

Johnson County Paratransit Advisory Board

Minutes

February 16, 2007

1410 South First Ave., Iowa City

Present:

Members: Lynne Stamus, Terrence Neuzil, Sally Stutsman, Chris Reynolds, William Gorman, Valerie Scher, Dee Vanderhoef, Mike O'Donnell

Ex-Officio: Roger Goedken, Marc Rahe

Others: Tom Brase, SEATS Director, Brian Hulke, SEATS, Benjamin Dalgaard, Bionic Bus, Angie Conard

Absent:

Members: Tom Gill, Brian Buelow, Vicky Robrock

Ex-Officio: Dave Purdy

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1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 10:50 a.m. by Dee Vanderhoef

Chairperson's Report: Dee reported on the rail study that is part of the 15 and 5 study out of Cedar Rapids. The train will go to Cedar Rapids, Amana, Oakdale, Coralville, and Iowa City. Speed is slow, not competitive with travel by car. The cost to upgrade rail lines versus adding two lanes on the highway is being discussed. Dee said she is not versed on how in cities wheelchairs can board rapidly. Lynne said she would check the internet to see how they can board handicap passengers.

The new ramp at the University has a stop for trains. This would allow for outlying parking for Coralville and Iowa City commuters. The second stop would be between Burlington Street and City Park.

There is a study called GEO 21 that is for freight rail use at this time. GEO 21 is a non profit lobbying group looking for supporters in the area.

Election of new officers: It was discussed that we not have a secretary because they do not take notes. By laws state that you must have a secretary so it was decided that they would elect a new secretary that would continue to approve the minutes.

Chair: Lynne Stamus, Nominated by Dee Vanerhoef and seconded by Chris Reynolds.

Vice Chair: Terrence Neuzil moved up from secretary.

Secretary: Vicki Robrock, nominated by Sally Stutsman and seconded by Mike O'Donnell.

2. **Director's Report:**

a. Routematch: SEATS staff attended training for level one and will attend level two training in two weeks. They will "go live" with new software in March. Routematch is a big plus for future technology, it includes website training which is proactive. The current system being used is efficient for now but the new Mentor (Mobile Data Communicators) hardware is much more advanced.

Sally: How will people know about the change?

Tom: The clients will be told about the changes when they call in to schedule rides. Tom also discussed putting something on our web site, as well as, making extra calls to providers. Mike suggested fliers. Tom said that clients that do not ride a lot will not be affected.

William: What is going to change and how will it affect the riders?

Tom: Two things – The time it takes to schedule rides will take longer at first and second is that the screens do not flow with this system.

Brian: The data conversion might have a problem so everyone will need to bear with us. The data switch will take place on February 28.

Mike: Do you anticipate disruptions?

Tom: A little but we are going to try to run Adept at the same time to avoid problems.

Brian: We are going to try five buses first as a pilot.

William: You need to get the word out.

Tom: Maybe we can post something on the buses.

Roger: What is the five minute plan?

Tom: I understand that the system will manipulate the times, we need to see what happens. The drivers still have a 30 minute window. The Routematch software will have different screens which won't schedule reservations right away. This system has more steps with more work for schedulers but it should not affect the customer. Clients are also going to be able to do their own rides on the web and SEATS will be able to approve the ride. In the future the system will be able to call a rider to let them know they will be at the location in a few minutes.

- b. Subscription Services and how this affects our service when a frequently visited address changes:** Subscriptions are more difficult each year, the ES move has helped us figure it out. Our system generates trips and our current problem is that several buses show up at once for trips within a one hour window. SEATS would like to become more efficient so this does not continue to happen. ADA laws allow SEATS to negotiate so we are able to be more efficient. Brian asked that a sub committee be formed to help solve this issue.

Dee: Do we have models that show efficiency as well as cost savings?

William: Need more information, the provider needs to meet the need of individuals. It is a larger issue than telling individuals they have to go at a certain time.

Brian: ADA guidelines state “Sec. 37.133 Subscription service. (a). This part does not prohibit the use of subscription service by public entities as part of a complementary paratransit system, subject to the limitations in this section. (b) Subscription service may not absorb more than fifty percent of the number of trips available at a given time of day, unless there is non-subscription capacity. (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, the entity may establish waiting lists or other capacity constraints and trip purpose restrictions or priorities for participation in the subscription service only.

Tom: We are so full with subscriptions that we are over 50% (with subscriptions). ADA suggest not over 50% is subscriptions. We are not putting people on wait lists. We are getting past the point of demand of people being able to use the service. Some times we are at 97% subscriptions and this hurts other riders without subscriptions.

William: We are more than willing to meet as part of a sub committee.

Sally: Good idea to have a sub committee

Dee: Is there a penalty with ADA for going over recommended percent?

Tom: If we have over 50% subscription service at any time of the day there can be no denials according to ADA.

Chris: I am not able to get to town because the subscribers schedule does not work with mine.

Tom: This is the perfect time to change subscriptions with our new software. A sub committee would help this.

Dee: Is there an outside party for a grievance?

Tom: Kind of, JCCOG is who you appeal to.

Dee: That is for individual, who would you use for more than one client with same issue?

Tom: So far we have not needed outside help.

William: Service is based on individuals wants and needs.

Lynne: Would you (Brain) like to make a sub committee?

Tom: William and Roger will be contacted to get people.

Dee: It would be useful to say that the vice chair of the committee would be an ex-officio so there is structure. Terrance agreed to this.

- c. New Facility:** \$250,000 of funds from Leach office money was lost in “lame duck session”. Funds from Coralville for a new facility have become a problem due to two different attorney’s interpretations of how TIF funds can be distributed outside of the original TIF area.

Dee: Iowa City letter does not show support from council.

Terrance: They are recalculating how Coralville will give us \$900,000.

Lynne: Is the money still there?

Dee: TIF money from Coral Ride Mall was where the \$900,000 was from.

William: The money for this year is dead.

Tom: Cambus lost 11 new buses this year from money that was earmarked.

Benjamin: Cambus will only be getting 4-5 new buses in May or June, supposed to get 15.

Dee: They will no longer be using “earmarked”, it is now called “congressional designation”.

3. Old Business:

Dee: An overview of the FY08 budget of national league of cities can be found on the Iowa City web site. It is under icgov.org and click on “council meeting packet”.

- a. Approval of last meeting’s minutes by Sally and seconded by Dee.

4. New Business:

Dave Purdy was not present but it was reported that there are four reports on successful aging in Johnson County. The reports show that Johnson County is moving forward to establish itself as an aging community. Market analysis was done with AARP to help coordinate all services with web page or calls to branch out. It was noted that this would be excellent for SEATS.

5. Open Discussion:

Next meeting will have a power point presentation with last fiscal year information.

6. Next meeting is set for May 18, 2007 at 10:30 a.m.

7. Adjourn at 11:40