



Minutes City of Tempe Transportation Commission December 11, 2012

Minutes of the City of Tempe Transportation Commission held on Tuesday, December 11 2012, 7:30 a.m., at the Don Cassano Community Room, 200 E 5TH St., Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Charles Huellmantel, German Piedrahita, Peter Schelstraete, Philip Luna, Pam Goronkin, Gary Roberts, Ben Goren, Sue Lofgren, Catherine Mayorga, Steven Saiz

(MEMBERS) Absent:

David Strang, Marcellus Lisotta, Sue Jones

City Staff Present:

Eric Iwersen, Sue Taaffe, Shelly Seyler, Greg Jordan, Yvette Mesquita, Mike Nevarez, Nancy Ryan, Tanya Chavez

Guests Present:

Hillary Foose (Valley Metro)

Commission Chair Charles Huellmantel called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Appearances

None.

Agenda Item 2 – Approval of Meeting Minutes: November 13, 2012.

Several commissioners requested to make changes to the November 13, 2012 minutes and review the revised meeting minutes at the next Transportation Commission in January.

Agenda Item 3 – Regional Transit Fare Policy Proposed Adjustment

Presented by Greg Jordan, Public Works Department and Hillary Foose, Valley Metro

The purpose of the presentation is to understand the results of the fare adjustment public involvement program conducted September 21 through March 1, 2013.

In fall 2011, Valley Metro proposed and shared with the public a fare structure that would have increased the base fares for local/LINK/light rail and Express/RAPID services by \$.25; all other fare types would adjust accordingly.

The public comment was shared with the Transit Management Committee in February 2012 and the fare proposal was approved.

In 2012, the federally- required Title VI analysis was initiated to evaluate the proposal for equity among rider demographics.

The revised proposal increased Express/RAPID service by an additional \$.25 to ensure the support for operations is spread equally among riders.

With the Valley Board approval in September 2012, staff initiated a public involvement program consisting of online and offline resources to understand the public's comments on the revised fare program for March 2013.

A summary of the current fare change proposal was provided: \$.25 increase on local/bus/LINK/light rail; \$.50 increase on Express/RAPID bus; ADA Dial-a-Ride: \$4.00 for 1-Ride; Rural Route: \$4.00 flat fare for 1-Ride

Current Fare Change Proposal was provided: ASU/employer-issued passes; Semester Pass; Elimination of 3-day pass; Addition of 15-day pass

Other topics discussed: why the fare increase; Fare Change Public Involvement; Fare Change Communication.

The survey was condensed, included 5 questions and 1500 surveys.

Most survey participants included local riders and Express riders

Both cost and service was important to transit riders

68% of survey participants believed that there would be a large impact on fare change increases.

60% of survey participants would continue to use public transit if fare change occurs.

80% of survey participants oppose fare increases.

Public Input include: Don't raise prices, keep the same; Make the increase gradual; RAPID customers should pay more; Fares should be similar to other regions; Fares have gone up, but no service; Run service later, more often; Better quality drivers; Call for greater service

Public Feedback Conclusions include: Cost and level of service are both important to riders; a majority of respondents oppose the proposed fare increase; however, majority will continue to use transit and have asked for increased service.

Staff will move forward to gain Board approval of the proposed March 1, 2013 fare increase and associated changes.

35 A-frame signs were placed at various locations region wide, the placement of the A-frame signs were not placed at all transit centers but were strategically placed at several transit centers, park-and-ride lots and Express stops.

The fare policy will be opened and evaluated in 2013; future rate increases will be gradual.

Commissioner Goren questioned if additional services could be provided to riders due to the rise in fare increases and mentioned that more should be done to characterize what the increases will provide to the public.

Greg Jordan stated that the present fare increase is not tied to any particular improvement but is intended to maintain the Valley Metro Board of Director's fare recovery goal of 25%. In the future, we have a region need to do a better job of communicating to the public what fare there is a possibility of creating more of an integrated system among public transit that could become a seamless opportunity for riders to take various types of public transportation.

Tempe's portion of the fare increase has projected to be about \$700,000 per year and is included in our projections for resolving the final portion of the deficit.

Commissioner Sue Lofgren suggested that there should be an increase in lighting and safety.

Commissioner Saiz suggested that improving driver dissatisfaction among riders could provide a better overall experience for riders.

Smaller amenities and changes to the transit system could make a customer impact.

Commissioner Huellmantel mentioned that the issue is whether or not the commission will want to recommend the approval of transit fare increase.

A motion to support the fare increase was made by Commissioner Saiz; and was seconded by Commissioner Schelstraete; Motion carries with Commissioner Mayorga abstaining.

Agenda Item 4 – Bike Hero Award

Presented by Sue Taaffe, Community Relations

The purpose of this item is to select a recipient for the City's annual Bike Hero Award.

Although advertisement efforts increased, fewer nominations were received.

Promotion of the award nomination included online ads (azfamily and azcentral); Valley Metro member business services email blasts, TBAG notification, Twitter, and Facebook posts and Tempe Today and Connecting Tempe newsletters.

- The nominees include:
 - Mehdi Farsi with State Bicycle Co.
 - Maja Wessels
 - Neil Giuliano

Commissioner Huellmantel stated the nomination with the most merit should be awarded.

Commissioner Mayorga made a motion to select Neil Giuliano for the Bike Hero Award. Commissioner Pam Goronkin seconded the motion. Commissioner Huellmantel approved, Commissioner Goren abstained and all other Commissioners in attendance did not approve.

Commissioner Schelstraete made a motion to select Maja Wessels for the Bike Hero Award. Commissioner Roberts seconded the motion. The motion was approved with Commissioners Mayorga and Goronkin voting no.

Agenda Item 5 – September 2012 Tempe Transit Telephone Survey Follow-up

Presented by Sue Taaffe, Community Relations

WestGroup Research attempted to contact 27 respondents who indicated that the bus is not safe; 13 responses were received.

There are consistencies in the responses like poor lighting at the stops, concerns because of the type of riders they see on the bus and lack of security.

Greg indicated that staff is evaluating potential program improvements in two core areas: 1) Develop a bus system security program beginning in FY 2013-14 funded by the transit operating budget, and 2) focus our bus stop improvement fund on improving lighting at bus stops. In addition, the transit program's asset management program will do a better job of replacing lighting that has failed. Commissioner Goren asked if capital funding can be used for solar lighting at bus stops. Greg replied solar is used now used throughout the system. Commissioner Lofgren stated with more lighting people feel safer and Commissioner Goren shared it helps with perception to add lighting.

Commissioner Schelstraete asked if it would be possible to review PD reports or calls for service to search and analyze by bus or bus stop. In response, Greg said PD does not specify by bus stop, however staff is working with PD to begin documenting calls at or adjacent to a bus stop.

There was a discussion with Commissioners regarding concerns about pan handlers and homeless population. Commissioner Huellmantel concluded the conversation by stating Commission will work with the PD and City and indicated the Attorney's office is working on Ordinance changes.

Commissioner Schelstraete agreed with addressing security concerns and reviewing PD reports. Greg indicated data of security incidents on the bus is understated, and the data infers that the rail system is less safe than the bus system due to the rail system having more security to deploy in response to incidents. Jon King is on staff with Transit to provide Rail & Bus security systems. Commissioner Goren followed up by stating he would like to get PD's prospective and know how reports are logged.

As a future agenda item, Commissioner Huellmantel requested PD be invited to share information relating to bus related safety & lighting.

Agenda Item 6 – Transportation Master Plan

Nancy Ryan, Community Development

Due to time constraints, Nancy Ryan was unable to present an update to the Transportation Master plan, but mentioned two critical areas to review before the next meeting: revisions added to the retreat packet to address Commissioner concerns and the syllabus. An additional meeting to discuss the Transportation Master plan is tentatively scheduled for January 15, 2013 at 7:30 a.m. in the Don Cassano Community Room.

Agenda Item 7 – Broadway Road Project

Presented by Eric Iwersen, Community Development Department.

- Staff will discuss the following
 - Current draft design solutions showing various options for bike lanes, landscaping, pedestrian upgrades, left turn movements, and ADA enhancements
 - A "pros & cons" discussion about the various design alternatives
- The project has been awarded approximately \$2.7 million in federal transportation grants for the purpose of bicycle and pedestrian improvements and re-characterizing the street as more multi-modal.

- This project has been going on 5 or 10 years, one of the biggest constraints is the amount of land. Street is abutted by single family homes. Primarily single family homes. When we went out a year and a half ago with a final concept, the neighbors at the public meeting had agreed to a 3 in 2 option, had required the purchase of a lot in right of way, in purchasing that right of way we encountered big

Eric Iwersen provided an update on the Broadway Road streetscape improvement project. New drawings were presented which focused on the segments between Mill Avenue and Rural Road.

The Commissioners discussed lane width and preferences; diversified ROW; tree wells/shading locations; landscaping versus masonry wall; making the area pedestrian friendly; costs to maintain landscape; narrowing of Broadway Lane or converting to mix use for bike, car, pedestrian.

Eric stated the project will use drought tolerant trees/landscape and operating cost will increase. Eric also stated that the walls on the North side are not continuous and public art funds are available for an art project.

Shelly Seyler shared there is a water structure which is a constraint for the project that is in the ROW.

Commissioner Huellmantel suggested seeking beautification funds from SRP.

Eric concluded by stating Commissioner feedback is valuable and requests Commissioners send an email in response to the pros/cons of the 202 segment of the project.

Agenda Item 8 –Department and Regional Transportation Updates

Not Presented

Agenda Item 9 – Future Agenda Items

Not Presented

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 a.m.

The Commission's next meeting will be held Tuesday, January 8, 2013 at 7:30 a.m. Don Cassano Community Room at the Tempe Transportation Center, 200 E. 5th St, Tempe, Arizona.