

MINUTES
CITY TRANSIT TRUST SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 14, 2017 - 6:00 P.M.
LAWTON CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS/AUDITORIUM

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Fred Fitch, Chairman. Notice of meeting and agenda were posted on the City Hall notice board as required by law.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Bob Morford, Keith Jackson, Caleb Davis, Dwight Tanner, Jr., Cherry Phillips, V. Gay McGahee, Doug Wells.

ABSENT: Jay Burk

ALSO PRESENT: Jerry Ihler, City Manager; Frank V. Jensen, City Attorney; Traci Hushbeck, City Clerk, COL Samuel Curtis, Fort Sill Liaison.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF CITY TRANSIT TRUST MEETING OF JANUARY 24, 2017.

MOVED by Wells SECOND by Jackson to approve the minutes of City Transit Trust meeting of January 24, 2017. AYE: Morford, Jackson, Davis, Tanner, Phillips, McGahee, Wells. NAY: None. MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS:

1. Consider authorizing the purchase of a replacement paratransit vehicle from the Oklahoma State Purchasing contract. Exhibits: None.

Ryan Landers, General Manager of LATS, stated this will authorize the purchase of a paratransit vehicle. The current vehicle no longer works.

Mayor Fitch stated this is the vehicle that they schedule door to door for special appointments.

Landers stated yes, it is completely separate from the fixed routes.

Jackson questioned if this will be CNG capable.

Landers state no.

Morford questioned if this was a new vehicle.

Landers stated this would be a brand new vehicle to replace a vehicle that no longer is working.

MOVED by Wells SECOND by Morford to authorize the purchase of a replacement paratransit vehicle from the Oklahoma State Purchasing contract. AYE: Morford, Tanner, Phillips, McGahee, Wells. NAY: Jackson, Davis. MOTION CARRIED.

2. Consider authorizing the issuance of a Request for Qualifications to obtain conceptual drawings, preliminary engineering, final engineering and inspections for the proposed transfer center and transit hubs. Exhibits: Conceptual Routes from Transfer Center and Hubs.

Deborah Jones, representing the Lawton Area Transit System, stated last summer they received an FTA grant in the amount of \$736,000 to design hubs and a transfer center. They have now reached the point where they need to authorize the RFQ for engineering for the two hubs and the transfer center. They would like to go out at the end of this month and anticipate coming back to the trust with the qualifier for the award. This is part of \$324,000 that is FY 13 FTA money. They have been notified by FTA that if we don't start encumbering this money we could lose it.

Phillips questioned if this money would cover the new routing and the hubs.

Jones stated the \$728,000 will probably cover the construction of one hub and maybe the transfer center. There is no money available as yet for the downtown hub, but it is not unusual to always be looking for FTA money. The engineering would be the first step.

Wells stated this is a carry on of the Lawton Metropolitan Area Transportation Committee where they hired a consultant to study the routes and come up with suggestions and they recommended a new transfer station at 17th and these different hubs.

Jones stated this is actually part of a McDonald plan, who are the operators. It has been discussed with Dr. Stoddard who is a consultant to the MPO, but we have not completed that route study, but the route study provided by McDonald does some things that we have to do with the system right now. First of all it shortens frequencies, instead of an hour frequency with big loops, we go to regional routes that radiate out of the hubs so you get a frequency of 15 minutes on some. That is how you increase ridership. If you have low ridership you have to look at whether that route is the best route. Dr. Stoddard is examining these routes from McDonald and she is sure he will give an evaluation.

Mayor Fitch stated this does not lock them into anything, it will come back to the trust.

Jones stated the award to the engineering firm will come back to the trust.

MOVED by Wells SECOND by Phillips to authorize the issuance of a Request for Qualifications to obtain conceptual drawings, preliminary engineering, final engineering and inspections for the proposed transfer center and transit hubs. AYE: Morford, Davis, Tanner, Phillips, McGahee, Wells. NAY: Jackson. MOTION CARRIED.

3. Consider authorizing the public comment period for potential service reductions on the Orange Route and Saturday service for all routes. Exhibits: None.

Jones stated they are asking for comments to consider some service reductions. Out of the Kansas City

buses that were brought in, only three are operable. On the Opus buses they brought in from Waco, there are two operating and the middle aged Gilleys that were bought in 2010, 2011 and 2012, there are seven operating. They cannot perform the preventive maintenance because of the age and miles of the fleet. Staff is recommending that they open the public comment period for some reductions in service. They are proposing that the orange route, which is the Ft. Sill route, they go down to one bus on that route during normal service and that would give an hour frequency instead of having buses go counter clockwise and clockwise. They would probably have reached this conclusion later this summer as more security restrictions are placed on Ft. Sill. Ridership is down to about 140 per day and they can service that with one bus and continue to get many retirees out on base. They would also recommend reducing the hours on the Saturday service. They have done numerous surveys and they are virtually not carrying anyone after 6:00 p.m. The current hours are 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. and they would recommend they go from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. On Saturdays they would also go to a one hour frequency on every route. They would have one bus running on every route, not two. They have approximately 100 customers using Saturday service and at that rate they cannot justify two buses at this time. They do anticipate three new buses being delivered in June and three in March of 2018. They cannot guarantee restoration of service that far in advance because they won't know how many current buses will be running, but they can evaluate it if the trusts want to. It is better to have an organized service reduction where our customers know that bus runs every hour rather than where we frequently have a bus break down on a route and a bus has to be towed in. By starting the public comment period the trust is asking the riders of LATs what their feelings are towards these proposed reductions. There will be a public hearing at the end of the public comment period and they will also take it to the MPO for their input. They will provide transportation for clients to come to the public hearing.

Tanner questioned where the public hearing will be held and how many will be held.

Jones stated it will be in the City Hall auditorium and they will have at least one. They will also use seat drops, which are forms they drop on the bus for riders to fill out while they are riding and then they drop them in a box. They have better comments from the seat drops than they do public hearings.

McGahee stated the seat drops are a great idea since those that actually are riding the buses can be involved and they can be informed about what is on the horizon.

MOVED by McGahee SECOND by Phillips to authorize the public comment period for potential service reductions on the Orange Route and Saturday service for all routes.

Morford questioned if this would affect Ft. Sill or strictly the retirees.

COL Curtis stated the retirees would be impacted by these changes. He does not have a problem based on the utilization rate and at least this would be open for public comment to see what the impact would be. Going to one bus at a regular interval of one hour is reasonable. He is not aware of any increased protection on Ft. Sill, but he does feel that what is being proposed is reasonable.

Jones stated she was speaking about the fact that some of the customers do not have DOD authorization on the base so they have been waiting at the security area.

Phillips questioned how many passengers would they be down by not being able to run the regular route.

Jones stated that is hard to answer until they go into a public comment period because not all passengers ride every day. Carrying only 140, there are not many passengers utilizing that route right now.

Tanner stated right now this route on Ft. Sill is running clockwise and counter clockwise and those that don't have a Ft. Sill pass will wait at the gate and then the opposite direction bus will pick them up. What happens when there is no one to pick them up.

Jones stated they will run on a clockwise basis so they could wait at the security center on Sheridan Road.

Tanner questioned if the bus would come out the same gate it came in.

Jones stated no, it will go out Key Gate.

Tanner stated if the passengers get off at one gate because they don't have a pass and the bus doesn't come back through that gate, who is going to pick those passengers up.

Jones stated they will have to make their way on their own.

Tanner stated that will not work.

Jones stated all passengers who board the orange route are asked before the bus leaves if they have DOD clearance to go on base and some ride it without clearance and they sit there and she does not know why. They need to get the public comments and they are not saying this is the only way to change this, they need to see what happens with the comments.

Tanner stated he guesses that is the reason it was set up as clockwise and counter clockwise to pick those folks up that didn't have a pass. That system is working now and we just can't leave the citizens at one of these gates without having a way to pick them up.

Jones stated they will look at anything that comes up in this.

COL Curtis stated he read that they will do one hour loops either clockwise or counter clockwise. He stated that individual would have to wait one hour and then get back on the bus and go to their destination.

Wells stated the bus is going to make the same loop so when it comes back the next time around it is going to be dropping passengers off again and going on to Fort Sill.

Jones stated if they do not have the clearance to go on Fort Sill they must stay at the security center.

COL Curtis stated they would need to get a pass and then get back on.

Tanner stated if you are using one bus you would have to go back out that same gate to pick up those folks that weren't able to get on Ft. Sill.

Jones stated if they go in on Sheridan there is a building to stay in and they can call a cab. She understands the concern and they will have to look at it.

Wells stated regardless of what gate, if you drop them off and don't have a way to pick them up and get them back downtown, it's a problem. They need to look at that.

Jones stated they have to integrate into the other routes, but they should take public comments and they will look at these concerns.

McGahee stated today they are just approving opening the 90 day comment period.

VOTE ON MOTION: AYE: Morford, Jackson, Davis, Tanner, Phillips, McGahee, Wells. NAY: None.
MOTION CARRIED.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m. upon motion, second and roll call vote.

FRED L. FITCH, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

TRACI L. HUSHBECK, SECRETARY