

**MINUTES**  
**STARTRAN ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**  
**StarTran Conference Room 2**  
**July 26, 2012**

Members Present: Linda Carter, Stephen Speicher, Kim Phelps, Mike DeKalb, Don Herz

Members Absent: John Baylor, Beatty Brasch

Staff Present: Larry Worth, Brian Praeuner, Mike Weston, Scott Tharnish, Glenn Knust  
Kitty Elliott

**I. REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

Chairman Kim Phelps noted the Open Meetings Act and Patron Conduct Notice posted on the north wall.

**A. Patrons to be Heard**

- Pat Schreurs, commented that in the winter the schedule and the AVL doesn't seem to give the same information and the #48-Salt Valley route at 7:45 to downtown was not announcing stops. Mr. Knust said he would look into this. Mr. Worth also noted that the drivers are responsible for announcing stops, locations, etc if the automated equipment is not operating, and asked Mr. Weston to identify and remind the driver of that policy.

**B. Review/Action Items**

- June 28, 2012 StarTran Advisory Board Meeting minutes – A motion for approval was voiced by Mr. DeKalb and seconded by Mr. Herz. Approved 4-0-1, with the one being Mr. Speicher abstaining as he was absent from that meeting.
- Proposed September Pass Promotion – Kitty Elliott noted that the Marketing Sub-Committee met to discuss the proposed promotion in conjunction with StarTran achieving two million riders in a year's time in August. The proposal is to discount 20-ride passes from \$33 to \$8 (HandiVan 20-ride passes from \$66 to \$16) and Senior Saver passes from \$16 to \$8 as a thank-you to patrons. The pass promotion would be only the week of September 10-14, 2012 here at the StarTran office and at three other locations for a 2-hour time frame. A news conference is planned for Thursday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, in hopes that the Mayor will be available to make the announcement of StarTran achieving two million riders earlier in August. Ms. Elliott will have promotional pieces, cookies and water available to patrons during this promotion, as a thank you to StarTran patrons. The promotional passes sold at the discount would be limited to ten per individual. Ms. Elliott noted that the temporary promotional pricing is about celebrating and thanking Two Million Riders, and not about long-term revenue gains or losses.

Mr. Speicher moved for approval of the promotional fares as stated above, Mr. DeKalb seconded the motion and the vote was unanimously in favor.

- Ms. Elliott requested Board approval to discount Big Red Express individual game tickets in quantity to hotels/motels near express lots. The discount would be ½ price with a minimum order of 20 round-trip tickets. Mr. DeKalb moved approval and Mr. Speicher seconded, with a unanimous vote in favor.

**C. Discussion Items**

- Goal Setting – Mr. Tharnish said at the last meeting it was agreed to narrow the focus on a specific goal to target new riders. Staff met to discuss the pros and cons and it was apparent from the discussion that there are many paths this target could take. What makes a new rider? – No car, route not close, don't understand the system, fearful of the bus, family issues, need more independence with vehicle, etc. Who to target for new riders? – Age based (students/elderly, etc.), employed, income, route specific, neighborhoods; and then barriers, such as language and training. Mr. Tharnish said staff came up with 5 ideas and mentioned a couple. One was to provide new service, a circular type of service for the elderly in senior living facilities to make a loop on certain days at certain times so they know the routine; or not a new service, but the same idea only utilizing existing routes that serve senior living facilities to educate and train them at their facility and on-board trips through the entire route. One other idea might be to target a specific business (Kawasaki, Assurity, LBL) where they might buy passes from us at full price and discount to their employees with staff training the employees. Mr. Tharnish thought one option should be implemented as a trial and then reviewed after possibly six months.

Mr. Speicher said we should learn what the factors are that hinder people from riding the bus and what keeps current patrons on the bus. He felt that if they could learn where they can go on the bus, such as a concert, the doctor, etc. with some pro-active information on the places/destinations you can get to via bus this may help.

Mr. Tharnish said we should work towards the target to focus on within the next month or two.

Mr. Phelps thanked Mr. Tharnish for the update.

**D. Operations Report**

- Mr. Worth reported that paid ridership was up 8.6% compared to last year. However, June 2012 ridership is down from June 2011 possibly because school was dismissed a week earlier than the last year. UNL ridership is up 5%. The July 4<sup>th</sup> shuttle operated, at the City's request and carried 401 this year as compared to 632 last year.
- At the last board meeting it was requested we provide information on Smart Cards and Debit/Credit Card usage, of which was provided on Pages 4 & 5 of the board report.
- Bike rack usage is still high.
- Mr. Worth said the Mayor's recommended budget proposed no changes to the routes or schedules, the contract with UNL was acknowledged, as well as the new (sixth) Big Red lot location. The fare changes were to reduce the regular 31 day pass from \$45 to \$16 with Handi-Van from \$90 to \$32, to increase the Star Shuttle from a quarter to fifty cents, and charge a quarter for transfers which now are free. In the second year budget it is proposed to increase the Big Red shuttle service from \$4 to \$5 each way.

- Mr. Worth reminded everyone of the StarTran Advisory Board Public Hearing tomorrow, Friday, July 27, at Aging at 10<sup>th</sup> & “O” Streets at 4:00pm. Stated each patron has a three minute limit on the agenda topics only, and after the public hearing there would be a regular meeting of the board to take action on recommendations on the Mayor’s proposed budget and forward those onto the Mayor and City Council. He explained that if the Council had made any changes, impacting StarTran, at their meeting on Monday, the 23<sup>rd</sup>, that would have also been added to the StarTran public hearing on 7/27. Mr. Worth said the City Council Public Hearing on the StarTran budget would be Monday, August 6<sup>th</sup>. He said the Chair of the Advisory Board usually speaks to the City Council at this meeting on the recommendations of the board. The adoption of the budget will be Monday, August 20.
- Mr. Worth noted that StarTran is proceeding forward to order new buses, cameras, GPS, fareboxes, and hiring of drivers for the start of the additional UNL service contracted by StarTran to begin in January.

**E. Other Business**

None

**F. Patrons to be Heard**

- Ms. Schreurs said that StarTran should alert HHS to bus passes as they send their patrons on cabs and with Transport Plus. Staff indicated to her that StarTran already sells HHS passes and they are aware of our services.
- Ms. Johnston said she wanted service to 56<sup>th</sup> & Pine Lake Road, as there is no service close to that area currently. Staff and Board Members acknowledged her concern that this was not covered by a bus route.

**G. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned.