



TRANSIT SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
2 JANUARY 2019 – 10:00 A.M.
MEETING MINUTES
MEETING # **TS0119**

ATTENDANCE

- Voting Membership:
 - City of DeKalb: **Tim Holdeman**
 - City of Sycamore: **Adam Orton**
 - DeKalb County: **Kathy Ostlick**
 - NIU: **John Heckmann**
 - NIU Student Association: not present
 - VAC: **Paul LaLonde**
 - Kishwaukee College: not present
- Non-Voting Attendance:
 - DSATS Staff: Brian Dickson
 - Transit Staff: Marcus Cox, Sabrina Kuykendall Kvasnicka
 - TAC Committee Representative: Nathan Schwartz
 - Others Present: none

(**BOLD** indicates voting member)

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Holdeman called the meeting to order and established a quorum at 10:02 a.m.

1. *Introductions*

Introductions were made.

2. *Approval of Agenda*

Motion #TS0119-01: Motion made by Mr. Heckmann and seconded by Ms. Ostlick to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

3. *Approval of Minutes*

Motion #TS0119-02: Motion made by Ms. Ostlick and seconded by Mr. Orton to approve the minutes from the November 7, 2018 Transit Subcommittee meeting. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

5. Election of Officers

Mr. Holdeman said Mr. Nicklas is the current Transit Subcommittee Chair. As Mr. Nicklas was unavailable today, Mr. Holdeman, as current Vice-Chair is the acting Chair for this meeting. Mr. Holdeman said DSATS staff has recommended to him that the new Chair for the Transit Subcommittee should not be someone who is directly involved in Transit operations. This would leave Ms. Ostdick or Mr. Orton as options. Mr. Holdeman said he is willing to continue to serve as the Vice-Chair. Mr. Holdeman suggested Mr. Orton be nominated as Chair and Mr. Holdeman nominated as Vice-Chair.

Motion #TS0119-03: Motion made by Mr. LaLonde and seconded by Ms. Ostdick to nominate Mr. Orton as Chair and Mr. Holdeman as Vice-Chair of the Transit Subcommittee. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Dickson said the nominations must now be closed and the nominations be approved.

Motion #TS0119-04: Motion made by Mr. Heckmann and seconded by Mr. LaLonde to close the nominations and approve Mr. Orton as Chair and Mr. Holdeman as Vice-Chair. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Orton proceeded to take over as Chair of the Committee.

6. Sources of Transit Funding

Mr. Cox said at the last meeting, members requested staff provide an overview of Small Transit Intensive Cities (STIC) grant funding. Transit staff decided to provide an overview of the various types of funding which is available for public transit.

Local Sources: This includes NIU student fees, contributions by VAC, and Huskie Line and VAC fares. VAC funding sources include Opportunity House, Kishwaukee College, the City of Sycamore, United Way, Area Agency on Aging, other human services organizations, and private contributions.

Federal Sources: This includes the Federal Transit Administration 5307 grant funds, STIC funds (which are included within the 5307-grant funding), and other federal competitive grants for which the City of DeKalb may apply.

State Sources: This includes the Downstate Operating Assistance Program (DOAP) which provides 65% of transit operating assistance funding, up to a set maximum limit set within the grant.

When using DOAP funds, the 35% match can be provided by both local sources and federal sources.

Mr. Cox said the City estimates about \$80,000 in farebox revenue from Huskie Line and VAC in FY19. Mr. Cox said local contributions in FY19 are expected to be about 27% of the total

budget. Mr. Heckman asked what time-frame FY19 is in this context. Mr. Cox said FY19 was the 2019 calendar year.

The Federal Transit Administration 5307 grant is a formula funded grant provided to all US metropolitan areas with a population between 50,000 and 200,000. These grant funds can be used either for operating assistance or transit capital projects. It is the grantee's choice as to how much is allocated to operating assistance and how much is allocated to transit capital. For transit capital projects, a 20% match is required. For operating assistance, a 50% match is required. Mr. Cox noted DOAP grant funds can be used as a match to the 5307 grants and the 5307 grant funds used for operating assistance can be used as match to the state DOAP grant.

The Federal STIC funds are additional funds provided within the 5307 grants for small cities which have a high transit usage. These are typically cities which have universities serving students, faculty, and staff with public transit. STIC has 6 areas of data which can increase 5307 grant funding if thresholds are met for each data item. The six areas include:

1. Passenger Miles per Vehicle Revenue Mile,
2. Passenger Miles per Vehicle Revenue Hour,
3. Passenger Miles per Capita,
4. Passenger Trips per Capita,
5. Vehicle Revenue Mile per Capita, and
6. Vehicle Revenue Hours per Capita.

All this information is reported via the National Transit Database (NTD). In the past, only VAC data has been reported to the NTD. As VAC ridership is much lower than Huskie Line, the DeKalb area has only met 1 or 2 of the area thresholds in the past. It is anticipated, with the addition of Huskie Line, at least 4 of the 6 area thresholds will be met. If service to Aurora or Elburn is added, there is a good chance DeKalb could meet the thresholds for all 6 areas.

Mr. Heckman noted the annual 5307 allocation has remained about the same from year to year and asked how this allocation is determined. Mr. Dickson said the total amount available for the United States is determined within the federal transportation bill. The grant funds are then distributed between all the US metropolitan areas based on a formula which includes population and other factors. The population figures used in the formula are based on the decennial census, therefore allocations remain similar for 10 years. Once new census figures are published, an area's allocation may change. If an urban area population remains the same, but other urban areas in the country see an increase in population, the unchanged area could see their percentage of the total decrease, therefore reducing their total allocation of transit funds.

Mr. Cox identified the City of DeKalb currently has \$4.2 million in federal FTA funds available for use which have not be allocated to specific projects yet. There is a time-limit (typically five years for new 5307 grants) as to how long each annual allocation is available for use without being dedicated to a specific project. If those funds are not allocated to a specific project within the time-limit, those funds will lapse. Staff has been tracking when those grant allocations expire to ensure the funds are allocated to a specific project within the time limit.

Mr. Cox said current state law requires DOAP allocations increase 10% annually. This increase will continue until the law is changed. In State Fiscal Year 2019, the City has been allocated \$5,192,400 in DOAP grant funds. Due to issues with GATA, approval of the SFY19 DOAP agreement has been significantly delayed. This has meant the City has had to provide funds from the City general fund to pay VAC for the transit services they provide until such time as

SFY19 DOAP funds are received and the City general fund is reimbursed. Mr. Holdeman inquired if those GATA issues have been resolved and the City will not face this situation in coming years. Mr. Cox said staff has put in place procedures to address the issues which arose this year, however, staff cannot be certain if new issues will not arise next year.

7. Full Consolidation Implementation

Mr. Cox said as of January 2, 2019, both Transdev and VAC are both operating under agreements with the City of DeKalb. There are no major changes to the system except Route 18 is now being operated by Transdev and the Huskie Line Freedom Mobile is being operated by VAC.

New schedules have been developed for use by riders.

Mr. Holdeman said there seems to be some kind of branding in the new bus schedules with a wave at the bottom. Mr. Holdeman wondered what plans for branding are upcoming. Mr. Cox said the wave was the creation of the City's transit GIS specialist, Ms. Casey Heuer, and Mr. Cox liked it enough he kept it as part of the new schedule.

Mr. Cox said staff has some ideas on branding and marketing in the future, however, right now the focus is on getting all the operational items in place. Mr. Holdeman requested branding and marketing be an agenda item at a future meeting (in the near future).

Mr. Cox said beginning with the new agreement, both Transdev and VAC will operate 362 days a year, with only Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day being off.

Route 21 (Sycamore) and Route 24 (Kishwaukee College) will continue to be operated by VAC. Hours of operation and bus service in evenings and weekends will be expanded on both services. Route 18 will now have live tracking. There was a request transit staff have an update on the consolidation plan at the February meeting.

8. DSATS 2019 Calendar

Mr. Dickson said the DSATS 2019 calendar was approved by the Policy Committee last month and was published in the Daily Chronicle on Monday. The Calendar is being provided to members for their reference.

9. Staff and Project Updates

Mr. Dickson said he began working for the County as of this morning. Mr. Heckman asked how this move will affect Mr. Dickson's participation on the Transit Subcommittee. Mr. Schwartz said the Transit Subcommittee, as a committee of DSATS, will continue to be managed by DSATS staff. This means DSATS will continue to arrange the meetings and post the agendas. Mr. Cox and City of DeKalb staff, however, will take over most of the duties of preparing agenda items and presenting agenda items at meetings.

Mr. Holdeman inquired how the federal government shutdown will affect transit and DSATS. Mr. Dickson said while the government is shut down, no federal funds will be available to pay vendors and reimburse the City or County for funds expended. Mr. Dickson said during the last shutdown, FHWA staff was still working, as their funding comes from the federal motor fuel tax. All FTA staff, however, are on leave until the federal government shutdown is ended.

State funding, such as DOAP, shall continue. Mr. Holdeman requested a risk assessment be provided as part of the February meeting, if the shutdown continues.

10. What's new with our State and Federal Partners

Nothing presented.

11. Additional Business

Nothing presented.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion #TS0119-05: Motion made by Mr. Holdeman and seconded by Mr. LaLonde to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. The January 2, 2019 meeting was adjourned at 10:55 am.

Submitted By: Brian Dickson

Adopted: 3/6/2019