

**DES MOINES AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**1100 DART Way – Des Moines, IA 50309  
March 30, 2010**

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Steve Brody, Bob Mahaffey, Angela Connolly, Steve Van Oort, Gaye Johnson, Tom Gayman, Chris Hensley, Ted Boesen

Commissioners Absent: Skip Conkling

Alternates Present: Paula Dierenfeldt

Staff Present: Brad Miller, General Manager; Sharon Cramer, Finance Director; Elizabeth Presutti, Chief Development Officer; Randy Ross, HR Director; Scott Reed, Senior Maintenance Manager; Chet Bor, Paratransit Director; Jim Tishim, Senior Planning Director ; Randy McKern, Transportation Manager; Rebecca Lovig, RideShare Manager; PJ Sass, Customer Service manager; Mike Kaiser, Safety Manager; Gunnar Olson, Public Information Officer; Suzanne Robinson, Clerk to the Commission; Nolden Gentry, Legal Counsel

Others Present: Cynthia Reynaud, Des Moines Register; Judi Applegate, Susan Bonnichu and Donita Snook, Urbandale Chamber; Drivers/Supervisors Cheryl Wolfe, Ron Bienfang, Tim Moroney, Greg Schmitt; DART customer s John Halsband and Jerry Patton

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Angela Connolly at 5:01 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Notice of the meeting was duly published.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Connolly called for corrections to the February 23, 2010 minutes.

There being no comments on the minutes, it was moved by Ms. Christine Hensley and seconded by Ms. Gaye Johnson that the minutes be approved. The minutes were approved as written.

Chair Connolly called for corrections to the March 9, 2010 minutes.

There being no comments on the minutes, it was moved by Mr. Bob Mahaffey and seconded by Mr. Steve Van Oort that the minutes be approved. The minutes were approved as written.

**TRAC UPDATE**

Chief Development Officer Ms. Elizabeth Presutti gave an update on the discussion at the TRAC March 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. She said the members provided feedback on the new website, and discussed

improvement goals for the On Call service. Ms. Hensley asked if there were any openings on the TRAC Committee. Ms. Presutti said that the RideShare position on the committee had not yet been filled.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS SECTION**

Julie Applegate, Vice President of the Urbandale Chamber, asked that DART reconsider the proposed service changes in Urbandale.

## **CONSENT ITEMS**

A. February 2010 Financial Report

It was moved by Mr. Boesen and seconded by Ms. Hensley that the Consent Items be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **Action Item 9A – Soliciting 2020 Regional Transit Services Plan and Alternatives Analysis RFP**

Ms. Presutti gave a short history of the process for developing a rapid transit corridor as part of the vision for the future of transit in the Greater Des Moines area. She said that DART has been working with the FTA to merge the two earmarks that have been received into a comprehensive study that will provide DART with a system plan for the region so that a corridor for bus rapid transit could be selected. She said that because of these changes, it is necessary to re-solicit a bid for the entire project. She said the Scope of Work will consist of:

- Data Collection
- A 2020 Regional Transit Services Plan
- Alternatives Analysis

After relating the Scope of Work and explaining that an extensive public outreach plan will be developed to get input, Ms. Presutti said that DART staff is now preparing the grant application for the funding, and expects to release the RFP within the next six weeks with the award being made in June or July.

General Manager Brad Miller said that the reason this has been brought before the commission as an Action Item is because some commissioners have been asking for a “roadmap” for the future of transit in the community. He said that in the process of planning for reductions in service due to budget shortages that elected officials continue to ask about when new routes will be established to fill growing needs. Ms. Presutti added that the data collection process will also help the Des Moines Area MPO in developing their regional model for growth in the community. Mr. Van Oort said that he didn’t think a 10-year model took the process far along enough, and he suggests a long-term comprehensive plan. He asked that the commission appoint an Ad Hoc Committee made up of commissioners who will work with DART staff to put the RFP together, and look at forming a plan that will take DART to 2030. Ms. Presutti said that the consultant that wins the bid will be tasked with that. Mr. Van Oort said that he would like to be familiar with the process prior to the consultant’s input.

Chair Connolly appointed Mr. Van Oort to chair an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of Mr. Steve Brody and Ms. Presutti.

It was moved by Mr. Van Oort and seconded by Ms. Hensley that the commission authorize DART staff to solicit a Request for Proposals for a 2020 Regional Transit Services Plan and Alternatives Analysis pending FTA approval.

The motion carried unanimously.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **10-A – State Legislative Update**

Mr. Miller introduced Bill Wimmer, DART's expert in the State Legislature, who announced that it was touch and go whether the funding for the Downtown Trolley service and the funding for state employees to ride the DART system would be continued due to statewide budget cuts, but that because DART's partners in the community, including the Partnership, the East Village membership and the ridership stepped up and made sure funding was included in the final budget bill for the state. He said that DART had received some extravagant compliments from leadership in the State Department of Administrative Services, with many more state employees riding DART buses than was expected, and that trolley ridership was also greater than expectations, and the vocal support by riders as well as clerks in the House and Senate who ride the trolley, was influential in keeping funding for the service.

Mr. Wimmer also discussed the funding that was provided for the prospective new transit hub in Des Moines. He said that he will get with the DART Legislative Committee and discuss the details of the process with them. Ms. Hensley asked that DART staff write to Senator Matt McCoy thanking him for his hard work in keeping the funding for DART services and in securing funds for the transit hub. Mr. Wimmer concurred that Senator McCoy was instrumental in these actions, and if it weren't for him, there would be no funding for these projects.

Mr. Wimmer said that he had talked with Congressman Boswell, who told him that DART General Manager Brad Miller did a great job in his testimony before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in Washington DC last week.

### **10-B – April 25, 2010 Service Change Update**

Mr. Miller explained the process for amending the 28M Agreement to allow DART to issue GO Bonds, and told the commission that the meeting of the city managers (Service and Budget Committee) would be posted as a public meeting. He went through the timeline for getting the amendment approved, and explained the conditions that the city managers had given as a guideline for the structure of the amendment. He said that even though the city managers agreed at their earlier meeting to allow DART a cushion in the amount of the bonds in order to cover unforeseen or greater liability costs, the West Des Moines council would not approve this form of the amendment, and asked that the bonds be issued in the specific amount only to cover known/estimated liability costs, thus the special public meeting called to get the city managers agreement.

There was discussion among the commissioners about this setback, and the consensus was a hope that all the city managers would attend, since it was the absence of some that caused the misunderstandings about the actions of the previous meeting. Ms. Hensley said that her biggest worry was that if the funding were so greatly restricted, DART would have to cut service to meet its liability obligations.

Ms. Presutti gave a comprehensive update on all the items that must be included in making the service changes (power point presentation attached). After going over all the details that had to be accomplished, she thanked staff for all the extra hours and hard work put in to get the changes done in time. She also thanked Dana from the TMA for all her help.

Ms. Hensley asked if it would be possible to get the service changes onto the City of Des Moines' website, and Chair Connolly asked for the same at Polk County's website. Ms. Hensley asked about the old bus stop signs, and Ms. Presutti said that most have been changed, except for the ones where there are utilities issues. Mr. Mahaffey asked about the bus stop signs that were bagged along University Avenue, and Ms. Presutti said that they were bagged because they were just being moved, or there was some issue, and that they weren't being eliminated.

**10-C - Performance Reports**

No discussion.

**MONTHLY REPORTS**

Ms. Presutti announced that the regional On Call service to Mitchellville was adjusted to work with the visitation times at the Mitchellville correctional facility. She said that these new times would be in effect until the Aquatic Center opens this summer, and then they will be adjusted to serve that ridership while still keeping with a better arrival and departure time at the correctional facility. Ms. Presutti also said that she was working with Aviva on an adjustment in service to serve their new facility.

Mr. Miller gave an overview of his testimony to the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in Washington DC. He also told the commission that he and Ms. Cramer made presentations at the FTA Region VII annual conference in Kansas City. He said that Ms. Cramer's presentation was regarding the DART cost allocation plan, and that she shared her considerable expertise in a procedure that no other system in the region has attempted.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

No discussion

**COMMISSIONER ITEMS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

2010 Meeting Dates

Apr 27, May 25, Jun 29, Jul 27, no meeting in Aug, Sep 28, Oct 26, Nov 23, Dec 21

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_