



The Wichita Transit Advisory Board Meeting is in regular session.

Remote*: Diana Edmiston, Jason Gregory, Dorsha Kirksey,

Absent: Ellen Abby, Troy Tabor, and Mika Pyyhkala

Guests: City staff: Paul Gunzelman*, Council Member Bryan Frye*, Tonja Howard*, Jay Hinkel, Mike Tann, Raven Alexander, Nate Hinkel, Sarah Pineda

Public Guests: Shelley Rich, Alicia Hunter*, and Derek Sorrells*

Opening

Lead Raven Alexander called the regular meeting of the Wichita Transit Advisory Board to order at 10:01 a.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

No quorum to approve November minutes. Will table for January meeting.

1. Public Comments

None

2. Discussion Items

A. TranSystems Update

Paul Gunzelman provided a quick update on the Multimodal Facility. Paul met with TranSystems a couple of times to discuss reporting of the 60% concept plan. He is getting into detail about what is needed for backup power. Scheduling meeting with Evergy, and investigating existing utilities at the facility. Will work with IT department as well to make sure the backup power needed for those systems is considered. He is working with the facility group to determine fixtures, toilet fixtures and how those are mounted. Planning for 60% plan submittal for January 17, 2023.

Jason Gregory questioned if there is funding to do any improvements to surrounding streets, specifically a pedestrian signal. Jason also inquired on if we need to redesign any of the streets. Have we identified any funding in the CIP?

Paul mentioned that within the budget, TranSystems is designing some street corner radius improvements at Sycamore, Burton, and Texas to ensure buses can get around those corners.

Those are tight radii right now. They were improving the Sycamore and Texas intersections adjacent to the Delano entry to Riverfront stadium. Right now, there is a marked crosswalk. Further investigation of the existing streets will take place. There are improvements to the streets that will be included. We will need to do some sidewalk repairs because they will most likely be damaged during construction. Will look at Sycamore and Oak Street for any damage.

Dorsha mentions presenting the 60% design plan to the Wichita Sedgwick County Access Advisory Board when it is ready. Paul asks who the contact is to work with on scheduling that presentation.

Information Items

B. Marketing Report

Nathaniel Hinkel discussed digital insights on the stats and reach of Google and Facebook. All reach was organic this past month.

Focus is currently working on Transit Advisory Board New Member handbook and updating all the current material to give a better look at everything involved with Wichita Transit. A digital copy will be sent out to all currently on board.

Starting mid-January, Route 12 will extend to the WSU West Campus on N Maize Rd near 37th street. This route extension will utilize the time available on our existing route without the need for additional resources. The new extension will serve WSU and other retail, commercial, and school properties. Additional stops will be established along the route.

Nate is working with Evergy on a new marketing branding plan for Evergy Connect customer service information downtown. Two buses will be wrapped, one CCW and one Proterra. Also, working with City communications to create a recruitment video featuring what it's like to be a Bus Operator. This will help with the recruitment of new bus operators.

Smart Card Ticketing is moving forward and currently working with vendor on final implementation details. We are expecting to have them on site next month for testing and training. First quarter 2023, cards will be ready for use.

Ridership has been robust this fall; much of that is between WSU and USD259 students. Students are averaging 39% of total ridership this fall semester. As school lets out between semesters, we will see a natural dip in ridership. Veterans Ride Free is still getting an average of well over 4,000 rides per month. Information graphs were provided to see ridership visually.

C. Director's Report

Mike Tann states the first quarter of next year, we will be issuing an RFP for system redesign. Springtime will start a comprehensive study looking at improving and expanding the system. An option may be transitioning to a hybrid grid that will increase direct routes from one side of town to another. We would also bring in the consultant to listen to the needs and wants of the community. There will be a lot of public outreach that will go with that study. The first task is to meet with stakeholders, electives, and users of the system and establish the goals immediately. The goal is to create and fund a system that meets the needs of a greater percentage of our community. The board will be essential in the prioritization of those goals.

We are Incorporating a new relationship with WSU, extending service to the West Campus on N Maize Rd. This was a direct response to WSU's request. Currently, Route 12 ends at Target in

New Market Square. The route will extend north on Maize to 37th and then turn at WSU. This extension will benefit the community, not just WSU.

Several federal grants will be coming out in the next 24 months that deal with pathways to transit. This includes sidewalks and connectivity to either transit stops or transit facilities. With the size and scope of the Riverfront project and the community that surrounds it, our project could be fitting. You have entities that will service it and transit service going there. There will be a lot of creative ways to apply discretionary funding to improve the connection ability to that facility. Raven will look at these grants as they come out to see what we can apply for. It is anticipated that federal grant funding will become increasingly more competitive.

A new federal bill is expected to be signed this week. Part of this bill would provide a significant increase in transit funding, both on the discretionary side for capital projects and formula funding on what we do now, such as 5307 and 5310. Increased federal funding for these projects is critical to us. We are seeing with these bills the desire to increase formulary funding that comes to us based on ridership, revenue, partnerships, capital projects, and electrification. Besides getting formulary funding, it opens the door to make us more advantageous to apply for discretionary funding. The community's appreciation, as well as transit usage, will come into play with discretionary funding.

There was previous discussion of combining the WBPAB and TAB, but that will not occur. The City Manager should contact Council Members to make their new appointments to Transit Board. The large influx of new members in the first quarter of 2023 provides an opportunity for many changes, like for the chair and vice chair. As Nate mentioned, we are updating the New Board Member Handbook. The handbook will include a lot of new information, data, a contact list, and financials that have not been done in the past. New and standing members will receive a lot of new and updated material.

Our newest appointed board member Derek Sorrels is here virtually today. Appointed by Council Member Frye, member Sorrels owns four local businesses. He joined to ensure growing a usable transit system while also increasing ridership.

3. Old Business

None

4. New Business

None

5. Announcements

Raven mentions a call for projects for Section 5310 funding was released on December 1, 2023. This funding is for agencies that support seniors or persons with disabilities. This is in partnership with WAMPO.

Adjournment

Lead Raven Alexander adjourned the meeting at 10:28 a.m.

The next meeting of the board will be held on **January 18, 2023 @10:00 AM.**