

Dial-A-Ride Commission Unapproved Minutes

December 15th, 2022 - 10:00am

Attendance

DART Commissioners: Mary Laforet, Sandra Bacon, Jenny Marshall, Mark Wesson

City of Midland Employees: Karen Murphy, Amy Bidwell, Rodney Merillat, Courtney Brubake

Meeting Called to Order: 10:02am by Mary LaForet

Introductions

Approval of last year 's meeting minutes (12/2021)

First approval by: Mary LaForet

Second approval by: Jenny Marshall

FTA / MDOT Business - Amy Bidwell

- Manufacturing Vehicle Delays -
 - Dial-A-Ride has had a vehicle on order since October 2020.
 - That order will not be fulfilled
- **Amy - Bus on order with the manufacturer since October 2020 - Covid hit and the manufacturing company has had delays.**
 - Instead the contracts were renegotiated at increased prices
- **Amy - We have re-negotiated a price, which is almost double, that the industry was seeing in influx.**
- **We have several busses past their useful life, as a result in the pricing influx, we have to allocate more funds.**
 - We have had to allocate more state and federal funding to purchase the buses

- **Amy - We are working on the federal grants. Karen Murphy will be going to city council to budget for additional funds.**
 - This is related to record high inflation impacting the bus manufacturing industry
- Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan - FTA Requirement Committee annual approval by DART Commission
- **Amy - this is a federally required document. We must have this because we receive federal funds. This is done annually, and must be approved within the DART commission.**
- **Amy - New this year in the PTASP - added a flow of past data within the document.**
- **Amy - Removed safety suggestion response sheets. All employees are allowed to submit a safety suggestion, the suggestion is reviewed by management and at our safety meeting. This response sheet was a little redundant because we communicate with our drivers and post in the meeting minutes so it was removed.**
- **Amy - Within this document we track all emergencies, accidents, system failures, etc.**
- **Amy - Four different goals we try to achieve with safety, 1) reduce at fault safety faults, 2) maintain system reliability, 3) maintain fatality rate of zero, 4) maintain an injury event level of .93.**
 - We did not meet 2 of our safety goals, we did not reduce our at fault safety faults by 15%, they remained the same.
 - **Mark - Are these safety events passenger related? Bus related?**
 - **Amy - We have two different types of safety events - employee and non-employee. These are all tracked in this data.**
 - **Mary - Do you train employees to avoid these safety incidents?**
 - **Rodney - Yes, we try to catch most of these incidents immediately when reported and add it to our trainings.**
 - **Karen - Dial-A-Ride is at the top with reporting all of their safety incidents.**
- **Amy - proposes to approve the PTASP**
First approval by: Sandra Bacon
Second approval by: Mark Wesson
All in favor - 4 yay's, 0 nay's
- Transit Asset Management Plan
- **Amy - This talks about the age of our busses and our equipment. 7 busses out of our fleet have met their useful life span. We have several grants this year that will hopefully replace all of those.**
- **Amy - our goal was only to have 10% of our busses be to this point, we are beyond that point.**

- Amy - we are still meeting all expectations and standards. Our standards exceed federal guideline standards.
 - Karen Murphy - DART busses rank in the top priority for service behind police and fire when it comes to our fleet services.
- Amy - Our radios are eligible for replacement, but after talking with our fleet manager, our radios are in fantastic condition, so we do not need to replace these.
- Amy - Also in this plan we discuss our bus shelters. We have 3 bus shelters, Larkin, Rodd and Jerome St (BP Gas). We cannot stop at all of these small businesses downtown so rather than clog up Main Street, we use these bus shelters. Our bus shelters are 7 years old, the life of a bus shelter is around 10 years. We work with the parks department to maintain our bus shelters. We also audit them thoroughly to make sure they stay up to date and taken care of.
- Amy - the main things we have updated in this plan are the busses past their useful price and what the cost of replacement would be.
- Amy - proposes to approve the Transit Asset Management Plan

First approval by: Mary LaForet

Second approval by: Mark Wesson

All in favor - 4 yay's, 0 nay's

- MDOT Vehicle Accessibility Plan Approval
- Amy - We do this every year. MDOT requires this plan. In the past, we have been able to fill out this form and MDOT approves it. This year MDOT is asking for an entirely new plan, luckily it is the same as the old plan.
- Amy - This is part of being compliant with the Michigan Transportation fund act. This ensures senior citizens and passengers with disabilities have access to public transit. We provide a demand response service, everybody is welcome to ride at any time during our operating hours.
- Amy - we transport over 13,000 passengers that are either a senior citizen or disabled within our service area.
- Amy - Plan must be approved by DART commission, reviewed with Karen and then taken to City Council.
- Amy - this plan discusses how many busses are within our service, fare rates, service schedule, and phone service hours.
- Mark - The wording on senior services in this plan is wrong.
- Sandra - questioning the way she is presented in this document as a "person at large" not a "person with disabilities. "
- Mark - The wording on the last part of this document, the sentence seems to maybe be cut off?
- Karen - We can make all of these updates.

- Amy - proposes to approve the MDOT Vehicle Accessibility Plan

First approval by: Mary LaForet

Second approval by: Mark Wesson

All in favor - 4 yay's, 0 nay's

- Triennial Review Results
- Amy - this is basically a big audit. They look at legal issues, financial issues, PTASP, Transit Asset Management, Civil Rights Plans, compliance areas, how much money have you been given and what are you using it for. They look at basically every aspect of what we do. We had zero findings with this review. They looked at everything and had zero issues.

Operations Update - Rodney Merillat

- Rodney - Holiday hours (MLK, Good Friday, Easter, Black Friday, Christmas hours and NYE hours. This is the second year we have done this.
- Rodney - Covid Protocols - drivers and passengers are no longer required to wear masks, but we do follow the CDC guidelines. We still have hand sanitizers on every bus, busses are cleaned at night and sanitized through-out the day. We are also at normal capacity.
- Staffing
- Rodney - we are still hiring, looking for about 3-5 drivers. Sign-on bonus has ended.
- Text Messaging
- Rodney - We have not seen a reduction in no shows, which we were hoping for. We also have some technical issues with our software company.
- Jenny - persons with staff don't really get these messages because they don't take care of their own rides, so we will always have issues with the no shows on that end.
- Amy - that's a good point. If you know anything that might work better, let us know so we can look into it. Cost is always a factor though.
- Agency Forum -
- Rodney - Meets quarterly.
- Ridership
- Rodney - 86% recovered pre-pandemic.

Quarter	Vehicle Miles	Regular Fare	Elderly	Persons W/Dis	Seniors W/Dis	Total
Jan - Mar 2021	82,109	6,727	1,622	7,614	1,755	17,718
Apr - June 2021	82,803	5,969	1,764	8,508	2,075	18,316
Jul - Sept 2021	84,954	5,218	1,898	9,668	2,280	19,064
Oct - Dec 2021	84,172	6,959	2,117	10,480	2,501	22,057
Jan - Mar 2022	86,632	7,827	2,425	10,307	2,956	23,515

Apr – June 2022	88,854	7,894	2,533	9,748	2,789	22,964
July – Sept 2022	90,075	7,634	2,651	9,846	2,907	23,038

New Business - Amy Bidwell

- Bicycle Racks
- **Amy - We applied for a bicycle grant this year for all 14 busses. This is a passenger load and unload process. The earliest we anticipate that we may see the bike racks installed would be the end of 2023, beginning of 2024. This rack would be on the front of the bus.**
- Isabella Bank Free Ride Day
- **Amy - This is a first for DART, Isabella bank approached us to sponsor a free ride day for all passengers on 12/20/2022. We are already seeing a high response for this day.**
- DART Commission Opening (Midland resident 65+)
- Transit Study: Midland County Connection/Dial-A-Ride
- **Amy - Conducting a transit study to look at the needs for the county and to see if we could collaborate more with County Connection. Would this be efficient or provide better service?**
- Electric Vehicle Update
- **Amy - Awarded a grant for electric vehicles. This reduces carbon emissions, the busses are quieter, reduce vehicle maintenance costs. We are hoping to place our vehicle order soon.**

**No Questions -
Meeting Adjourned:**

Respectfully Submitted

**Amy Bidwell
City of Midland
Dial-A-Ride Manager**

MDOT Required Signature

**Mary LaForet
Chair - DART Commission**