



Oxford - University Transit Meeting **February 10, 2010**

Members Present: Donna Gurley, George Price and Jim Windham

Others Present: Tim Akers, Ron Biggs, Matt Davis, Frances Saralvarez, Dick Burkepile, Tyler Biggs and Taylor McGraw.

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Donna Gurley.

It was noted that there were not enough members present for a quorum.

General Manager's Report – Ron Biggs

- Mr. Ron Biggs informed that ridership was up compared to last month with a total of 10,792 passengers. The number of Ole Miss students was 6,859 in the month of January, and we need to take into consideration that classes did not start until the middle of January.
- O.U.T.'s presence has increased at the university with the expansion of the new routes.
- The new routes are paying off, specially the Green and Yellow Routes. The Orange Route is not doing as good as expected; it services the Links Apartments, Belk and Wal-Mart. In order to travel from the Links Apartments or Belk to the University, the passenger must transfer buses at Wal-Mart to go to the university. We look forward to an increase of ridership when the weather changes.
- The daily average of riders is approximately 750. We expect the number to increase to 1,000 per day when spring time arrives and the weather improves.

Planner's Report – Tim Akers

- Mr. Akers started the meeting discussing a letter received from the University of Georgia in regards to the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) 2010 Transportation and University Communities Conference, which is scheduled for April 10-13, 2010. He mentioned that Mr. Tim Lett from McDonald Transit was planning to attend.
- We are in constant communication with Ole Miss in regards to the shelters on campus and other matters related to O.U.T. There is a great concern about safety on campus. People in the Union Building are concerned about someone trying to cross in front of the buses. There is talk about making a cut-out (bus pullover section) with a shelter to improve safety.
- There is \$150,000 available to procure shelters. We are considering getting 20 shelters spending approximately \$100,000 leaving \$50,000 in reserve for shelters at the University and to install solar panels on the shelters. There will be additional expenses involved in the installation of the bus shelters.

Open Discussion

- The Ole Miss Students who attended the meeting voiced the need to have route maps posted at the Student Union and/or Lyceum.

The students were informed that there are plans in progress to have maps on the shelters and at the Student Union. Ultimately, we hope to have a GPS system to give information on the bus location on passenger's cell phones.

- It was mentioned in the meeting that Ole Miss Students are being encouraged to park at the JC Penny parking lot and catch the bus to campus. Mr. Biggs added that some students were already parking their cars at the parking lot and riding the bus to Campus.
- Mr. Akers informed the Commission that he is providing Mayor Patterson with weekly reports to include the number of riders and fare box amount.
- As of now, the biggest pick up in the new routes is the Exchange Apartments. We hope that in the future, Sterling may consider using our bus service rather than the method of transportation they currently use.
- The students who were present made a suggestion to put advertisements inside the buses.

The Commission informed them that the issue had been discussed, and unfortunately, it does not generate the kind of revenue needed to advertise inside the buses, but we have not given up on the idea. The students also mentioned they would be happy to help promote O.U.T. by putting up flyers or anything O.U.T. may need them to do.

- Ole Miss' orientation in January was cut back due to the weather, and that is the reason why O.U.T. did not attend. Our information cards were included in the student packets.
- Mr. Akers expressed the need to begin thinking about purchasing information signs and their designs. O.U.T. has ARRA money and some money in next years budget for signs.
- Commissioner Windham requested information on O.U.T.s liability insurance (shared liability protection).
- Mr. Akers added that McDonald Transit's first renewal of the contract was coming up in August. We have a four-year contract with McDonald Transit with two one-year renewals.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Donna Gurley adjourned the meeting.