



City of Madison

Meeting Minutes - Draft

LONG RANGE METRO TRANSIT PLANNING AD HOC COMMITTEE

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Monday, November 26, 2007

4:00 PM Madison Public Library, 201 W. Mifflin Street, Room #202

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 8 -

Mark M. Opitz; Carl D. Durocher; Amanda F. White; Gary Poulson; Susan M. De Vos; Richard W. Wilberg; Lance L. Lunsway and Satya V. Rhodes Conway

Absent: 1 -

Jed Sanborn

Excused: 3 -

Ida Thomas; Michael G. Heifetz and Edward G. Clarke

2. 08269 Welcome New Members

Gary Poulson is a Former Alder and spent six years on the Common Council. He has spent four years on the Transit and Parking Commission and is a current member. He takes the bus often. He hopes he can help on this Committee. Alder Joe Clausius will be the Committee member representing the MPO.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES -10.22.07

This was Approve the Minutes. DeVos requested the correction of a typing error.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

5. REPORTS

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](#)

Wilberg referred to the feedback for this subcommittee, which was scored by frequency and then ranked. The group decided which would be short term, mid term and long-term recommendations. The Subcommittee assigned writing paragraph descriptions of each of the ten items. These will be input for the final report. These will be combined with the recommendations that the subcommittee made for the interim report as their recommendations for the final report. Kamp said from a staff perspective it is appreciated because the Subcommittee is bringing back specific recommendations.

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](#)

This group created a table identifying possibilities in four areas by how frequently they came up in public comments: revenue sources, equipment/cost effectiveness issues, RTA/sales tax and employee issues. They also had preliminary recommendations and a memo from De Vos about studying the use of small buses. One recommendation was that one percent of Metro's revenues be derived from advertising. Wilberg asked what 1% of the budget is. For a \$45 million budget, it's about \$450,000. Also, White said the Marketing Subcommittee would be exploring ads on benches. Rhodes-Conway said it is important to not only look long-term but also something more feasible for the next year's budget. In the future, the group should talk about how to address the fact that the bulk of Metro's marketing budget comes from bus wraps and advertising, but there is some opposition to that. The group should decide whether to recommend bus wraps. DeVos said recommendations should not be limited to wraps. Poulson agreed with stating short and long-term ideas. Rhodes-Conway said that adding additional wraps passed the Council but there was some opposition. The City seems to be heading in more ways than just transit to getting income from advertising. DuRocher said there is also controversy about content and window coverage. The Committee could explore recommending full wraps minus windows. It might be easier to sell that concept, and it would still bring more income than placard advertising. Full wraps over the windows also gets into issues of amenities. White said the Marketing Committee could continue this discussion because they are discussing corporate partnerships. They would bring back a place to start to the next full Committee meeting. Opitz said with wraps it can sometimes be difficult to tell that it's a Metro bus. We still want to have branding for our buses. Kamp said there are currently East/West Towne wraps that wrap the bus without wrapping the windows.

Another concern of the committee is equipment – bus size, type, operations, and achieving efficiencies through technology. DeVos wrote a memo about small bus usage. DeVos said we need a lot of research. This research could be important since the cost of fuel is a major factor given as the reason it's so difficult to know how much money should be budgeted, and the smaller buses get twice as much fuel efficiency as the big buses. Some buses appear to run every hour, contain a couple of people and use a huge bus. This seems it could be an area of research, whether certain routes at certain times could use a smaller bus. There are a number of areas that need to be addressed. Rhodes-Conway said she hears this comment often: why are there those big buses that are empty? At a minimum, the group should articulate what the issues are to show we had the discussion, made a decision one way or the other and lay out the reasons. Perhaps staff could do a page summary of the discussions to date on this issue, as well as a quick survey of peer systems' use of bus sizes. White said there are two issues: 1) perception and 2) system issues of whether it will mean efficiencies. It might require marketing research to learn public perception. Rhodes-Conway said the public perception is already clear. It's one of the most common things we hear. White said we don't know the perception issue. Do people believe that the buses are too big or that the ridership is too low? Poulson said people do talk about the use of small buses, but someone's isolated observation should not drive public policy. Address the perception; the driver is the main cost. The driver has to be paid to drive either size bus. Lunsway said there are two sides. He would like to see larger buses because he know the ridership is there. There needs to be some substantial research done about what efficiencies could be gained. Also, the perception might be that someone sees the bus empty now, but three stops later it could be full. To reduce capacity is not good. DeVos said the

idea is not to use small buses on busy routes, but some less busy routes, especially on weekends. DuRocher said that Metro has a lot of ridership data for individual routes and wondered if that could identify routes that never get beyond 40% of the capacity of the bus. Kamp said one way to do this type of analysis is to look at peak hour requirements. Certainly on weekends there are routes that don't need the capacity. But if we need the large bus for peak times, would that mean we need two buses for that one route?

It needs to be addressed, but by someone at arms length. DeVos said that is why she suggests there be a tie with UW Transportation Research Center and that WisDOT finance it. Rhodes-Conway said in the absence of the funding, the group still needs to make recommendations. Staff can provide data for the Subcommittee to look at, then they can write a recommendation.

Issues include: fuel cost, equipment cost, facility issues, routes that small buses could be used on, staff costs. DeVos and Opitz said a full analysis is not something this Committee can do. Rhodes-Conway said staff can provide enough data to decide whether this is something worth pursuing. DeVos said she has a list of research topics. There needs to be a dollar figure on how much it would cost for someone to actually do the research. Maybe the group could justify that WisDOT should spend \$1 million to fund a research arm that would provide the information for not just Madison but other Wisconsin transit systems. Lunsway said maybe research can be put in terms of short term and long-term goals. DeVos said the group needs to look into state and federal funding, how Metro partners with other entities, among other things. The region can't do it all. White said that for the final report, it might be helpful to see a pie chart of where funding is coming from now and how the group is hoping to increase or decrease that funding.

DeVos said income from parking revenue might be open to discussion. Lunsway said that money is off limits until the bonding is paid off. Lots of people will want to go after that money. If the group can show a correlation between more funding for transit and some benefit to parking, then there might be a chance to get that money. Parking enforcement and speeding ticket funds now go to the general fund. Lunsway said a short-term recommendation could be going after enforcement revenue, and long-term could be going after the parking revenue. There would have to be a really good argument.

08274

Marketing

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

White said this Subcommittee updated some of the recommendations from the interim reported and added new ones. One is the Business Advisory Committee. Wilberg is taking the lead to make sure this group is implemented. Wilberg and White will serve on the committee, and are looking for other volunteers. Staff will consult with the City Attorney's office as to whether the Business Advisory Committee needs to be an official city committee. Also maybe the group should recommend a "Friends of Metro" group that is like Friends of Parks or Friends of the Library. Perhaps people would donate more money in order to avoid bus wraps. The Marketing Subcommittee will also be making recommendations about how to present other subcommittee recommendations to the public. They recommend surveys of current customers, core Madison service areas and potential new service areas. There need to be an increase in the marketing budget. The Subcommittee asked staff for wish list. Staff will report back with a wish list and costs to the Subcommittee for consideration. Another recommendation is increasing partnerships with co-marketing, cross promotions and partnering with large businesses. Wilberg said the group spent a lot of time talking about riders. Metro has done more surveys of riders than potential riders. So they should survey peripheral areas to see the potential to extend routes and boost ridership. Metro's marketing budget is significantly smaller than their peers. These recommendations are more than marketing; they touch on increasing ridership and system improvements.

The group wondered if there were any issues that had not been assigned to a subcommittee. Kamp said he was struck that 74% of over 200 transit systems surveyed agreed that eliminating fares on public transportation is a feasible idea. He didn't know if that was something this committee wanted to investigate. White said she would be interested in investigating this, but she wants this report to be taken seriously, so she would want lots of information to back a recommendation like that. DeVos pointed out that people who drive are not charged to use roads. DuRocher said if the report says don't charge to use buses, that's the only thing people will focus on. Lunsway said there could be a paragraph saying 74% of those surveyed from Metro Magazine agree buses should have free fares. Here is what it means for Metro. DeVos said the TPC only looked at the effect of raising fares, not at the effect of lowering fares. That's a good research question.

Lunsway said the group talked a lot about state and federal funding, but what are the strategies for talking to people about getting this funding restored or increased? Does the city have lobbyists? Maybe transit systems should pool their resources to get some sustainable funding. It is an issue, but how can it be resolved? DeVos said people get so focused on their local issues that it's hard for people to band together as a statewide group. Kamp said the best way to do that is to have groups like the Madison Bus Advocates and Friends of Metro lobby the state legislature. Hearing from the users carries a lot of weight. The Wisconsin Urban and Rural Transit Association (WURTA) is part of it, but hearing from businesses, riders and other members of the public carries more weight.

6. 08275 Revised Work Plan/Process
Timeline for Completion of Ad Hoc Committee
2008 Meeting Schedule
Public Meeting Dates
Follow Up on Final Report

Attachments: [Metro Magazine Industry Data.pdf](#)

This Committee originally planned to have a final report finished by the end of December. That is not going to be happening. The group needs to decide how to proceed. The next meeting will be December 17, 2007 at 4:00 PM. There will be three more meetings in 2008: January 28 at 5:00 PM, February 18th at 4:00 PM and March 17th at 4:00 PM.

Metro would need the recommendations by about June to consider it for the next budget. The new timeline is to have the draft final report done in February with final public meetings in March. The group can process the comments and have the final report done by the end of April for the TPC and Council. Opitz will write another memo to the TPC revising the timeline.

White said that the group recommendations in the report should be what happens next, including having Metro report quarterly to the TPC about the progress of the recommendations.

7. ADJOURNMENT

This was Adjourn at 5:29 PM.