

# MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

August 21, 2018

LET IT BE REMEMBERED, the Public Transit Advisory Committee in and for the County of Collier, having conducted business herein, met on this date at 3:00 P.M. in REGULAR SESSION at Administrative Building "F", Suite 501, Collier County Government Complex Naples, Florida with the following members present:

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman: Mr. John DiMarco  
Vice Chairman: Mr. John Jenkins  
Mr. Arthur Dobberstein  
Mr. Harold Weeks  
Mr. Richard Duggan

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Mr. Kerru Dera

## ALSO PRESENT:

Ms. Michelle Arnold, Director, Public Transit and Neighborhood Enhancement  
Mr. Omar DeLeon, Senior Planner, Public Transit and Neighborhood Enhancement  
Mr. Matt Liveringhouse, Transit Manager, Public Transit and Neighborhood Enhancement  
Ms. Yousi Cardeso, Operations Analyst  
Ms. Robin Jennings, Collier County  
Ms. Elena Ortiz Rosado, Events, Sales and Marketing Coordinator

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman DiMarco called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.

**II. Roll Call**

Roll call was taken and a quorum was established.

**III. Approval of Agenda**

*Mr. Duggan entered a motion to approve the August 21, 2018 meeting agenda. Mr. Jenkins seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion was carried.*

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

**a. July 17, 2018 minutes**

Clarification to record: Member Comments: Mr. Dobberstein gave an approximation of fleet vehicles in service, not exact numbers.

*Mr. Duggan entered a motion to approve the July 17, 2018 meeting minutes, with the noted correction. Mr. Dobberstein seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion was carried.*

**V. Committee Action**

There were no committee action items to discuss at today's meeting.

**VI. Reports and Presentations**

**a. Summer Paw Pass – Ms. Elena Ortiz-Rosado**

Ms. Ortiz reported that the Summer Paw Pass program was coming to a close for the season, having sold 42 passes this year, compared to 40 passes sold last season. Marketing efforts included digital marketing via the Naples Daily News, which included a digital display ad on the website, as well as ads geographically targeting all student age residents in Collier County, social media posts on Instagram and Facebook, and posters distributed throughout the community. The Summer Paw Pass program was also marketed through various agencies in Collier County, including presentations at the Early Childhood Network meeting in May, the bi-weekly Collier County new hire orientations, and a presentation to the students at the Lighthouse of Collier County. More outreach to schools to promote the program for next season is planned. Attempts to discuss the program with a member of the school district have so far been unsuccessful, however further attempts are planned. Mr. Jenkins suggested that a flier be given to all school age children at the end of the school year; however, Mr. Duggan felt this may be cost prohibitive and suggested targeting middle school and high school age children and holding meetings with school counselors to identify and target those students most likely to utilize the program. Mr. Duggan offered to contact the school counselors in this regard.

Ms. Ortiz stated the pass cost was \$30.00 for unlimited travel between July and August and was a plastic smartcard which was waved in front of the fare box. Once mobile ticketing is implemented, the Summer Paw Pass will be included in this program.

An advertising opportunity exists with the smartcard for businesses to include their logo and information on the front of the card, with Public Transit information on the back. Community outreach is planned for the upcoming season to hotels and businesses in the community for promotion of transit to their employees, as well as patrons.

Mr. Jenkins stated that Friday night high school football games would be an excellent opportunity for students to utilize the bus service and to promote the Summer Paw Pass program, as well as the CAT system in general. Mr. Duggan stated an agreement would first need to be put into place with the School Board. Mr. Liveringhouse stated that public perception regarding the safety and reliability of the bus service needs to be reinforced with parents. Mr. Duggan stated that there are programs in place for students to utilize the bus system, including the Special Class program and Project Search at NCH. Mr. Dobberstein suggested that public education in the form of bus tours and information regarding public transit may be done utilizing an off-duty bus parked at Friday night football games. Mr. Ortiz stated that this type of public outreach is currently being done, having been well received by the community, with more such events planned.

**b. Bus Stop Shelters**

An update was provided to the Advisory Committee with regard to the current status of the bus shelter construction program. PTNE staff has implemented a program to construct 10 new bus shelters, beginning April 2018. As of July 2018, 7 have been fully constructed, with 2 scheduled to be fully completed before the end of the year. Photographs of the new shelter design were shared with the committee. The locations of the new bus shelters include 2 at Floridan and Johns Street, 2 at Rattlesnake Hammock and Skyway Drive, 1 on Sunshine Blvd and 16<sup>th</sup> Street, 2 at Pine Ridge Boulevard and Airport Road, 2 at Santa Barbara Boulevard and Recreation Lane, and 1 at Santa Barbara Boulevard and Devonshire Boulevard.

Staff is presently working with the Procurement Department on a design build proposal to select one vendor to design and build future shelters. The vendor chosen will be presented to the BOCC for final approval, after which approximately 40 shelters are planned to be constructed under that process over the next 3 years.

Mr. Jenkins inquired as to any plans for larger bus shelters, in particular adjacent to the new water park on U.S. 41. It was clarified that ridership patterns at that location would need to be reviewed and although larger bus shelters are not planned, two shelters may be installed if justified by high ridership.

ADA improvements have been made at the bus shelter adjacent to the Whistlers Cove Apartments on U.S. 41. Mr. DiMarco suggested an additional shelter be constructed at the Gulfgate Plaza at Bayshore Boulevard due to high ridership and increased development in that area, as well as improvements at the bus stop at the CVS at U.S. 41 and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street downtown, which currently offers limited space for disembarking. Mr. DeLeon stated he will be reviewing City plans for the construction of a roundabout at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and 8<sup>th</sup> Street, which may potentially include a bus stop or pullout area.

The several bus shelters that presently exist at the intersection of U.S. 41 and Collier Boulevard were also discussed in terms of accessibility to shopping and businesses in that area. Mr. DiMarco inquired as to whether a bus stop was planned for the downtown area. Ms. Arnold stated that development is planned at U.S. 41 and 10<sup>th</sup> Street, with plans for inclusion of a bus shelter at that location. Ms. Arnold clarified that the Land Development Code presently does not require the inclusion of a bus shelter, however may be offered by the developer of the project, as in this case.

Mr. Dobberstein inquired as to the status of a previously discussed idea for private funding of additional bus shelters. Ms. Arnold stated that the individual proposing this concept has not moved the initiative forward at this time.

Mr. Jennings inquired as to whether the walls of the shelters may be used for ad space. Mr. Liveringhouse confirmed that this has been identified as a potentially excellent source of revenue and will be working through the Fall to seek BOCC approval of bus shelter advertising, as well as bus wrap advertising. Larger transit organizations typically outsource this work to an advertising firm, with a base percentage of sales earned from advertising. Ms. Arnold stated that previous requests for bids from advertising firms have solicited no response, likely due to the relatively small profits anticipated to be generated from advertising sales with the programs presently in place, which does not include the more visible bus shelter ads or bus wraps. Mr. Jenkins inquired as to whether the bus shelter design includes the mechanism to display advertising. It was clarified that the bus shelter design does include a glass door display. Ms. Arnold stated a workshop is planned between Public Transit and the BOCC on November 6, 2018 at 9:00 a.m., at which advertising will be a topic of discussion. Mr. Liveringhouse estimated additional revenues of \$300K-\$400K from bus shelter ads and bus wraps, based upon income generated by Lee County Public Transit in this manner. The BOCC presently has an advertising policy in place; however, this would need to be expanded to include Public Transit advertising. Ms. Arnold stated that these existing county advertising guidelines will be shared with Committee members for their review.

Bus shelter design was briefly discussed and the present lack of solid walls in order to keep the interior dry during rain, however it was clarified that this would inhibit good air flow and is prohibitive due to often high outdoor temperatures. Maintenance of the shelters was also briefly discussed, with the benches noted as requiring the greatest maintenance.

**c. Fixed Route Performance - Mr. DeLeon**

Mr. DeLeon presented the quarterly performance measures to the committee for review and recommendations for improvements. A 15% decrease in ridership was reported compared to last year, with an increase in some routes, but a decrease in others. Several issues have been identified which are contributing to a decline in ridership. One issue is convenience, especially in view of increased popularity of TNCs (Transportation Network Companies) such as Uber and Lyft. Another issue involves land use and whether Transit is being actively promoted.

Easier automobile loan approval is also felt to be a contributor. The increase in gas prices has not been correlated with an increase in ridership, possibly due again to the ease and quick availability of a TNC. Mr. DiMarco pointed out that Lyft often offers discounted rides. Ms. Arnold stated that while convenient, TNCs are not affordable as a primary source of transportation. Ms. Arnold stated that bus service needs to be viewed as a more convenient and desirable option by the public.

Mr. Weeks inquired as to the feasibility of an all-night bus; one bus which would run on a specific city loop overnight. Mr. Jenkins offered an illustration of a “heartbeat” bus, which would run either a 24-hour loop or an extended hour loop run. Ms. Arnold stated there would be challenges with this concept, specifically with identifying the center core around which the route would operate.

Mr. DeLeon pointed out that a recent survey included with the FPL bill mailed to Collier residents resulted in respondents stating a desire for greater bus frequency and later service. Current bus frequency and timeliness of the busses were discussed. Ms. Arnold stated that frequency could be increased on certain routes during peak hours, cutting back frequency in off peak hours, thus negating the need for 15-minute interval stops throughout the day. Mr. Dobberstein pointed out that the cost of increased frequency would come from the tax base unless the advertising ideas previously discussed were approved by the BOCC, which would need to be thoughtfully presented during the upcoming workshop. Ms. Arnold offered to share the existing thin outline of the presentation with the Advisory Committee for their review.

Mr. Jenkins stated that an offer of greater self-sufficiency may be a tipping point for the BOCC to approve bus shelter and wrap advertising initiatives. Ms. Arnold pointed out that the Transit Division has operated that way for many years. Routes have been modified to be made as efficient as possible, without an increase in local funds since 2012. Increased operational costs have been made up through grant manipulation, with an expected \$500K deficit anticipated for the upcoming year and \$900K in two years. Mr. Liveringhouse stated that the upcoming focus group is intended to determine BOCC plans to support Transit, with three possible outcomes; if no changes are made by the BOCC, routes/services will be cut, the County may simply assist with anticipated deficits in the upcoming several years, or the County may fund the program to achieve growth objectives. Various talking points with regard to the presentation to the BOCC were discussed. Mr. Dobberstein suggested specific data and documentation of the ways the Division has cut costs operationally should be included, but that the presentation should begin on a positive note of accomplishments to date. Ms. Arnold further stated that a short video is being developed, which will show the “Faces of Transportation.”

Ms. Arnold stated that a traffic impact analysis is planned, which will focus upon Land Use and incorporating transit into the development process and ways to assist with promoting transit. A study in this regard is soon to commence, with the results available in 6 to 8 months, which will be presented to the Advisory Committee for review and recommendations.

**VII. Member Comments**

Mr. Liveringhouse stated that he will be soon be transitioning to a new career opportunity and leaving the Public Transit Division.

Mr. Duggan announced a recent career promotion and will be resigning his Advisory Committee membership, however has a qualified replacement.

**VIII. Public Comments**

There were no comments made by members of the public.

**IX. Next Meeting Date – September 11, 2018**

**X. Adjournment**

**There being no further business for the good of the County, the meeting was adjourned by order of the Chair.**

**Public Transit Advisory Committee**

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**John DiMarco, Chairman**

These minutes approved by the Board/Committee on \_\_\_\_\_ as presented \_\_\_\_\_ or as amended \_\_\_\_\_.