

MINUTES  
STARTRAN ADVISORY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING & MEETING  
Aging Partner, 1005 "O" St  
September 9, 2011

Members Present: Steve Speicher, John Baylor, Debby Brehm, Kim Phelps, Beatty Brasch

Members Absent: Kory George

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

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Mr. Phelps called attention to the Open Meeting regulations posted in the room.

I. Mr. Phelps opened the public hearing regarding the proposed reduction in service and fare increases as follows:

- Reduction of service hours by eliminating 30 minutes on the first and last trip on select routes
- Proposed fare increases:

	<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
▶ Regular 31-Day Pass	\$45.00	\$ 50.00
▶ Regular HandiVan 31-Day Pass	\$90.00	\$100.00
▶ Low Income 31-Day Pass	\$ 7.50	\$ 8.00/\$10.00
▶ Low Income HandiVan 31-Day Pass	\$15.00	\$ 16.00/\$20.00
▶ "Star Pass" Summer Youth Pass	\$15.00	\$ 20.00

Board members introduced themselves, and Mr. Phelps presented the "ground rules", and welcomed all attendees.

The following attendees spoke:

- Steve Craft is against raising the Low Income fare to \$10 but would be more comfortable with \$8. Mr. Craft proposed a two-tier low income fare based on income with lower income tier paying \$8.
- Tom O'Brien is opposed to fare increases.
- Deloris Cole suggested that fares be increased in small increments. Ms. Cole was informed that the deadheading would be implemented on the least used trips on select routes.
- Diane Kimble felt fare increases were fair, and noted that the deadheading would leave some patrons without service and suggested initiating a child fare.
- Sharon Johnson is not opposed to fare increases, but felt that many patrons utilize the first and last trips on routes so opposed the deadheading.
- Rosina Paolini is opposed to service reductions resultant from deadheading and is interested in increasing transit per the City Comprehensive Plan (LPlan 2040). Ms. Paolini noted in the Comp Plan the population that utilizes transit service will increase therefore service should be built up rather than cut. In answer to a suggestion to build later, Ms. Paolini felt that it would be more expensive than to continue increasing a little at a time each year. Ms. Paolini asked for the investment to be made in order to increase long-term ridership. She noted that if transit hours were extended, there would be more riders/revenue, so fare increases would not be necessary.
- Tag Jackson stated his opposition to service cuts, agreeing with Ms. Paolini that more revenue would be brought in with more service, particularly evening services (until 10:00 p.m.). Mr. Jackson felt that a fare increase would be hard on some patrons.

- Lois Newman asked Advisory Board members if they are StarTran patrons, to which Steve Speicher indicated that he utilizes transit services daily. Ms. Newman felt the StarTran personnel should determine routes/schedules rather than hiring a consultant. Ms. Newman opposed fare increases.
- James Welch noted the need for a sidewalk on the west side of 46<sup>th</sup> St from “R” St to Vine. (Such was subsequently checked and was determined that a sidewalk is in place. The area will be monitored for passenger boardings for potential shelter placement.)
- Greg Butcher expressed interest in the UNL contract negotiations as related to UNL student fares. Mr. Butcher noted that the young professionals are potential transit patrons and suggested that marketing should be directed to them.

Mr. Phelps thanked all those in attendance and closed the public hearing.

### **STARTRAN ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

II. Chairman Phelps noted the regular StarTran Advisory Board meeting.

A. No patrons to be heard.

B. Chairman Phelps reminded the Advisory Board of the City Council’s August 10, 2011 action which was to increase the Low Income 31-day pass from \$7.50 to \$10 (regular fixed-route) and \$15 to \$20 (HandiVan), maintain 12 hours Saturday service, and the Advisory Board recommend other reductions/increase revenues equal to the difference between the budgeted savings and the low-income fare additional revenue, which equals \$157,000.

After much discussion, the following was voted 4-1 in favor of recommending; the Low Income fare be increased to \$8 (regular)/\$16(HANDIVAN) and deadheading 12 of 15 weekday routes and 9 of 12 Saturday routes. The vote was unanimous in favor of agreeing to use \$50,000 in State funding, and that the remainder of revenue to be determined by City administration with no cuts in service or increase in fares.

The StarTran Advisory Board asked that 2012 UNL Football Express fares be considered for an increase in order to generate more revenue.

The StarTran Advisory Board asked that UNL/StarTran contract be discussed at a future Advisory Board meeting.

C. Patrons to be Heard as follows...

- Steve Craft stated concerns with scooters taking too much time boarding/exiting buses causing route delays and suggested that scooters instead utilize HandiVans.
- Rosina Paolini expressed interest in increasing Big Red Shuttle service fares. She was advised that this would be placed on a future Advisory Board agenda for consideration during development of the F.Y. 2012-14 budget.

D. Chairman Phelps adjourned the Advisory Board meeting.