

DES MOINES AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
NOTICE OF TRANSIT RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING AND AGENDA

May 14, 2009 – 11:30 a.m.

Partnership 2nd Floor Conference Room, 700 Locust Street



1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. APPROVAL OF MARCH 17, 2009 MINUTES
4. DISCUSSION ITEMS
 - A. Multi-Modal Transit Hub Workshop
 - B. DART Driver Safety Training
 - C. Marketing and Communications Update
5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS
6. OTHER – Communications
 - A. Next DART Commission Meeting: May 19, 2009, 5:00 p.m.
 - B. Next TRAC Meeting: Wednesday July 8, 2009, 11:30 a.m.

700 Locust Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room

**DES MOINES AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
TRANSIT RIDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**Greater Des Moines Partnership, 700 Locust Street
March 17, 2008**

ROLL CALL

Committee Members Present: Paul Bice, Helen Boles, Eileen Bradley, Jinsong Chen, Crystal Estabrook, Kelly Henry, Jade Howser, Mary McGee, Sarah Riley, Linda Urias, Audra Zimmerman

Committee Member Absent: Jill Clothier, Gini Wolf

Staff Present: Elizabeth Presutti, Chief Development Officer
Michelle Orfield-Koranda, Program Development Manager
Kirstin Baer-Harding, Marketing Manager
PJ Sass, Customer Service Manager
Rebecca Lovig, RideShare Manager
Peg Hadley; Customer Service Supervisor/Minutes

Others Present: None

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Elizabeth Presutti, in the absence of both Chair Gini Wolf and Vice-Chair Jill Clothier.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 14, 2009 MINUTES

It was moved and seconded to approve the January, 2009 Minutes. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

DART Fare Policy

Ms. Presutti presented the written DART Fare Policy Recommendations to the committee for discussion and stated that there is a need for a written, detailed fare policy for our customers. Ms. Presutti researched a number of other transit agencies and based the recommendations on her findings. The basic proposal calls for scheduled fare increases as follows:

Fare increases for Fixed Route shall occur every two years at \$0.10 or the percentage 2-year increase in inflation (whichever is higher). The purposes of the planned fare increases are to ensure that fare revenues keep pace with inflation, to reflect a fair-share contribution by riders to the costs of operating a transit system, and to demonstrate that DART is a wise steward of public funds generated by the property-tax levy. Fares for all other services shall be adjusted every two years to maintain their relationship to the base cash fare.

Due to the greater cost per passenger of operating ADA service and the extension of this service throughout the DART service area, fares for services operated by Paratransit shall increase by twice the amount of local bus fare increases. For example, if local bus fares increase by \$0.10, then the Paratransit increase will be \$0.20.

Fare increases for RideShare shall occur every two years at 3 percent or the percentage 2-year increase in inflation (whichever is higher).

Notification of Fare Adjustments to the public will follow the Public Input Policy adopted by the DART Commission on January 20, 2009.

Discussion followed on this proposal. There was general agreement with the recommendations after clarification was given to inquires, which included: the reason for Paratransit fares being double the basic fare (Federal Law allows us to charge that much); how would it affect OTT fares (they would stay at 40% of base fare); some committee members would like to see Senior Reduced Fares begin at age 62 (this will be taken under consideration); it was clarified that seniors can use their Reduce Fare ID any time of day (there used to be restrictions); it was also clarified that there are no special fares for students (Drake, Des Moines University, and Grandview College are all Unlimited Access members) – children 5 and under, with an adult, are free, children 6-10 are 75¢ cash only, and all passengers 11+ are full fare. It was also stated that RideShare is evaluated on a regular basis, usually bi-annually.

June Service Changes

Ms. Presutti gave an overview of the proposed upcoming schedule/service changes for June 2009 which included:

Route #91: Route will be streamlined along Lower Beaver/NW Beaver traveling from Johnston City Hall along NW 62nd; the Park & Ride at Johnston City Hall will remain; there will be additional trips in the morning and afternoon; loop at 50th & Aurora will be eliminated (this area is covered by route #4).

Route #92: Route will remain unchanged; the two Park & Ride locations will be kept (Gloria Dei Church and the Ice Arena); there will be four morning trips and four afternoon trips; the trips will alternate with route #93 providing 15 minute service at Gloria Dei.

Route #93: Route will be streamlined along 22nd/86th Street from NW 62nd in Johnston to 1:235 into downtown Des Moines; there will be three Park & Ride locations – Dahl's in Johnston, Dahl's at 86th & Hickman, and Gloria Dei Church. There will be four morning and four afternoon trips.

On-Call: A new On-Call zone will be added to service the entire city of Clive and a portion of Urbandale in the morning and afternoon rush hours.

Discussion followed and there was general agreement to the proposed changes. The question of more western expansion was posed. However, without additional funding and without Waukee's participation in DART, expansion in will be limited in the short term. It was noted that Mercy West might be served by Clive Express, but there would still be no mid-day service there.

Ms. McGee suggested a feasibility study for increasing service to southside routes #7 and #8. Frequency of schedule does draw riders, but adding more runs with the possibility of no increase in ridership is not feasible at this time as no funding is available. MPO is assisting with planning by trying to determine where riders live and work and which services would draw more riders.

April Customer Appreciation Event

Ms. Baer-Harding told the committee that 2008 ridership was up 18% over 2007 and that the national average is only 4%. So we are holding a Customer Appreciation Day on April 22, 2009, which is also Earth Day. There will be signs on the buses and ads in the newspapers outlining all the services DART provides along with information regarding how using mass transit helps the environment. Everyone riding DART regular and/or express routes will ride for FREE that day as a thank-you to our loyal customers.

Committee members were asked to provide us with names of any people who regularly ride DART and would be willing to submit testimonials.

Discussion followed on our programs to teach people how to ride the bus. In conjunction with DART staff, CICIL provides How To Ride classes at various locations. PJ Sass, DART's Customer Service Manager, facilitates these training sessions and it was noted that she does an excellent job. Committee members had some suggestions for these trainings. There was also some discussion on training of drivers for whom English is a second language so they are able to provide accurate, understandable instructions for our newer riders. It was also noted that any printed materials need to be high contrast and large type for the visually impaired.

DART Roadeo

It was announced that this year's DART Roadeo will be held May 16th from 7:00 am – Noon at the parking lot located on MLK & 11th Street. The Roadeo is a test of our drivers' abilities using a timed obstacle course. Winners of the local Roadeo go on to the State Championship and, if successful there, go on to the National event. Anyone interested in being a judge or helping with the preparation of the courses please contact Ms. Presutti or Ms. Orfield-Koranda.

Sensitivity Training

Frank Strong from CICIL came to DART and spent the day training staff on how to assist persons with a visual impairment. We will be making improvements to our website so that persons with vision issues are better able to read it. There will also be spot checks of our drivers so they are aware of how to treat persons with disabilities. DART is committed to being very proactive on this issue.

America Recovery and Reinvestment Act

DART will receive \$7.8 million for capital expenditures (cannot be used to expand routes, pay salaries, etc.; must be a capital expense). Following is the proposed disbursement of these funds:

- Nine new buses
- Auto Vehicle Location (AVL) system for fixed route buses
- Design of the proposed new Transit Hub
- Add to our storage facilities (new bus barn)
- Rider communication improvements (website, signage, etc.)
- Pothole issues on property

5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Orfield-Koranda went over some future agenda items which included Performance Monitoring and Service Standards and Policies. Please let her know if you have any other issues you would like to see on future agendas.

6. OTHER

There was some further discussion regarding western expansion. The idea of having reloadable Fare Cards was mentioned. It was explained that we would have to change all fareboxes on all buses along with software issues, so this is not something that will happen in the near future.

Ms. Orfield-Koranda announced that the next DART Commission Meeting will be on March 31, 2009 at 5:00 pm at the DART administrative office in the Multi-Purpose Room.

It was noted that Sarah Riley will be the TRAC representative with the design teams for the new Transit Hub.

The next TRAC meeting will be at this location on May 14, 2009 from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:55 pm.