



City of Madison

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Meeting Minutes - Approved LONG RANGE METRO TRANSIT PLANNING AD HOC COMMITTEE

Monday, January 7, 2008

4:00 PM 15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, Room LL-130 (Madison
Municipal Building)

These minutes are draft until approved at a subsequent meeting of the Long Range Metro Transit Planning Ad Hoc Committee.

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Chair Opitz called the meeting to order at 4:10 PM.

Present: 8 -

Mark M. Opitz; Carl D. Durocher; Amanda F. White; Gary Poulson; Susan M. De Vos; Michael G. Heifetz; Edward G. Clarke and Lance L. Lunsway

Absent: 2 -

Jed Sanborn and Ida Thomas

Excused: 2 -

Richard W. Wilberg and Satya V. Rhodes Conway

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Clarke moved and Poulson seconded to Approve the Minutes. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

4. REPORTS

a. 08273 Funding/Cost Management

Attachments: [DeVos Small Bus Memo.pdf](#)
[Table 1 - Public Input cost.funding.pdf](#)
[Combined funding cost management Table 2.pdf](#)
[Funding/Cost Management Subcommittee Report.pdf](#)

Opitz said this subcommittee has met a few times since the last full meeting.

They have made progress on their part of the report. Opitz also met with the Madison Long Range Transportation Planning Committee and had a good interaction. The subcommittee feels they need one or two more meetings in order to finish their recommendations. They have been talking about a regional transit authority (RTA). They have been suggesting asking the state to increase their commitment. They want to see federal gas taxes increased, but there are some things the group doesn't have control over. They would like to see funding be 80% federal, 10% local and 10% state. They are also recommending that 1% of Metro revenue come from advertising. DeVos said that is for the short term, but she has a goal of no advertising in the long term. They would like to see an increase in unlimited ride pass programs, including for small employers and also large employers, such as the state and Dane County. They would like to see 1% of revenues come from public/private partnerships in the mid-term. Bus size and type is another discussion. Metro should develop a scope of work as to whether this should be given to a third party to research further. Metro should develop a fitness/wellness program as some of their peers have.

DeVos has another document which needs to be merged with the group recommendations document. Other ideas include partnering with business to get funding for more airport service and using parking fees. So this subcommittee need a couple more subcommittee meetings to work out their final recommendations.

DuRocher asked if the 80/10/10 capital funding structure is a future goal or if something is already in process. At this point it is just a subcommittee recommendation to go into the report. Kamp said there has been talk to make this part of the Wisconsin Urban and Rural Transit Association's platform.

Clarke said at some point the group needs to think about the shape of the recommendations. Too many recommendations mean less impact. The committee needs to really look at the things that generate the most money. Opitz said he envisions the report as being a compilation of all recommendations, but focused with short, mid and long-term recommendations.

DeVos said none of the subcommittees have dealt with the fact that the RTA is more than an issue of funding. There are a lot of political entities that don't contribute toward Metro, but their citizens come into Madison every day to work, for example, the city of Stoughton. Stoughton has a Mayor, county representatives, etc. and the committee hasn't talked about any political links at all. Poulson said that's not necessarily the role of the committee to make those connections, but it can stress that to the Mayor and the City Council. To make this a reality, there is a lot of political work to be done. This recommendation could be under the public/private partnerships – talk about regional partnerships. In the marketing recommendations under increase partnerships, it lists municipalities.

Clarke said the group need to think about who the audience of the report is. Is it the Mayor and the City Council? What does this committee want to tell them about an RTA? They support it for the most part already, but we need them to not forget Metro and need them to stress that when they talk to people about it. DeVos said the County has offices downtown and uses parking downtown. This is not a city item, but could legitimately be something our Mayor should be talking about with the County Executive. The County provides a parking subsidy, but

they could offer that or the choice of bus pass. Lunsway said that the report audience has to be considered. The group can say in the report, here are some great ideas. However, it is not in the committee's purview to tell the Mayor to talk to the County Executive about providing bus passes.

White asked if there is a Metro staff person who does legislator education. Kamp is involved with that through Gary Goyke and WURTA. Locally, that consists of the planning unit going out to different municipalities. The Contracted Service Oversight Subcommittee (CSOS) is another mechanism to work on that. DuRocher asked if the legislative liaison from the Mayor's office provides assistance. He does in terms of contacts.

b. 08271 Ridership/System Improvements

Attachments: [Feedback Comment frequency ridership.systems Table 1.pdf](#)
[ridership.system priority table 2.pdf](#)
[Sign pole info.pdf](#)
[Rear sign info.pdf](#)
[Express Bus Service.pdf](#)
[Madison BRT.pdf](#)
[Ridership Priorities 6, 8, 10.pdf](#)

DuRocher said they broke down information from the midterm report and also considered public feedback.

A big topic is the readability and comprehensibility of the bus schedule. Other recommendations include express service routes and bus rapid transit (BRT) and considering amenities at bus stops. One thing that keeps coming back is using existing bus stops signs and putting information on both sides. It might seem minor, but it could have major implications. Offering a greater variety of fare card options is another idea. Also, driver attitude is very important. That is worth noting in the report under amenities. Training and feedback need to be provided to address that issue. Other recommendations include partnerships to provide more shelters/benches. A pilot is already being done with trash receptacles on buses. Maybe the city Streets Department can put more trash receptacles at bus stops. In discussions, this subcommittee talked about investigating making major corridors on bus routes having wi-fi available. Other public comments were that bus racks on buses are often full and the quality of air temperature on buses. It might help riders confirm they have boarded the right bus if the annunciators inside the buses announce the bus route. DeVos brought up the idea of bike lockers at transfers points or where people get on the bus, so they can leave their bike and don't have to load it on the bus. Lunsway said that the UW Campus has had that same request.

Clarke asked if there were public comments about driver attitudes. There were some; not many. The main thing the group is doing is putting together short, mid and long-term recommendations. Kamp said some recommendations already have dollar amounts attached to them. For example, it would cost from \$25,000 to \$70,000 for information to be put on both sides of bus stop signs. Other recommendations are still being worked on for wording.

c. 08274 Marketing

Attachments: [Marketing Subcommittee update Nov 07.pdf](#)

White said one marketing recommendation is the Business Advisory Committee, which is still looking for more members. The subcommittee created the Recommendations Matrix. Once the final recommendations of all subcommittees are ready, the Marketing Subcommittee will plug those into the matrix to show how to communicate those recommendations. They talked quite a bit about more market research, which is a large budget item. They would like to see three kinds of surveys: 1) a customer on-board survey; 2) a core Madison service area survey to understand the core area and why people are riding or not riding, who they are and what they need; and 3) increasing ridership. The subcommittee also wanted to increase the marketing budget. Marketing is important. The peer average is 1.5% of the transit system budget for marketing. Metro is well below that. The subcommittee wants to highlight certain items to demonstrate why they need a larger marketing budget. The asked staff for a wish list. Examples from the list include being able to do outreach campaigns, being more involved in the community, having more staff (an outreach person), re-developing the brand strategy (look at how Metro can improve on their brand and really "get sexy". Figure out why people want to ride the bus and make it fun and more marketable. Market research, expanding participation in events like Isthmus Green Convention, offer training for customer service staff and promoting more outlets are also on the list. The Subcommittee is going through the list and to prioritize what they feel is most important, and what they will recommend to use an increased marketing budget for. This subcommittee also stressed more partnerships and communication with organizations, businesses and municipalities. They still need to discuss corporate sponsorships/wraps/advertising with the full group because they did not come to consensus in subcommittee. At their next meeting, they will be analyzing Metro's customer service approach.

Clarke said he was impressed by a promotion he saw. In order to encourage people to use a service for the first time, it was available free. Perhaps Metro could give out free ride cards. Marketing did discuss this as part of the marketing outreach campaign. They talked about a cost of \$300,000 for two good outreach programs including a ride the bus free day. Kamp said it would be a nice idea to do a free fare day more proactively than Clean Air Action Day, which is in reaction to something. The group would need to decide what would trigger a free fare day, and who would sponsor it because Metro would need to recoup those lost fares.

5. 08466 Final Report Draft - Subcommittee Recommendations List
- *Current Recommendations
 - *Additions
 - *Recommendations that Need Discussion

Attachments: [Recommendations List 12.17.07.pdf](#)

Opitz asked if there is anything missing from the current draft recommendations. DeVos said the Marketing Subcommittee discussed briefly what the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) role should be in researching statistics

that would be helpful to various agencies including Metro. Perhaps this needs to be discussed with the full group. DeVos would like to see more of a relationship between the University of Wisconsin (UW) and WisDOT for research purposes. White said that is a recommendation that will probably be included in the marketing recommendations. Also, Metro needs to do some research of its own on more targeted areas. Lunsway said if Metro could get in contact with the right professors, there could be some class research projects. Kamp said the Madison Planning Organization (MPO) was also mentioned as playing a role in looking at research issues such as bus size. That might be an appropriate part of the Transportation Development Plan (TDP). Lunsway said it would be nice to see the Mayor's backing on some partnerships. Staff might not get as far with MPO or WisDOT. The committee agreed they had covered the necessary range of things in their work to date, incorporating public feedback.

6. 08468 Committee Timeline

Attachments: [Ad Hoc timeline 12.17.07.pdf](#)

The current timeline is to have all subcommittee recommendations to Rhodes-Conway in January or early February. Avoid Spring Break when setting up the next public input meetings. Either schedule them right before Spring Break (March 15 – 23 for UW) or first thing in April. The group agreed to follow the time line and have listening sessions in March. White said it would be a good idea to use Earth Day as a marketing opportunity to release the final report. The Mayor could also be invited to the public input sessions. There could be a press conference with the Mayor releasing the final report in conjunction with Earth day. This Committee will make sure to get the report approved by the Transit and Parking Commission (TPC) before any press conference. Clarke said it would be a good idea to do some initial vetting of report with the TPC. One of the public input sessions could be at the March TPC meeting. Kamp will be gone for the March TPC meeting; if he is to be present, it would have to be at the April meeting. That would still be in enough time for the city budget.

7. 08469 Corporate Sponsorships/Bus Wraps/Advertising

DeVos has a problem with selling ads on public property. Lunsway said he understands, but it subsidizes Metro, so he wants that revenue.

The committee needs to decide its stance is on advertising on benches, shelters, buses (wraps) etc. Clarke said as a general principle, it seems that corporate sponsorships and advertising is a good idea in order to increase funding for Metro. The committee could add that if Metro came to a point where it no longer needed that funding, advertising could be ceased. However, it's not realistic to do away with advertising. If the committee agrees that Metro needs advertising, then it should come up with principles for what kind of advertising. DeVos said advertising is okay in the short term but not in the long term. DuRocher said the wraps have been so controversial that the TPC will have it on an upcoming agenda. At that time, comments from this committee can be given to the TPC. White said the City Attorney's office has said Metro cannot discriminate against advertisers (with the exception of tobacco, which is under a different law.)

Heifetz said the committee should support advertising for funding, and not just in the short term. This committee would not be taken seriously to say the goal is to get rid of advertising. DeVos said that would be letting corporations run things. Other members said it's not realistic to say Metro will get rid of advertising. It's a grey area. Metro doesn't own all shelters, so some shelters could have advertising by people who own them. Also, Metro would be saying we won't accept advertising, but we still need the money, so we want former advertisers to get their employees on the bus with unlimited ride pass programs. It's not realistic. Parking structures now also will be accepting advertising.

Opitz said he deals with sign ordinances for Middleton. He sees a similarity. Signs are a necessary element to modern life. People need to find their way around, but we don't want it to look like the Wisconsin Dells. So in certain corridors, Middleton has allowed businesses to have signs, but they impose standards like the maximum height of the signs. Advertising will always have a place in America and that's just the way it is. DeVos disagreed. She has lived in countries that have no advertising on TV stations because those are public airwaves. She feels it is privatizing public space. Lunsway said America is not the only county that advertises. We may not like it, but we can't say we aren't going to allow advertising, which will generate funds for Metro, but we will allow it in parking lots.

Poulson said he agrees with Clarke. Given limitations of revenue sources, he supports the advertising suggestions. Clarke appreciates DeVos's concern about private use of public space. But he likened it to public airwaves – they are public, but are leased/sold to private entities for advertising. Perhaps no advertising is a goal or an ideal. But this committee can't say it's public space and can't be used for advertising.

DuRocher said that every time you expand something you are already doing, you need to re-analyze. Taken to the extreme, why not advertise on police vehicles? Poulson said there could be an argument made that those are different types of vehicles and there is a public good to having them easily and readily identifiable. DuRocher said the TPC will be looking at the bus wrap pilot and feedback. Perhaps Metro can do more than placards but less than full wraps, such as wraps that don't go on the windows. White and DeVos said that the current advertiser doesn't want to do that; partial wraps are too difficult to sell. Kamp did say the advertiser would think about partial wraps. Lunsway said the University subsidized partially wrapped buses. That goes back to the idea of a group that will subsidize the cost to keep the full wraps or wraps off buses altogether.

Clarke said maybe the TPC needs this committee to say something about wrapped buses, but that might be too detailed. The group wondered why people don't like wraps. It's not the principle because there has always been advertising on the buses. Maybe they don't like the way it looks. DeVos said people don't like not being able to see out the windows. She said the amount Metro gets from wraps is so small compared to what WisDOT is spending on roads and things. Heifetz said those funding issues can't be changed overnight. DeVos said she would like to give tax-paying voters the chance to decide whether they would rather have wraps or fare increases.

Kamp shared a staff perception that there seems to be a silent group that like the bus wraps. He didn't know if it is a majority. The majority of the City Council

supported an additional five but wraps. There were some positive public comments about wraps. He didn't think it was a fair statement to say that the majority of the public sees wraps as a degradation of service. Often, the people opposed to something are more vocal. Lunsway said he hears people saying, "Have you seen this one?" and "Have you seen that one?" about the wraps. At least they're talking about buses. Opitz said his feedback about the wraps is that it can be hard to tell if it's a tour bus or a Metro bus. Perhaps there could be an effort to make sure they are identifiable as Metro buses.

White summed up the group's feeling by saying that advertising is supported by the majority of this committee as a way to increase revenue, but they may encourage Metro to explore various ways of wrapping a bus, including partial wraps.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Poulson moved to adjourn; Heifetz seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:44 PM.