



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 14, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.
Committee will meet via ZOOM
Link Below

PPT members present: Ericson & Enz (Community Reps), Searl (UWP-SUFAC), Geyer (UWP), Kratz (UWP-Student Senate), Parrot (Council Rep) [arrived at 2:20pm]
PPT members excused: Andrews (School District), Elskamp (UWP), Schnurer (UWP)
PPT members absent: Hilfer (Hospital Rep),
PPT ex-officio members present: Crofoot (City),
PPT Staff Liaisons: Beau (Stratton Buses), Hellwig & Pluemer (Running Inc)
City Staff present: Sigwarth
Members of the public: Goldstein (Telegraph Herald)

Call to Order: Crofoot called the meeting to order on zoom at 2:06pm.

Appoint Committee Chair: Crofoot called for volunteers or nominations. Crofoot will serve as an interim committee chair unless a committee member would like to volunteer to serve in this capacity.

Approval of Minutes: August 12 and September 30, 2021: Geyer motion, Ericson second to approve minutes as written.

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

Route Discussion:

Review of Data: High ridership for taxi in 2020, low bus ridership in 2020 due to no students on campus because of pandemic. Ericson presented his review and findings of the 2020 & 2021 data. There are 12 stops that account for 94% of riders. Comparing the current routes to the frequently used stops should yield an ideal route for proposed revisions to the route. Survey of current bus riders could also be done.

Beau commented that the Green Route is hard to staff due to low ridership and early morning hours. The Purple Route is used, and hours could be extended.

Hellwig noted that due to the return to shared ride model, wait times are down to a 15/20 minutes wait for a taxi ride. During the pandemic, and only one rider from different household in taxi at one time, wait times were up to 45 minutes to an hour.

Budget / Hours of Service / Fares & Revision of Routes:

Due to low enrollment numbers at the university, the public transportation options will need to be adjusted to levels that can be sustained under new budget restrictions. Committee will should also review options to raise additional funds. Fares for the taxi last increased on January 1, 2012. A potential \$.50 increase with approximately 40,000 riders would raise \$20,000. Fares are not charged to student riders as they pay for the service through UWP enrollment fees.

Potential removal of low/no use stops and replacement with unserved areas of town – i.e. the apartments up by the golf course. This would affect the timetable of the bus, potentially increasing the hour loop or decreasing the hour loop.

The Commission on Aging inquired if a stop could be added at Medical Associates, which is not currently serviced by any bus routes. Crofoot noted that due to location, the simplest route to add the stop to would be the Orange Route but this would affect the half hour timetable. Asked for student/staff feedback regarding this thought. Geyer indicated that as the Orange Route is primarily student used and it is heavily used, they were not in favor of changing the Orange Route stop or timetable as that would not serve the student's interests. Ericson asked if the taxi would provide data regarding pickups and drop-offs at the hospital and Medical Associates for Committee to review.

Parrott recommended that the committee pass out surveys to the bus riders and taxi users to see what the public feedback is regarding use. Incentives for taking the survey can be used to encourage participation. Sigwarth noted that posters with QR Codes can be posted in the busses and taxis that will allow participants to fill out the survey digitally. Both digital and hard copies of the surveys should be collected.

Commission on Aging Concerns:

After Hours Options: When members of the public, especially physically disabled individuals, are taken to the hospital by ambulance or taxi and are then stranded out there after the taxi and bus hours are finished. Crofoot asked committee members to give this situation some thought to see if we could come up with alternative ideas.

Meeting Schedule for PPT:

Next Meeting – Thursday, October 28: Crofoot reminded Committee members that our next meeting will be Thursday, October 28 via Zoom at 2:00 PM.

Committee members homework:

- potential solutions for when physically disabled individuals are stranded at the hospital after hours
- review current fares and propose ideas for 2022 fares.

Also discussed was whether a proposed meeting date of December 16 would be an inconvenient time for students and UWP staff due to finals week. Geyer indicated that finals week should not be an issue for staff. Searl's finals should not conflict with that date. Based on this, the Committee is tentatively scheduled to meet in December 16 in addition to November 18 and December 2.

Adjourn: Parrot motioned to adjourn, second by Ericson, at 2:54pm.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81738996662?pwd=OWN1RnRZRE1CZjRFblc0ZjdhaHFhUT09>

Meeting ID: 817 3899 6662

Passcode: 279539

Email sent to Committee members on 10/15/2021 from Sigwarth:

Committee members:

After yesterday's meeting, staff reviewed the need for a survey. However, looking at the schedule of our next meetings and the need to have this data in hand to inform our decisions regarding potential route and fare increases, we need to get this survey out as soon as possible.

Staff will begin working immediately with Mr. Ericson and Council Member Parrott to compile survey questions and implement distribution to the bus and taxi ridership. If you would like to assist in the questions, please contact Debi. Once the questions are drafted, we will be sharing them with committee members for feedback. We hope to gather a few weeks of data to then present for committee review on November 18.