



## **DSATS Transit Operations Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, December 2, 2020 10:00 A.M.**

*\*Held as a Virtual Public Meeting via Zoom Meetings*

**Call to Order:** Chair Bushnell called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM.

### **1. Roll Call**

- Voting Membership (one vote per entity)
  - City of DeKalb: Marcus Cox
  - City of Sycamore: Mark Bushnell (Chair)
  - DeKalb County: Kathy Ostdick (Vice-chair)
  - NIU: John Heckmann
  - NIU Student Association: Rene Fuqua
  - Kishwaukee College: not present
- Non-Voting Attendance
  - Town of Cortland: Brandy Williams
  - DSATS staff: Nathan Schwartz, Brandon Geber
  - Transit staff: Marcus Cox, Sabrina Kuykendall
  - VAC: Mike Neuenkirchen

### **2. Administrative Agenda**

#### **a. Approval of Agenda (Action)**

Motion to approve the December 2, 2020 meeting agenda made by Ms. Ostdick; seconded by Mr. Heckmann; approved by voice vote.

#### **b. Approval of Minutes (Action)**

Motion to approve the October 7, 2020 meeting minutes made by Ms. Ostdick; seconded by Mr. Cox; approved by voice vote.

#### **c. Public Comments**

None.

### **3. Governance Agenda**

#### **a. 2021 Committee Meeting Schedule (Action)**

Chair Bushnell presented the proposed 2021 TOC meeting schedule for recommendation to Policy Committee. Motion to recommend the proposed 2021 TOC meeting schedule made by Ms. Ostdick; seconded by Mr. Heckmann; approved by voice vote.

### **4. Transit Agenda**

#### **a. Ongoing Paratransit Provider Transition**

Mr. Cox of transit staff presented on the paratransit provider transition from the Voluntary Action Center (VAC) to TransDev scheduled to occur on January 1, 2021, including changes to service area, fare prices, and eligibility criteria. Mr. Heckmann inquired about general users not in a special rider category. Mr. Gill explained non-paratransit riders will be limited to those already registered in the system. Chair Bushnell asked if there was much interaction with the public concerning these changes. Mr. Cox stated that there have been multiple communications sent out to passengers. Mr. Neuenkirchen added that most complications regarding the transition will likely surface upon implementation. Mr. Cox also added that the legacy demand-response service for the general public has become too inefficient when fixed-route services are available, and are redirecting services to match ADA recommendations. Mr. Neuenkirchen reiterated that even with early communications, most issues will surface upon implementation of the service changes. Chair Bushnell asked if there was data describing how often people use the service. Mr. Neuenkirchen described that a majority of service is provided to subscription riders (dialysis, work commute, etc.), and that most riders should fall under the traditional fare but some general public work commuters would be impacted by the fare change.

#### **b. Rebuild Illinois Capital Grant**

Mr. Cox of transit staff presented that the City of DeKalb was recently awarded \$5,000,000 from IDOT's Rebuild Illinois Capital grant program to assist with the architecture, engineering, and construction of a transit maintenance and operations facility. The City of DeKalb is expected to use the funds to leverage discretionary grant opportunities available through FTA. Mr. Heckmann congratulated Mr. Cox on getting the award and commented on the potential operational savings expected from having a maintenance facility.

Mr. Cox commented that DeKalb County also received an award for county services. Mr. Neuenkirchen stated that the county received \$325,000 for vehicle purchases and facility upgrades, and that funds will be tied in to previously awarded capital grant funds for other expenses incurred during the urban service transition.

#### **c. Ridership Statistics**

Mr. Cox of transit staff presented year-to-date ridership statistics for both the fixed-route and paratransit systems and elaborated on potential impacts due to COVID-19 and an evolving NIU class schedule. Mr. Cox also provided a comparison of ridership trends throughout the country.

### **5. Closing Agenda**

#### **a. Staff and Project Updates**

Mr. Schwartz introduced Brandon Geber, the new full-time DSATS employee. Mr. Geber provided a brief introduction of himself to the committee.

**b. What's New with Our State and Federal Partners**

No comments.

**c. Additional Business**

Mr. Neuenkirchen proposed that VAC could also provide updates to the committee given the rural service interaction to the urbanized area. Mr. Schwartz responded that he would bring the idea to the IDOT MPO manager and see what DSATS can do to accommodate.

**d. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Ostdick; seconded by Mr. Heckmann; meeting adjourned at 10:45 AM.

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Transit Operations Committee at a subsequent meeting.