

MINUTES
STARTRAN ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
StarTran Conference Room 2
November 16, 2009

Members Present: Beatty Brasch, Kim Phelps, Karen Moritz, John Baylor, Kory George

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Larry Worth, Mike Weston, Scott Tharnish, Kitty Miller, Brian Praeuner, Glenn Knust, Connie Thoreson

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

A. **Review/Accept Minutes of September 24, 2009 Board Meeting**

The minutes were accepted as submitted.

B. **Patrons to be Heard**

None

C. **Marketing Report - Kitty Miller**

Kitty Miller reported on the following Marketing issues:

- As soon as the AVL Project is completed, Ms. Miller plans a “kick-off” event.
- The last Big Red Shuttle services will operate Saturday, November 21st.
- On October 23rd was a “Free Fare” day. This was in conjunction with the Homeless Connect Event, however was promoted as a “Patron Appreciation Day”, to eliminate possible negative connotation. StarTran served approximately 600 more riders. It was noted that some utilized the free service in order to travel to The Center For People In Need (CFPIN) for their Homeless Connect Event. Ms. Brasch estimated the CFPIN served 200 or so families.
- The State of Nebraska is participating in the Employee Bus Pass Program, with 62 participants.
- Brian Praeuner and Ms. Miller continue to plan for the promotion of the bike racks to be installed on all buses.
- Both Neighborhood Routes, # 56 and #57 will be promoted per TDP guidelines for low ridership routes. The promotion will begin November 27 and run through the end of 2009, with free fare on only these two routes during this time frame. The premise will be to utilize StarTran services to increase ridership and shop for the holidays in these neighborhood stores. Ms. Miller has secured gift certificates from businesses along these two routes, and will have drawings for the neighborhood route patrons to win the certificates as well as StarTran fare devices.

The promotion will be advertised on the radio, the website, Journal Star online ad, print on buses and possibly in the shelters along the two routes. The information will also be distributed on the City’s RSS feed for those that have registered to receive StarTran information updates.

In answer to a question, Ms. Miller noted the StarTran website now has an RSS feed, for patrons or anyone, to register to receive StarTran informational updates, events, etc. Ms. Miller also agreed to check as to if the October 23rd “Free Fare” day was included on the RSS feed, and insure that StarTran information is being included on the RSS in a timely manner.

The Board inquired as to the status of the StarTran wrapped bus and the potential to move the bus advertising program to StarTran staff. Ms. Miller noted that both are being reviewed by the Mayor and/or his staff. The Board will be notified in the event of any information, on these two issues, being passed on to StarTran.

The advertising idea was proposed by the Marketing Sub-Committee to the PW/U Director. The Director will be discussing the idea with the Mayor for his input/review. The proposal is to discontinue the current advertising contract with Houck Advertising, with StarTran hiring a sales person in order to sell wrapped buses only.

D. Operations & Planning Report

Larry Worth reported on the following issues:

- Reviewed ridership noting that UNL ridership is down 18% year to date with one less booster bus on that route this year.
- The AVL contract is proposed to be extended to July, 2010. Discussion took place, acknowledging that the project is about two years past the original contract completion date with no penalties having been assessed. Kory George agreed to review the contract, particularly regarding opportunities for late penalties.
- Mr. Worth updated the Board on the status of the Stimulus funded projects per the Board Report.
- StarTran operated shuttle service for the Boo-at-the-Zoo event after the private charter company backed out at the last minute. Mr. Worth noted the City will be pursuing a formal complaint against the private charter company.
- StarTran staff will meet with representatives from the Northwest Industrial Park area to discuss future possible service to the area.
- Special Olympic transportation meetings continue; Arrow is proposed to carry people to the venues and StarTran proposed to operate shuttle service to the downtown lodging, Pershing Auditorium and parking garages.
- Mr. Worth noted the State Budget reductions and how they may effect the StarTran budget.

E. Ridership Report

Scott Tharnish reviewed and summarized the ridership report per the Board Packet.

Mr. Tharnish noted that revenue from paid cash fare and full price 31-day passes are down more than the rest of the fare devices.

Mr. Tharnish will update the Board on the status of the current budget.

After discussion on the outcome of the October 23rd free fare day results, the Board made a motion to propose 25¢ fare for the month of February, 2010. The motion was seconded and there was a unanimous vote in favor of the proposal as follows...

A promotional fare reduction of 25¢ is proposed for the month of February, 2010. Staff noted that revision of the promotional “base fare” to a 25¢ cash fare would result in changes to other fare categories in compliance with federal/state requirements. The PW/U Director will be advised of the proposal for subsequent notification to the Mayor’s Office.

F. **New Business**

The December StarTran Advisory Board was scheduled for December 17, 2009, 8:00 a.m. in the StarTran Conference Room 2.

G. **Miscellaneous Information**

None

Adjournment

Ms. Brasch adjourned the meeting.