

TRANSIT COMMISSION MINUTES

Date and Time: The Transit Commission met on Thursday, May 15, 2014, at 1:00 P.M. at the Wausau Downtown Airport, 725 Woods Place, Wausau, WI.

Members Present: Sherry Abitz, Keith Draheim, Daniel Guild, Keene Winters, Robert Mielke and George Peterson

Members Excused: Joan Joss and Txang Hue Yang

Also Present: Greg Seubert, Mary Foss

In accordance with Chapter 19, Wisconsin Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and sent to the Wausau Daily Herald in the proper manner. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Abitz after noting a quorum was present.

Public Comment on Matters Appearing on the Agenda

No comments were made.

Daniel Guild arrived at 1:16 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mielke moved to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2014 meeting. Winters seconded. Motion carried.

Election of Vice-Chairperson

Abitz explained that they are in discussion on how to add the Transit Commission chairperson to the Coordinating Committee. Abitz feels that it is necessary to move forward with this because of the issues that Transit may be facing in the near future regarding bus service in the area. If by chance this does happen, she would step down from Transit Commission chairperson. Abitz asked if there were any nominations for vice-chairperson. Winters nominated Mielke. Abitz asked if there were any other nominations. Winters moved to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Mielke. Draheim seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Transit Commission Meeting Dates, Times and Location

Seubert stated that the reason for considering a different meeting location is that the Metro Ride office does not meet ADA accessibility requirements. Metro Ride staff has investigated several locations and the Wausau Downtown Airport seems most appropriate. It is on a bus line; it has ample parking; the location is a midpoint for Transit Commission members; it has WIFI availability; and the building is ADA accessible. Abitz stated that she liked the idea that it is a more convenient location for members from Rothschild, Schofield and Weston. After a brief discussion, the consensus of the Transit Commission was to conduct meetings at the Wausau Downtown Airport, on the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 1:30 p.m.

City of Wausau/Metro Ride Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy

Seubert stated that most of the proposed changes to the Metro Ride Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy were recommended in the FTA Triennial Review, which was conducted in February. Seubert explained that the draft distributed in advance of the meeting was not sufficient for the reviewer, so he provided an updated draft, along with a summary of modifications to the original draft. Seubert indicated that some changes were made to add clarity to the language. The only substantive change to the original policy is the removal of blood alcohol testing. That method is not required by the Federal Transit Administration nor is it prohibited. But some state courts have found the method to be unconstitutional without a search warrant. Metro Ride has never conducted a blood alcohol test and Seubert felt that the method should be removed from the policy.

Winters moved to approve the draft. Peterson seconded the motion. The motion Carried. Guild abstained from voting because he hadn't read the entire policy.

Future of Transit Services in Rothschild/Schofield/Weston

Seubert said he is working on a fourth bus route scenario for the Village of Weston. Guild said that once he receives it, he will be present it to his finance department and trustees for consideration. They will identify a preferred scenario and work with groups such as NAOMI. They may go to referendum in November or they may just commit to a route. The deadline to gather information for a referendum is August 26, 2014. Weston will conduct information sessions that will be open to the public. Seubert stated that the challenge going forward will be the timing of the budget relative to the timing of referendum. He may have to develop several budget scenarios. Each of the scenarios would have to have different service levels or frequencies. One of the possibilities would be no service in Rothschild, Schofield and Weston. Peterson noted that each of the municipalities will begin their budget process soon and each may have to consider multiple possibilities. Seubert said that he would keep everyone informed as the process evolves. No action was taken.

Transit Director's Report

Seubert said he received a call from Northern Valley Workshop asking if Metro Ride could be more flexible with the bus route we provide them, so their clients could access work opportunities in the community. Seubert supports the proposal and hopes it would produce additional ridership.

The State of Wisconsin completed year-end audits for 2009, 2010 and 2011. We learned from the audits that they have changed the way they treat certain revenues, such as insurance dividends. They now treat these revenues as contra-expenses, which results in a reduction in the amount of operating assistance they owe us for those years. Because the audits are so delayed, we will experience an accumulated reduction in State operating assistance receivable, all at once. Had we known about the change, we would have modified our procedures much sooner. The finance department is in the process of preparing invoices for Rothschild, Schofield and Weston for the fourth quarter of 2013. Those invoices will include adjusts for prior year audits.

The next regular meeting date is June 19, 2014, at 1:30 p.m. Daniel Guild indicated that he would be unavailable on that date.

Draheim moved to adjourn the meeting. Winters seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abitz, Chairperson

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