



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

Public Transit Advisory Commission

Tuesday, September 19, 2023
5:30 PM

Conference Room
1A/1B
City Hall
701 E. Broadway

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Matt Wright at 5:30 p.m.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

City Staff: Mike Sokoff, John Ogan, Gus Harmon, and Shannon Hemenway

Public: Ricky and Cathy

Presenters: Shawn Strate and Corrine

Present: 8 - Dawn Zeterberg, Matt Wright, Shaunda Hamilton, Tammy Teel, Adam Thorp, Donald Jackson, Gabi Jacobs and Sarah Johnson

Absent: 4 - Raymond Cecora, Candy Cornman, Robert Boone and Lydia Olmsted

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Matt made a motion to approve the agenda with a second from Tammy. The vote to approve the agenda was unanimous at 5:32 p.m.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Matt made a motion to approve the minutes with a second from Sarah. The vote to approve the minutes was unanimous at 5:32 p.m.

August 15 Minutes

Attachments: [Meeting Minutes August 15](#)

V. City Council & Other Commission Updates: Vision Zero, Disability,

Bike/Ped, CATSO

Matt mentioned that the City Council voted to continue fare-free for the next fiscal year.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Shawn Strate with Olsson & Associates

Attachments: [Olsson Presentation](#)

Mike mentioned that in 2017 Olsson was the lead team on that study. Shawn Strate goes over his history with transit as did Corrine.

Shawn explained why they are here and how they are going to integrate all the systems and the needs for the transit system. He explained what the changes are and some of the similarities from the 2017 study. Shawn mentioned this is a plan that transit can actually use. He mentioned that this is about a 14-month process. Shawn presented the PowerPoint presentation to the group. See the presentation above.

Tammy asked why the numbers on slides 8 & 9 are so low. Shawn explained that these numbers are the total population and come from the US census. Matt asked why Urbana is doing so well. Shawn mentioned that they have state money. A Public member asked if they have a fee for riding. Shawn mentioned that Chicago has fares but was unaware if Urbana does. Corrine mentioned that just because you increase your budget does not entirely mean your ridership will increase along with that increased budget. Corrine mentioned that parking is a big deal and the higher the parking rates the more people are inclined to ride the transit system. Adam asked if there are any cities that are high performers and if there are any other college towns similar to ours. Public member mentioned that Ann Arbor Michigan is a high performer. Corrine mentioned that the student fee also went towards the transit system. Tammy asked if these numbers are based on the students that are currently enrolled. Shawn said yes these numbers are the number of people who are enrolled active or not. Corrine explained that Columbia is different than most college towns but they must find the most similar.

Shawn explained that they would be meeting with many members of the City and otherwise. Tammy mentioned that advertising for these meetings should be advertised a few days ahead to help plan to attend these meetings. A Public member talked about the driver shortage and combined routes and lack of drivers. Mike mentioned that we currently have 22 full-time drivers but mentioned that by combining routes they have reduced mandatory hours from 12 to 4 hours per week. Mike also mentioned that the city budget was approved last night and the new pay raises have been approved and that next year's compression will be addressed.

Shawn went over what micro transit is and explained that the service will have much fewer riders but will be able to service many more areas. He mentioned that they have not done any studies for Columbia but is on their radar.

Shawn goes over questions with the transportation committee and asks each member of the committee to talk about why they think transit is important.

Matt mentioned that he does not like that the majority of the country is reliant on a car and that it is almost impossible to get anywhere without a car. Adam mentioned that it is a public good and we should invest more into a public good. Tammy mentioned that she was never a public transit person until she was medically disabled. Tammy explained that she would have to wait multiple routes because the buses often did not have spots on the bus. Sarah mentioned that she only had one car and had to commute to work along with her husband back and forth and used so much gas that they would have loved a better transit system for people who only have one car. Dawn explained why she did not like the transit system. Shaunda mentioned that she wanted to get on the committee to understand how the transit system worked. Public member Cathy described that the transit system is something that gives you independence.

Shawn asked a question to the commission what does the existing system do well. Shaunda mentioned that offering free rides is a strength and the resources that are available. Sarah mentioned that she really likes the central downtown transfer stop and it is one stop at the Wabash. Tammy mentioned she likes how we accommodate bikes, wheelchairs, and walkers. Tammy also mentioned that she likes it if doctors' appointments run behind ParaTransit will come back to get you if you miss your time. Adam mentioned that the layout of the routes given the challenge of Columbia is done really well. Matt echoed Adam and also mentioned that the integration of electric buses is something that is important. John Ogan mentioned that he likes the app and because of the app he never missed the bus. John also mentioned that they have a call back center and Facebook message center. A public member asked what that number was. John replied 874-city.

Shawn asked the commission what needs were being met. Tammy mentioned that ParaTransit needs are being met even while short-staffed. Shaunda mentioned that the app needs are being met. Sarah mentioned that the routes are going to the least fortunate areas.

Shawn asked the commission what are the biggest challenges in Columbia. Matt mentioned he would like to improve the student shuttles. Tammy mentioned that the routes are not accommodating in the Rock Bridge area. Sarah mentioned that it is hard because of the layout of Columbia. A public member mentioned that the first and last mile of the routes are hard whether that is walking or riding to that bus stop. Adam mentioned the frequency of trips. Dawn mentioned we need more drivers. Sarah mentioned that the hours of service could go later at night. Gabi mentioned that the routes do not connect to hot spots of Columbia which include many workplaces. Tammy mentioned the more Columbia expands the routes do not. A public member echoed Sarah for hours of service.

Shawn asked the commission what the plan goals were and asked if they could

fix two things immediately what would they be. The consensus was frequency, money, and drivers. Tammy mentioned wheelchair access and if the buses are full what is plan b to get the wheelchair riders picked up. Gabi mentioned real-time kiosks would be good. Tammy mentioned getting more shelters around town. The public member mentioned the accessibility of signage. Adam mentioned that the app could be improved and that the app could have the Saturday routes. Gabi mentioned that Google Maps would be a great option. Corrine mentioned that Google Maps is difficult. Mike mentioned that they are in the final approach to finding another provider and they are down to the final offer.

VIII. RIDERSHIP

IX. REQUESTS FROM COUNCIL/CITY MANAGER

No new requests.

X. GENERAL COMMENTS BY PUBLIC, MEMBERS AND STAFF

Tammy mentioned that a physical copy of the ridership would great.

Virtual Link

Attachments: [Zoom Link](#)

XII. NEXT MEETING DATE - 10/17/2023

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Matt motions to adjourn at 7:05 p.m.

Members of the public may attend any open meeting. For requests for accommodations related to disability, please call 573-874-CITY (573-874-2489) or email CITY@CoMo.gov. In order to assist staff in making the appropriate arrangements for your accommodation, please make your request as far in advance of the posted meeting date as possible.

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