

RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF April 4, 2013 MEETING

Board Members Present: Steve Durkee, Director Mike Lewis and Maureen Martin

Other Committee Members Present: John Flaherty, Paul Harrington, Steve Devine, Everett Stewart, Linsey Callaghan and Mike Walker

Absent:

Also Present: Wayne Hannon, Mark Therrien, Amy Pettine, Lilly Picchione, Marie DiToro, members of the Resource Team; and members of the public whose names are on the meeting sign-in sheet.

Discussion/Approval of Minutes: tabled for approval till next Strategic Planning Meeting.

COA Recommendations Update:

- Amy explains that at the Board Meeting last month they gave a presentation on the summarized public comments and were at two scenarios.
- There were 700+ comments from the public and we have met this week and have a set of draft recommendations.
- There were three full meetings with drivers on these potential changes.
- Meetings with Fatima Hospital and Fidelity to iron out.
- A main goal of COA is to get regular consistent schedules.
- Presents final draft of recommendations for COA.
- Our intentions is at April Board meeting is to get approval to go out to Public Hearings.
- Discussion on 99, turn around in the Job Lot parking lot with their approval.
- Key Corridors-adding a lot of frequency to routes that are overcrowded today. We are breaking some of the thru-routes in order to do this.
- The 31 will not connect to the 56 any longer that will upset some people that need to transfer, but it will give more service to the 31.
- There is some re-branding; route 1, 42 and 77 will become one powerhouse route.
- Ultimately, we will lose 8-10 routes because some routes were over lapping in their alignment and we tried to combine those. However, people will technically lose their route number, but not their service. It would just be covered on a different route number.
- A lot more transfers.

- Tripling the amount of service to the Warwick Mall. It will become another Hub and a lot of people will have to transfer there. We are working with the mall to put a significant amount of sheltering in. 15 minutes to wait for the next bus.
- Steve Devine states that they are working with RIPTA and the mall on the Route 5 project.
- Route 6-Trolley would like to extend to Train Station, but have to wait for CCRI finished their project to change the entrance. We will get there eventually but in the meantime re-route for the Jewelry District.
- Working with coordinate service with Westminster and Broadway. Pairs of routes on each of these routes: Broadway service every 10 minutes and Westminster every 15 minutes.
- Route 26 is going away, we will extend the 92 Trolley goes to RIC; they will get 7 days a week service.
- Steve Durkee asks, If we are able to grow our service, will we bring some of these things back? Amy responds that we do have a wish list service if that happens.
- Route 32 – West Barrington-we are cutting service out-they can take 60-to Park and Ride lot. Willard Ave is out. It is only 4 trips a day currently. There are only 8 riders a day currently in this area.
- Distance between stops approximately 1/6 of a mile.
- Director Lewis wants to know how we are going to market this appropriately.
- Steve Durkee states that presentation has to reflect that we are improving our service.
- Emphasize all the benefits, increased frequency, decreased travel time, the good balance in scheduling.
- Lindsey states we have to show how many riders are benefiting from these changes.
- Maureen agrees we have to get out ahead of it instead of being on the defensive.
- Director Lewis states this can take money.
- Paul Harrington states we should go out to the riders and that is where we can get positive support. Captive audience.
- Mark agrees we could use some professional help on how to present this appropriately. Will sit with Wayne and look over the budget.
- Timing: Looking to do 7 Routes in June-not a lot of change and do not require Public Hearing. The rest of the changes would need Board vote in June. The earliest we would start major changes would be September.
- Everyone is in agreement that the timing set forth to go to the Board and have the Public Hearings is placed at the right time.
- Director Lewis really believes we should get marketing help on how to present this positively to the public.
- There have been a lot of in-depth conversations with the publications. For the most part the publications have been positive about the COA, however if they start getting negative letters in from their subscribers about these changes they could change their printed opinion.
- Would like to re-design the timetable with a slightly new look and feel-post COA route-because we are part of this Benchmark Group-we are also doing a Customer Satisfaction Survey. This allows people to give us feedback on

cleanliness and safety. People want to give us their opinion. Keep dialog going with the public.

- Everett Walker-is the timing to the arrival and departures correlate to the Train schedule at all? We do not correlate with the train schedule so long as you run on a regular frequency people can make their connection; however with the increased volume that is going there it will help.
- Steve Devine also contributes that it is not necessarily the Bus to rail connection, but if someone takes a train into Providence and there is a gap in their return trip- this gives them the opportunity to take a RIPTA bus back home.
- The 49 Camp St route is going away. The 90S we are keeping. The 8 is going away, but we are serving that route with two other routes; 14 will cover Jefferson Boulevard and 29 will come somewhat into Buttonwoods. 80% will still be able to have service.
- Steve Durkee-the major work will begin in September 2013, but how long until everything is complete? Mark Therrien is thinking 18 months to 2 years for completion of all changes. We have Title 6, the law changed; not exactly sure of the Director Lewis agrees this may be a bit of a challenge to iron out the changes. Should have a better feel at the Board meeting of the length of time it will take for completion.
- Steve Durkee and Director Lewis: How do we get this message to the rider that this is the change to your route? This is important. Must manage the messaging to the passengers.
- Painted Boxes and Bump Outs will be used. Will have to work with RIDOT on what will work best in each situation. Should come up with guidelines of when you use which system.
- Multiple side conversations pursue on painted boxes and bump outs.
- Steve Durkee believes more shelters would be a great thing.
- Express Trips-we have renumbered these with Route numbers with an "X". We will have 8 express trips across the state. Opportunity to market express trips and a positive thing coming out of this project.
- State line and Attleboro-conference call this afternoon-it is all about the Insurance. Mark thinks today we will reach the decision point.
- Mark introduced Lilly Picchione, Director Federal Programs and Capital Development.
- She brought to our attention that we do have an area that is an ADA issue with the service changes. The Plainfield St. bus goes out to Atwood Ave, right on outbound to Medical Center. We were going to get rid of that section of the route. There is a housing complex in that area that has 14 people in wheelchairs. We need to come up with a solution and look this over. They are currently using the Ride Program now. Activity is very heavy on the Ride side.
- Steve Durkee is very pleased to have Lilly on board.
- Paul Harrington wanted to make it known that any changes in the frequency of transfers can impact revenue. Mark explains 87% of our people buy pre-pay monthly passes which includes transfers. Only 13% of the people may have to transfer and pay a little extra. Paul states that these people may be encouraged to buy monthly passes.
- Paul also wants to state the Premium Ride-he was in Cleveland and they have a Rapid Transit and it is more like Peter Pan buses. WiFi access and they charge

a premium. If we can develop these premium rides we can increase revenue with this.

- Steve Devine states that isn't it true that you lose riders with too many transfers and Mark states yes it is, but how much it will impact.

Flex Service

- Flex are the vehicles that look like Ride Vehicles, open to general public. It is a point deviation service. They circulate within a zone around a community and most of those zones have points or stops along that zone. Can travel anywhere within that zone, can make reservations to have you picked up at end of your driveway and brought to any of those points in that zone. First come first serve. Room for wheelchairs.
- \$2 million a year in operating a cost, 14 vehicles.
- Performance measures were completed
- Most productive zone is in Woonsocket.
- DHS gives RIPTA \$200,000 a year to towards Flex Service in low-income communities.
- Questions to look at:
 - What is the purpose of this system?
 - Who are our primary audience?
 - Should some of this service be switched over to Ride?
 - How can we market this better?
- People take it to connect to Fixed Route.
- Amy goes through the different Flex Routes briefly while the Committee looks over the handout.
- Possible new zones: Tiverton- we are looking at a new model, instead of fixed time points that are not connected this would be a flex route and these points would connect. Playing with the model in order to service Tiverton.
- Amend our service guidelines to incorporate Flex, review the zones, and meet with different communities.

Update on Mayor Taveras Economic Development Plan Related to RIPTA

- Kennedy Plaza-it is still front and center and moving forward.
- Street Car-if the city is serious on this we will begin the process of the Tiger 5 application. Steve Devine stated that there seems to be a big interest in the Street Car. HDR-workshop on finances to build such a system with RIDOT.

Adjournment:

Steve Durkee asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Steve Devine made the motion which was seconded by Mike Walker. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie DiToro
Recording Secretary