

Oxford - University Transit Meeting 4/8/09

Members Present: Jack Howard, Donna Gurley, Carol Haney, Shannon Baker, George Price, Jim Windham

Others present: Tim Akers, Tim Lett, Megan Taylor, Ron Biggs, Matt Davis. Mike Mossing, media

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jack Howard.
The meeting agenda was approved.
The minutes for the March 11th meeting were approved.

February Report from General Manager

Mr. Ron Biggs reported that ridership continues to increase. There were 11,363 riders in the month of March. He said that most riders comment that they are looking forward to the expansion.

Financial Report

Tim Akers reported on the reimbursement, which was for operational costs only. Everything is in target with the current budget.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Grant

The grant will award 100%, and no matching required. Tim Akers reported that the list of requested items was approved by the Board of Alderman. He reported that most of the items on the list was taken from the MDOT grant, but if they were rejected from the ARRA grant they would be place back on the list for consideration for the MDOT grant. This grant allows for funds to be applied to capital costs, which means that it could also be applied toward the new facility.

Tim Lett commented that a GPS system could be installed and a website for tracking the buses could be established.

This grant can only be used for projects that are ready because it will most likely be approved by August. Tim Akers stated that he felt confident that most of the requests would be approved.

Donna Gurley asked if waiting on the approval of the grant would delay the expansion. Mr. Akers said it might.

Tim Lett informed that the expansion is important and it is critical it happen in the fall. He is working on securing buses from another city that have been provided under a federal grant that could make starting the expansion in August a possibility, though there may be a cost involved. These buses would be used for 12 – 18 months until the buses approved through the ARRA grant for the expansion were delivered.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program

The program was explained by Tim Akers. He also stated that it was approved by the Board of Alderman Tuesday night and that the FTA has given tentative approval of the program. The FY 2009 DBE goal is 2.3%.

Green Week

Mike Mossing, from the University of Mississippi, came to the meeting to seek support from the commission for Green Week. He asked for permission to create a schedule sign to place at the Student Union so encourage more students to ride OUT.

Discussion of Fares

Tim Akers stated that implementing fares is dependant upon the expansion of the system. He asked the commission that if the expanded service was delayed would they want to charge fares anyway. When and how the University will subsidize the fares is crucial to the overall fare implementation.

Tim Lett reminded the commission about experiencing a 30% drop in ridership with fare implementation.

Jack Howard stated that the commission really needed to know more about the University's plans to subsidize the fares. He suggested a meeting with University officials. Tim Akers requested the meeting be delayed for 30 days to determine if service expansion buses will be available.

Discussion of advertising on buses

Donna Gurley communicated that Larry Sparks had inquired about advertising on the inside of the transit buses.

Tim Lett explained that generally there was very little response and very low revenue to be earned.

The commission agreed that more marketing needed to be done around the campus.

George Price made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Jim Windham seconded.

With all voting yes, the meeting was adjourned.