

Oxford - University Transit Meeting 6/10/09

Members Present: Jack Howard, Jim Windham, Donna Gurley, Shannon Richardson, George Price

Others present: Tim Akers, Megan Taylor, Ron Biggs, Matt Davis, Frances Saralvarez, a journalism class

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jack Howard

The meeting agenda was approved.

The minutes for the April 8th and May 13th meeting were approved.

General Manager's Report

Mr. Ron Biggs began his report by introducing the office manager for OUT, Frances Saralvarez. He reported that ridership was still over 400 a day. Schedules have been placed at the Union and the Lyceum. The issue with the transit stop sign in Brittany Woods was corrected. Mr. Biggs stated that with the proposed expansion the route would go out to The Exchange apartments, but he will try to see if time will allow for a stop at The Mark as well.

Donne Gurley remarked that she like the times of the stops displayed at the Student Union. Jack Howard commented that the goal is to eventually have GPS on the busses with tracking ability available.

Discussion of Expanded Services

Jack Howard announced that the OUT system would be receiving 5 busses from a transit system in Charlotte, pending the approval from the Board of Alderman. OUT will assume the federal interest on these busses. The busses will only be in operation for twelve months because they will be replaced with new busses purchased with funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The latest start time for expansion is projected to be October, but hopefully it will be before that.

Mr. Howard explained that fares will be instituted at the same time as the expanded service goes into operation. The fare structure will need to be reviewed and a public hearing held before fares can be officially instituted. The intention is for University staff, faculty, and students to be able to ride OUT by showing their identification cards. This is pending the discussions for supplementary funding from the University. Mr. Howard explained that the fares will apply across the board if something is not worked out with the University at the time of the expansion.

Donna Gurley made a motion to hold a public hearing to discuss the institution of fares on Wednesday July 8th at 6pm, following a 5pm meeting by the OUT commission.

Jim Windham seconded the motion.

With all voting yes the motion was passed.

Mr. Howard added that he hoped that the University works out their contribution to the fare structure so that OUT can fulfill the purpose of the expanded service.

Planner's Report

Tim Akers reported on the current financial status of OUT. He stated that he would be going to the Board of Alderman to request permission to advertise for the design and engineering for the new transit facility. Mr. Akers explained that this would be a similar process to hiring the management firm.

Mr. Akers said that he was still waiting to hear about the stimulus funds from MDOT. He told the commission that MDOT will be visiting in July for an annual audit.

Mayor Howorth was present and took a moment to announce that the City of Oxford received an award from the Mississippi Economic Development Council for the "Complete Streets Program" which includes both the Oxford Pathways Project and OUT.

Jack Howard thanked the Mayor for all of the work he has done in support of OUT.

George Price made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Jim Windham seconded.

With all voting yes, the meeting was adjourned.