



## Transit Operations Committee

**Date:** Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

**Time:** 10:00am

**Location:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held as a Virtual Public Meeting.

**Attendance:**

**Voting Members**

City of DeKalb: Bryan Faivre, Marcus Cox  
City of Sycamore: Mark Bushnell (Chair)  
DeKalb County: Kathy Ostdick (Vice Chair)  
NIU: John Heckmann  
NIU Student Assoc.: James Holmes, Rene Fuqua  
Kishwaukee College: Not Present

**Non-Voting Attendance**

Town of Cortland: Brandy Williams  
VAC: Tracy Smith  
DeKalb Transit: Sabrina Kuykendall Kvasnicka  
DSATS Staff: Nathan Schwartz, Brandon Geber

### Meeting Minutes

**Call to Order:** Chair Bushnell called the meeting to order at 10:04am.

**1. Roll Call**

**2. Approval of Agenda (Action)**

Motion to approve the February 3, 2021 meeting agenda made by Ms. Ostdick; seconded by Mr. Cox; Motion approved unanimously.

**3. Approval of Minutes – December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 (Action)**

Motion to approve the December 2, 2020 meeting minutes made by Ms. Ostdick, seconded by Mr. Heckmann; Motion approved unanimously.

**4. Public Comments**

No public comments.

**5. New Business**

**a. Election of Officers (Action)**

Chair Bushnell reported that it is time to elect the Chair and Vice-Chair. Mr. Schwartz explained that elections are held at the first meeting of the year, and officers have traditionally been represented by transit service partners. Chair Bushnell nominated Ms. Ostdick for Vice-Chair; seconded by Mr. Heckmann. Ms. Ostdick nominated Chair Bushnell to remain as Chair, seconded by Mr. Heckmann. Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

**b. Urban Service Updates**

Mr. Cox presented on the status of the paratransit provider transition from VAC to Transdev that occurred on January 1, 2021, including changes to revenue hours for various services, operation tracking procedures used to monitor services, and new tools and information resources released to the public.

Mr. Cox presented on the existing operating conditions of the urban fixed-route service. Transdev reported bus operator shortages that have impacted their ability to provide service at full capacity. City staff has worked with Transdev to set a deadline for a return to full-service. Mr. Cox also provided an overview of revenue service hour fluctuations experienced over the past year due to the ongoing pandemic.

Mr. Cox presented on the status of planning for a transit maintenance and operations facility. The initial facility location proposed by DeKalb City Council is along Dresser Road, but other locations could still be proposed. Transit staff is working through remaining items with the RFQ vendor before final council approval. Staff also looks to pursue a USDOT BUILD grant for supplemental funds. Mr. Geber asked if any other sites have been considered to improve user access and decrease deadhead. Mr. Cox responded those items have been considered and the Dresser Road location has been the best candidate to achieve those items. Other proposed locations on Barber Greene Road and County Farm Road are no longer options, so the city is looking at City-owned land.

Mr. Cox presented on total ridership statistics for calendar year 2020, including changes to services that occurred. The fixed-route system experienced an approximate 54% decrease in ridership while paratransit experienced a 34% decrease, both better than national ridership decreases experienced due to the ongoing pandemic. Mr. Heckmann thanked Mr. Cox for the overview and for keeping service levels consistent while dealing with the pandemic.

**c. Rural/On-Demand Service Updates**

Mr. Smith reported VAC has been working with the City of DeKalb and Transdev to ensure the paratransit provider transition is successful. Rural public transit has seen recent increases in ridership, and is working with the Health Department to coordinate rural COVID-19 vaccinations.

**d. SFY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Update**

Mr. Schwartz reported DSATS is currently working on their annual UPWP. Mr. Geber presented on the draft budget and budget narrative for State Fiscal Year 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022) and detailed projects and activities included within the work program. The draft budget will be sent to IDOT by February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021, and will go before the committee again for recommendation in mid-to-late spring. Chair Bushnell commented that the budget looks clearer and more straightforward than previous years. No other feedback was provided.

**e. Public Participation Plan (PPP) Update**

Mr. Geber presented on the update process underway for the MPO's PPP, including key items to consider, existing plan requirements, and recommendations to modify current public participation activities. Staff recommended to reduce the general 45-day public review period to 28 days for applicable documents and to move required public hearings to optional. Chair Bushnell commented that he is comfortable moving forward with the recommendations. Mr. Schwartz notified members the document will be sent to them for review. Mr. Geber mentioned the document will be going out for public review and a public hearing by February 17, 2021, and will again come before the committee for recommendation in April. No other feedback was provided.

**f. Title VI Program Update**

Mr. Geber presented on the update process underway for the MPO's Title VI Program, including required program elements, non-discrimination policies, limited-English Proficiency standards, and environmental justice procedures. Mr. Geber mentioned the document will be going out for public review and a public hearing by February 17, 2021, and will again come before the committee for recommendation in April. A questionnaire will also be sent to committee members to document the demographic composition of the committee. No other feedback was provided.

**6. Other Business**

**a. Staff and Project Updates**

No updates.

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

No updates.

**c. Additional Business**

No additional business.

**7. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Ostdick, seconded by Mr. Heckmann; meeting adjourned at 10:55am.

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