

CITIZENS TRANSIT ADVISORY GROUP (CTAG)
Meeting Summary
March 19, 2014
DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Present: Rob Watson, CTAG Co-Chair
Gus Kretschmer, City of Charlotte
George Sottilo, Town of Matthews
Todd Steiss, Town of Huntersville
Matt Covington, Mecklenburg County
Jane Dunne, Town of Mint Hill
Kenneth Carnes, Town of Cornelius

Staff: Dee Pereira, Allen Smith, Larry Kopf, Brandy Decker, Olaf Kinard, Paulus Ford,
Wanda Braswell

Meeting time 7:30 a.m. – 8:35 a.m.

I. Call to Order

Rob Watson, CTAG Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

II. Approval of February 19, 2014 meeting summary

The meeting summary was approved as written.

III. Proposed FY2015 Fare Recommendation & Transit Program

Rob stated that CTAG will vote in April on the recommended budget. All is encouraged to attend the April 15 meeting. CTAG is asked to proactively listen to the transit riders.

Dee Pereira started the presented by explained that there is a six-month budget process that concludes with the approval from Charlotte City Council in June. The transit operating program is the operating income and the operating expenses. This year the transit service is in line with the financial plan. The plan includes a 3.16 percent operating cost each year. Based on projections, if the fare increase isn't implemented the transit system will have an operating revenue gap of \$2.8 million. Without the fare increase CATS will have to reduce service levels and hours. That could also impact the workforce and caused a reduction in fleet. The MTC review the fare and financial policies every two years.

Q: Without the increase is the number of reduced hours?

A: 6000 hours of bus service.

Q: Does fare increase reduce ridership?

A: The experience for cats has traditionally been no, however that was because over the past 14 years we have increased service with fare increases. That has changed and staff has planned in fy15 budget that there will be a minor reduction in ridership during the first

year of the fare increase. This pattern is consistent with industry studies conducted on fare increases and ridership changes.

Q: What is the estimate reduction in ridership?

A: Staff can share the document with you.

Olaf Kinard presented the fare comparison. A 2014 proposed fare increase comparison chart was distributed. Mr. Kinard talked about the weekly pass that was originally set up for five days instead of seven days. He compared fares with other agencies include the transit systems in the Triad and Greensboro area. We have cost comparison per passengers that the NTD collects. A public hearing is scheduled for March 26, 2014.

Q: Is there a one-day pass for seniors?

A: Transit does not have a one-day pass for seniors. The seniors receive a discount on monthly passes. They ride more than others passengers.

Q: How long is the public comment period?

A: That night, March 26.

Q: What is NTD?

A: National Transit Database.

Larry Kopf presented information on bus, special transportation and vanpool. State law does not allow CATS to negotiate with unions. When the City of Charlotte took over in 1970, CATS had to have a management firm to work with the bus operators and bus mechanics. The current fleet is 323 buses and travels about 40,000 miles per bus each year. An average bus life is seven years. CATS bus operations have the transportation center, six transit hubs and six park and rides. Bus operations has maintained efficient management with limited growth. CATS recently received a grant to help fund a new service.

Local, express and regional service hours include 806,000 revenue service hours. Fuel is a huge cost factor. Transit currently hedges the cost to stay on budget. Special transportation service (STS) proposed budget for FY2015 is \$9.45 million. STS is a door-to-door service for people with disabilities. The base STS services is required by ADA and within ¾ mile of a fixed route. The passenger must call 24-hour before the needed ride. To meet the demand of the ADA trips and provide as many non-ADA trips, we are requesting fours positions to help when there are employees out. These are extra board drivers. The purpose is to increase efficiency and reduce overtime as well as help CATS meet ADA requirements.

Other bus services include 75 active vanpools for employees in the region to use and \$300,000 to DSS to provide service to people with disabilities and to transport them to sheltered workshop employment. The five-year CIP for bus operations include a five-year vehicle replacements; maintenance programs; scheduling system update; fare collection system and digital radio upgrade.

Q: What is the insurance liability for vanpool?

A: We are self-insured under the City of Charlotte. We trained the vanpool drivers.

Allen Smith, III presented the rail operations and facilities budget. Light rail is the region's first rail service. It is a 9.6 miles line with 15 stations and seven park and ride locations. The

weekday service is 5:36 am to 1:26 am with 10 minute intervals during peak operations and 15, 20 and 30 minutes intervals during non-peak. Weekend service is every 20 minutes unless there is a special event.

Rail has 108 employees and a fleet of 20 vehicles. Rail will use three Gomaco Replica Trolleys for the CityLYNX Gold line. To provide 15 interval trips, rail has requested seven operators for the CityLYNX Gold Line service. Other service level changes for Gold line services include: one supervisor; one safety officer; one train control technical; and two electro-mechanics. The rail operations requested two rail mechanics and two rail operators (will receive new cars). Operating cost drivers for rail is employees, risk insurance, traction power, equipment and parts and other contract services.

The federal government said we must maintain the system in order to continue to receive funding. MAP-21 funds reflect a commitment to ensuring that public transit operates safely, efficiently, reliably and sustainably so that communities can offer balanced transportation choices that help to improve mobility, reduce congestion and encourage economic development. The blue line needs capital to maintain. One rail car life is 30 years yet you have to maintain it in 15 years (mid-life overhaul). The five-CIP for rail operations include: rail equipment and repairs; expansion; and maintenance programs.

Q: Are rail employees in a union?

A: No. Rail and STS are city employees.

Q: Is FRA involved?

A: Although we are under FTA, we have to respect the FRA area.

Facilities Management is proposing \$4.5 million to manage and maintain all CATS owned and leased facilities, properties and passenger amenities: building and grounds; park and rides, CTC, hubs, bus stops, shelters, bike racks, and benches; all rail facilities and amenities along the alignment; ROW, Stations and platform areas, elevators, and I-485 parking garage; utilities; trash collections; landscape; janitorial services and snow and ice removal. The five-year CIIP will include enhancements to improve bus stop to compile with ADA requires.

Safety and Security is important to the culture. When safety is strong accidents are less frequent and less severe; overall safety performance improves; reduced cost to the organization; reflects good business practices and injury rates are lower. Transit security for rail is regulated by FTA state safety oversight standard. Bus is regulated by MAP-21. Safety and Security has 10 CATS employees and 75 personnel dedicated to security. The five-year CIP includes required drills; fencing; camera system replacement; secure access-card readers; building management system; lighting; and radio replacement.

IV. CEO's Report

Dee Pereira reported in Carolyn Flowers' absence.

- The East Coast p3 Infrastructure conference was successful with 225 registrars
- BLE received \$100 million

- CATS is managing the CityLYNX Gold line. Applied for a small starts grant for Phase II
- Carolyn attended the APTA legislative conference in March. APTA would like to extend MAP-21. (Reduction in funds from the state could impact us).
- Carolyn met with US DOT and the transit administrator while in DC
- The fare increase public hearing is 5:30 pm on Wednesday, March 26

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a. m.

NEXT CTAG MEETING: APRIL 15 AT 7:30 AM