNTY URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

September 12, 2001

AUTHORITY MEMEBERS PRESENT:

President BobRoberts

Jenny Dinsmore

Sandy Holepit

Bruce Gilbert

Frank Scafella

AUTHORITY MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

John Spears

Larry Calemine

OTHER PERSONELL PRESENT:

David Bruffy

Wayne Pifer

Sheila M. Wolfe

Paul Burns

CALL TO ORDER:

The Transit Authority Board Meeting for September 12, 2001 was called to order at 6:04 P.M.

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES (August 08, 2001)

Jenny Dinsmore made a Motion to accept the August 08, 2001 Board Meeting minutes as presented. Bruce Gilbert seconded the Motion.

For: All Present and Voting Opposed: None

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Rick Patton stated that the meeting for the Citizens Advisory Committee are open to the public but there is no place on the agenda for public comment. He asked that public comment be added to their agenda.

President Roberts asked that Bob Brock bring this to the Citizens Advisory Committee meeting and request for it to be added to their agenda.

Bob Brock stated that he would.

Rick Patton stated that he is glad that the Mountain Line Transit advertised the new schedule for West Virginia University home football game days. He feels that bus service should be restarted after the game starts.

The General Manager explained that the only way that an advanced schedule could be put out with the Transit Authority knowing what time the kick off is for each game. The schedule was set up so that it would be compatible with kick off times of 12:00 P.M. and 1:00 P.M. Passengers in the past have complained that there wasn't definite bus times for the routes on game days. The schedule is set up to run routes until 9:30 A.M. and then the drivers go and run football shuttles until game is over and then each route is run one last time at 5:25 P.M. This gives riders a chance to come to town and to return home. Normally, on football Saturday's ridership is about half or less of a non-football Saturday.

Frank Scafella entered Board Meeting at 6:08 P.M.

Jenny Dinsmore asked how many complaints were made about football Saturday service?

The General Manager stated that there had been a few on Saturday. We still had about 100 trips which was only about 50 less than for a normal Saturday. This schedule is only in effect 6 to 7 days per year.

Sandy Holepit asked if anyone had been left stranded?

The General Manager stated that we had sent the home special football schedules to 700 people who are on our mailing list, sent e-mails to those who had e-mail addresses, and also had placed schedules in the lobby of the depot and on the buses. To his knowledge no one was stranded, and no one should have been as there was one completed run of all suspended routes after the game.

Jenny Dinsmore recommended we run an ad in the Friday paper reminding people that the football Saturday schedules will be in effect.

The General Manager stated that it could be done.

Rick Patton asked that if on the evenings that there are events at Ruby Mc Quain Park could the Downtown Mall PM be deviated to the park to drop riders off at the depot so that they could attend the activities.

The General Manager stated that he had already talked with Mr. Patton about this subject. One of the basic principles of public transportation is you have to run on time and this would cause a time delay in the existing schedule.

Frank Scafella asked if the Mason Dixon Festival has a shuttle service?

The General Manager stated that it does, it will circle from Spruce Street to Walnut Street and to the depot. When people have a contracted service it is typically their responsibility to advertise that they are offering the service. The General Manager thanked Mr. Patton for bring this to the Authority's attention so that we know what services the public would like to see.

Rick Patton suggested putting our buses in some of the many parades that are had in Morgantown.

Geneva Johns stated that on the 12:00 P.M. Sabraton Mall run all the seats were full except for one. Is it possible to have a larger bus? She also stated that when a particular driver was being trained that his driving made her husband ill, because he goes 45 or 50 miles per hour and then jams on the brakes.

Bruce Gilbert stated that some of the other riders had also complained that there is not enough room on this bus. Would it be possible to put a 14 passenger Ford Van on the Sabraton Mall route?

The General Manager stated that some of the streets like Lastrivia that are on the Sabraton Mall route are not wide enough for the bus if cars are parked along the street. This is a good problem and we will try to figure out how to deal with it.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Citizen's Advisory Committee Representative

Bob Brock stated that he felt they were making some progress. The committee is going to start working on some surveys for Tele-Tech and Walmart. He asked the General Manager if he had worked up a banner to encourage people to buy \$10.00 in tokens.

The General Manager stated that it wasn't ready yet because of getting ready to get football schedules ready and the I.D. programs for students.

President Roberts asked if there is anything that the Transit Authority Board could do to be of assistance to the Citizen's Advisory Committee?

Bob Brock has a Transit Authority representative at the Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting.

The General Manager stated that the Citizen's Advisory Committee has put together a draft ridership survey. I have met with Dr. Mohamad Alkadry Assistant Professor, WVU Division of Public Administration, who has two graduate students working on the survey. They are going to work on a targeted survey. They are going to work on the organization of it so that we can get a more targeted survey. The survey is supposed to be ready for the next Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting. There will be about 6 or 7 thousand surveys sent out.

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CORRESPONDENCE:

The General Manager stated we have received some letters about the bus stop shelter on Spruce Street. The City has painted the yellow curb in front of that section of the street. He has issued a memo for all drivers to stop there. There does seem to be people using the bus stop shelter now. The Blue and Gold fare change has gone smoothly.

Sandy Holepit requested a letter of appreciation to the City letting them know that we have seen an improvement since they have painted the curb.

The General Manager stated that the Transit Authority had run an ad in the Daily Athenaeum concerning the students riding on their West Virginia University I.D.'s. We have also had signs made for the bus windows and banners on the bus stops at the top of Stewart Street and over Towers. This program is working very well from a ridership stand point we have actually had an increase in ridership of 42% over August 34% over last year. Only half of that is the West Virginia University I.D.'s. The other half of the increase is from the general community.

This has helped create larger community awareness. Our senior ridership is up 12% over last month. Over all ridership is up we had some instances where we have had to double up the buses because buses are full.

President Roberts would like for this information to be shared with the City Council and County Commission at the end of September after we have had a full month of operation under the WVU contract.

The General Manager stated that he would do this at the end of September.

Frank Scafella asked if the Jitney ridership was up?

The General Manager stated that Trolley ridership was poor that some changes would be made in the Jitney route. It had been suggested to make one Trolley go downtown direct from Water front place for the lunch hour and go ahead and continue the other Trolley in the full circle.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

The General Manager stated that revenue is up and ridership is up. Ridership is nearly 25,000 trips for the month of August.

Jenny Dinsmore what are the expenditures for the access grant?

The General Manager stated that we draw the money down as needed. It is now being used for the Grafton Van, Hundred Van and the Downtown Mall P.M. services. We will also have two more services that we are looking at to use this grant to get started. We have, in the last two years, been getting our draw-down money through Clarksburg. However the Board has taken action that allows us the ability to establish our own account and we will be able to do our own draw-downs and have the money within 3 days instead of the several weeks it now takes to get reimbursed.

Jenny Dinsmore asked why are we spending so much on the repairs on buses?

The General Manager stated that the Authority had a couple major repairs on buses.

Jenny Dinsmore stated that with the new buses repairs would be lower.

The General Manager stated that the 7 new buses that we received this year have spent at least a week under warranty repair work and out of service.

Jenny Dinsmore asked about the employees incentive program.

The General Manager stated that it was just one of the items that will need to be budgeted higher. The employee incentive bonus is based on fare box revenue. The good news is that the higher the incentive lines the higher the Fare-box revenue line. This means there will be no "real" short fall of funds in this category.

Frank Scafella made a Motion for approval of the August 2001 Financial Report as presented. Sandy Holepit seconded the Motion.

For: All Present and Voting Opposed: None

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DRIVER OF THE MONTH AND DRIVER OF THE YEAR PRESENTATION

The Board announced the Authority's August Driver of the Month, Mr. Jim Huffman.

The Board also recognized Bill George, Bernie Cordray, Joe Shultz and Terry Lewis for outstanding performance during the month of August 2001.

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OLD BUSINESS:

A. Sabraton Mall Service Update

The General Manager stated that overall ridership is down and the price-per-trip is going up.

B. Adoption of Transit Authority Bylaws

Jenny Dinsmore asked if all the changes were written into the Bylaws.

The General Manager stated that he had just mailed copies to all the Board members.

Jenny Dinsmore stated that we needed to look at all the changes before we take them to by legal counsel.

Bob Roberts suggested typing the Bylaws over and put in everyone's changes marking the changes by putting them in italics with brackets. Have them ready so that we can discuss them at the October Board Meeting.

C. Jenkins & Quinn Study Progress Review

The General Manger stated that he had reviewed the study and put check marks beside the things that he believed have been completed to date.

Jenny Dinsmore asked if we were going to do away with the Health Department Hub?

The General Manager stated that yes we will be effectively doing so by using the Access grant money to establish two new routes in the Star City and Suncrest area because there is no way for us to keep doing these two routes and stay on time. This problem has been made worse by the Star City bride construction.

President Roberts stated that what he would like to do is to develop a plan of action to accomplish these goals. He would also like to send copies of this Progress Study to City Council and Count Commission so that they can see what our plan of action is and what has been accomplished.

President Roberts stated that Dr. Hadsell had sent him and e-mail about dates he is available for the Board Retreat. After considerable discussion December 8, was chosen as a possible day for the Board Retreat.

The General Manager stated that he has a plan in place for the utilization of a smaller van (MAT-like) but because of all personnel transition it hasn't been able to be put into action.

President Roberts suggested sharing Jenkins & Quinn's Study Progress Review with the Citizen's Advisory Committee.

The General Manager stated that Transit Authority Ridership was best qualified to make a decision on whether or not the difficulties in transferring between bus routes have been addressed.

President Roberts stated that when we can get the data from the Citizen's Advisory Committee survey we might be better able to answer some of the Jenkins & Quinn's questions.

Jenny Dinsmore stated that some of the Progress Report could be used in the survey.

Jenny Dinsmore stated that the last five items on the Jenkins & Quinn's should be turned over to the Citizen's Advisory Committee.

D. Former City Employee Retirement Status

The General Manager stated that a letter from the Attorney Generals Office is included in the Board packet.

Jenny Dinsmore requested that David Bruffy write a letter back explaining about the City employee retirement status.

E. Leave Request Policy

The General Manager stated that we have had some problems with our employee leave policy because we now have only two part-time drivers. The current leave request policy allows employees to "bump" when a more senior driver wants to take time off. This policy has resulted in drivers making reservations when there was already someone else off that week and generally being inconsiderate of one another. This happened a number of times. The General Manager reported that he has taken some steps to better inform drivers of the issues related to leave request, but if it doesn't help, he will bring it back to the Board and ask that changes be made to the leave request policy.

NEW BUSINESS:

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A. Filling of Master Mechanic Position

The General Manager stated that David Beckner has resigned from his position as Operations Supervisor to take another position. We have been trying to decide how to restructure our maintenance operations at the garage to find the funds for a second mechanic position. Given Mr. Beckner resignation The General Manager asked the Board to fund the position of Master Mechanic, appointing our Mechanic, Noel Clemmer, as the acting Master Mechanic, and fund a second mechanic position. The cost to the Transit Authority budget will remain the same.

Bruce Gilbert asked if the mechanic position had been offered to the drivers?

The General Manager stated that it is open to anyone qualified, but that candidates have to be a certified mechanic.

Wayne Pifer stated that the job was posted internally and no one applied for it.

Sandy Holepit asked if we were creating a new position?

The General Manager stated that the Master Mechanic is a pre-existing approved position and we will not have an Operations Supervisor.

Frank Scafella made a Motion to fill the Master Mechanic Position and hire the seconded Mechanic as recommended by the General Manager. Jenny Dinsmore seconded the Motion.

For: All Present and Voting Opposed: None

B. Creation of Additional Full-time Driver Position (\$4666)

The General Manager recommended the Transit Authority should hire an additional full-time bus driver. This would be a position would be a floating that would fill in for other drivers who are on vacation or off on sick leave.

Bob Roberts made a Motion to create another full-time driver position with benefits. Bruce Gilbert seconded the Motion.

For: All Present and Voting Opposed: None

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Information

1. The Citizen's Advisory Committee made a number of recommendations at their last meeting. These recommendations have been implemented: the dates of WVU Home Football Games has been placed on the Saturday Football Bus Schedule; notation of all days which the Authority is not operating has been noted on the regular Bus Schedules; and a final draft of a General Survey was presented and is being distributed in various manners.
2. I recently met with representatives of WVU and Main Street Morgantown to evaluate the Downtown Trolley Service. Based on this meeting, we are planning changes to the Trolley service in the Wharf District to improve ridership and use of this service.
3. This past month has been very busy preparing for the return of WVU Students to town. Administration has been busy preparing promotional information, distributing schedules and answering calls. In addition, we have been working closely with WVU Student Administration to promote our service. Individual schedules have been prepared for each of the WVU Dorms, Student Administration has manned a booth in the MountainLair, a number of articles have appeared in the DA in addition to paid advertising included in the Correspondence section of your Board Packets. Additional activities have included preparation and purchase of coordinated advertisements for our bus windows and banners that will be displayed on various bus stop shelters.

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ADJOURNMENT

Jenny Dinsmore made a Motion to adjourn at 7:14 P.M. Bruce Gilbert seconded the motion.