

**Transportation Policy Advisory Committee  
Public Transportation Sub-Committee**

**Members Present:**

Tom Irwin, Chair  
Dick Lemieux  
Dean Williams, CNHRPC  
Cathy Wyrenbeck  
Laura Aibel (Staff Representative)  
Heather Shank (Staff Representative)

**Members Absent:**

Councilor Byron Champlin  
Councilor Brent Todd  
Ed Roberge (Staff Representative)

**Others Attending:**

Jim Sudak  
Larisa Djuvelek-Ruggiero  
Patricia Hutchins

**I. Call to Order**

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the May 19, 2014 were presented and approved. Minutes from the September 22, 2015 meeting were presented. Mr. Lemieux requested additional detail of the bus kneeling discussion be added to these minutes. Amended minutes for the September 22, 2015 meeting will be presented at the November 17, 2015 meeting.

**III. Referrals**

Discussion of the TPAC referral regarding Mr. Peter Pilch's request for additional accessible service was discussed. Ms. Aibel has emailed Mr. Pilch inviting him to the meetings but has not received any response. Ms. Aibel will reach out to Rob Mack who has outlined potential sources of information for Mr. Pilch. She will invite Mr. Pilch to the November 17, 2015 meeting.

**IV. Public Comments**

Ms. Patricia Hutchins was present at the meeting. She expressed the following concerns as they relate to the survey questionnaire CAT conducted between September 30<sup>th</sup> and October 14<sup>th</sup>:

- The northbound bus pullout on Main Street cannot accommodate more than one bus.
- The Storrs Street hub is unclean, cold and unpleasant. If the hub is to remain at Storrs St over the winter, the granite steps leading to Eagle Square may be difficult to use. The slope between Storrs and Main Streets is too steep for some passenger to navigate. The bench on one side of Storrs Street has rotted slats.

Mr. Sudak replied there is enough room on the northbound Main Street stop to accommodate two buses at a time. Mr. Irwin asked if Ms. Hutchins has heard if passengers want to maintain the transfer hub on Storrs Street. Mr. Sudak replied the survey results indicated the split was about 50/50 for and against retaining the Storrs Street location. Mr. Sudak said the current plan is to move the hub back to Main Street at the close of construction in November.

Ms. Wyrenbeck remarked that it can be difficult to board and alight buses during the winter due to snow banks. General Services tries hard to remove the snow banks, but there is a delay at times.

**V. Updates/Old Business**

- i. **Vehicle Replacement Program**- Ms. Shelley Winters, Administrator of NHDoT Rail and Transit Bureau, attended the meeting to answer questions regarding vehicle acquisition. Ms. Winters told the subcommittee NHDoT would compile and bid a vehicle per CAT's specifications, as CAT is the subrecipient of the grant. Ms. Winters encouraged the subcommittee and staff from CAT to meet and come to agreement regarding the preferred type of vehicle. A decision must be made whether or not the City will still provide the match if CAT requests a type of vehicle differing from the previous selection (i.e. rear engine). CAT was the only agency requesting a medium duty bus.

Further, Ms. Winters explained that other transit companies are using rear engine models for higher capacity routes. Generally, these are larger models than the front engine models used in downtowns. The price for a vehicle does not dictate the model, unless the specified model is not within the budget. A multiyear contract is probably not possible. The funds have already been approved by FTA, no additional notice of award will be sent. Ms. Winters had to leave at this time.

A lengthy discussion followed. Subcommittee members and others discussed the following;

- the pros and cons of two types of buses, front and rear mounted engines
- maintenance, repair and part availability of rear versus front engine models
- anecdotal experiences with reliability for front and rear engine models
- importance of aesthetics in vehicle selection

Would the City still provide the match if a front engine model was specified? Would CAT still proceed with the purchase if the City match was not provided?

Some elements required by CAT for any vehicle include; low floor, cameras, stop announcers, wifi, cart storage area. Mr. Sudak will find out if there are multiple models of both engine configurations with this standard equipment.

- ii. **Ridership Report**- The ridership report was distributed. Ridership on the fixed routes and Senior Transit in September was the highest since October 2014. Paratransit ridership rose, but has not reached the number in October 2014. Chairperson Irwin requested the Fixed Route Y-axis graph be consistent between the FY13-FY15 and the FY16 reports.
- iii. **CAT Quick Report** – Mr. Sudak reviewed the Quick report with the subcommittee, including the “CAT Downtown Transfer Bus Kneeling Survey”. The questionnaire was distributed to passengers between September 30<sup>th</sup> and October 14<sup>th</sup>. Passengers who rode the bus were not prevented from completing more than one survey. The response to kneeling buses was 37% want the bus to kneel at every stop, 51% want the bus to kneel on request only and 12% said either is acceptable. The complete survey results are attached. Drivers have been instructed to lower the bus at every stop until further notice.

## VI. Other Discussions

- i. **CAT Program Goals** –No update.
- ii. **Bus Kneeling Policy** – See Quick Report above.
- iii. **Boarding and Alighting Study** – Mr. Williams distributed performance measures from 2011 and 2012 Boarding and Alighting studies. He reviewed the form data collectors will be using for the counts. He plans to perform the boarding and alighting counts November 17, 18 and 19. This might be same time Main Street will reopen, causing timings and ridership to be abnormal. Is it necessary to do the counts at this time or can the study be postponed until the spring? Ms. Aibel will review required performance measures with Mr. Roberge as they relate to the Main Street Complete Street Project and report back to Mr. Williams.

## VII. New Business –

- i. Ms. Wyrenbeck asked if passengers can call dispatch to learn of bus delays. Mr. Sudak said yes.
- ii. Ms. Wyrenbeck asked if the Storrs Street bus stop could be relocated back to the entrance of Market Basket. Mr. Sudak said the bus cannot pick up and drop off on private property.

## VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.