

**MINUTES**  
**STARTRAN ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**  
**StarTran Conference Room 2**  
**March 29, 2012**

Members Present: Kim Phelps, John Baylor, Steve Speicher

Members Absent: Beatty Brasch, Mike DeKalb

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

**I. REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

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

**A. Patrons to be Heard**

Pat Schreurs stated that she is sight impaired and that the automated bus stop announcements, on some buses, are not operating or are set at too low of a volume to be heard by her. Ms. Elliott encouraged her to call these incidents in with specific route and bus information, so that the bus can be checked and repaired or adjusted in a timely manner. Mr. Weston noted that the Bus Operators are to call out stops in the event of such equipment failure. He suggested Ms. Schreurs also call to report specific drivers that neglect to call out stops, so that he can handle appropriately.

Kathy Johnston noted concerns with regard to a particular driver's attitude toward her, and was encouraged by staff to call the main office with such concerns, so that they can be properly investigated.

**B. Review/Action Items**

Action items were deferred due to lack of a quorum.

**C. Discussion Items**

The Financial, Marketing, Management & Operational Analysis Final Report of StarTran was discussed as follows...

Mr. Baylor acknowledged that the analysis found no significant issues with StarTran operations and that StarTran was comparable to transit peers on most factors. He congratulated staff for achieving such a positive result.

Mr. Baylor stated his concerns that the report did not address some of the items included in the Request for Proposals (RFP). In particular, he felt that there should be other ways identified to reduce City funding to StarTran, other than only the suggestions to cut service. Mr. Baylor volunteered to draft a response to the Audit Advisory Board, to reflect today's discussion by the StarTran Advisory Board members.

Mr. Speicher felt that the recommendation to establish the goal for the transit system should be a top priority. The transit system needs to focus on either increasing revenue or ridership, as the two don't always coincide.

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Mr. Worth noted in response to Mr. Baylor's concerns, that potential cost savings were addressed in Chapter 11 of the Final SRF Report with the impacts of various service reductions indicated.

Mr. Speicher reiterated that a decision to determine the priority of the transit system needs to be included in the response to the Audit Advisory Board.

Mr. Phelps noted that he felt that the role of the StarTran Advisory Board also needs to be determined per report recommendations, in order for the Board to take appropriate actions.

Mr. Speicher noted that if it is determined that the StarTran Advisory Board is not to be a voice for the transit riders, that the riders should be made aware of that, as they need to have someplace to be heard.

After much discussion, it was decided that Mr. Baylor would draft a response to the Audit Advisory Board and distribute to the other Board members for their input and finalization. The due date for submission to the Audit Board was noted, which is April 9, 2012.

### D. **Operations Report**

Ms. Elliott reviewed the on-going and upcoming marketing activities described in the Board Report.

Mr. Baylor commended staff on continued ridership increases and asked if there is any particular reason for such increases. Mr. Tharnish felt that it could be cumulative, including higher gas prices, less unemployment, and positive experiences due to new programs being implemented. Mr. Speicher felt that the increase could be occurring with no real identifiable reason.

Mr. Phelps suggested that Mr. Baylor advertise the increased ridership through a spot on the radio, and Ms. Elliott agreed to arrange this for him.

It was noted that the trip planner and phone applications related to the AVL are on hold as staff is identifying a contractor to complete the project. Mr. Speicher asked that audio phone applications be included in the project.

Mr. Speicher noted that the volume of the automated stop announcements are not consistent but the bus operators have been very helpful in letting him know the bus route they are driving and the stops. Mr. Knust explained how the automated system works and indicated he would check into issues regarding the volume of the announcements.

It was noted that there were no responses to the UNL Spring or Fall football express services, from private charter operators, therefore StarTran will operate both services again this year, with a 6<sup>th</sup> lot at 949 W Bond utilized this fall.

Mr. Worth noted the consistent bike rack usage and mentioned the recognition of StarTran bus operator Mike Kennedy per the Board Report. Mr. Baylor stated that he and the Advisory Board are grateful for Mr. Kennedy's actions.

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In answer to a question, Mr. Worth stated that the input from the SRF Consultant Group was helpful, with several good ideas coming out of their report. It was also nice to hear that StarTran is doing well, and have many policies confirmed. He felt that the consultants will be a good resource to StarTran for the future. Mr. Baylor suggested that the SRF Consultants check back every few years to do a quick review.

Mr. Worth noted that the UNL contract continues to be negotiated. This contract will be implemented in January, 2013, in which StarTran will take over the current UNL service during the day and in evenings. This was also a recommendation in the SRF final report. Mr. Phelps noted that since StarTran and UNL combined to increase the Holdrege route service in 2010, UNL ridership has increased by 20%.

In answer to a question, Mr. Worth noted the differences between the SRF Consultant Analysis and the TDP being that the TDP is an analysis of efficiencies of the transit routes, and the SRF analysis focuses more on the transit operations. As noted in the SRF report, FTA requires that a TDP be conducted each 4-6 years.

Mr. Speicher is interested in staff exploring the option of an audio hand-held device that could be connected to the bus AVL system in order that patrons could be made aware of when the next bus would be arriving, etc.

### **E. Patrons to be Heard**

No patrons requested to speak.

### **F. Adjournment**

Chairman Phelps adjourned the meeting.

The next StarTran Advisory Board Meeting is scheduled for May 3, 2012, 8:00 a.m. in the StarTran Conference Room.