

**TRAC MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 8, 2014 - Noon  
DART CENTRAL STATION – MULTIMODAL ROOM**

**TRAC Members Present:**

Randy Anderson, Rod Van Genderen, Greg Boesch, Dina Ricketts, Daniel Rittel, Cyrilla Gregory, Jay Peterson, Tonia Crawford, Alexander Grgurich, Michael Barber

**TRAC Members Absent:**

Laura Friest, Patrick Karnes

**TRAC Staff Present:**

Gunnar Olson, Kirstin Baer-Harding, Jennifer Long, Tony Filippini, Ethan Standard, Jim Tishim, Jamie Schug, Tony Lafata, Todd Struthers, Suzanne Robinson

**Others Present:**

Mr. Michael Barber's associate

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Greg Boesch at 12:05 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Notice of the meeting was duly posted.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Chair called for corrections to the November 13, 2013 meeting minutes.

Hearing none, it was moved by Rod Van Genderen and seconded by Cyrilla Gregory that the minutes be approved.

The minutes from the meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**1. FY-2015 Budget**

DART Chief Financial Officer, Jamie Schug, presented the proposed budget to TRAC members. In her power point presentation (attached) Jamie outlined revenue assumptions, explaining that the increase in property tax revenue would amount to \$120k to \$180k. There will be a decrease in

federal funding used for operating expenses of \$365k, and the community of Sheldahl's withdrawal from DART membership will bring a loss of their \$3,000 tax levy.

Expenditure assumptions include staff increases of three, health insurance increases, and the cost for implementation of the DART Forward 2035 year 3 recommendations. She explained that the ACA appears to mandate health insurance for DART's part-time bus operators, which may add \$800,000 to the DART budget. She predicted that DART will need an 8-cent to 12-cent increase in the tax levy, adding \$40 to \$50 a year on the tax rate for a \$200,000 home.

The Chair asked if that 8 to 12-cent increase would cover all the increased expenditures, and Jamie said it does, and also includes the service enhancements as well. Alexander asked if the current statewide tax rollback continues, and Jamie said it will be in effect for four more years. She added that the state claims they will backfill the lost revenue.

Jamie then went over the timeline for the budget process, which ends when the budget is certified to the county auditor in March.

## **2. TRAC Goals for 2014**

Gunnar showed the 2013 goals in his power point presentation (attached), then listed DART's current major 2014 initiatives along with previously proposed goals and asked for more input. Michael asked about doing an app for cell phones for real time schedule information. Gunnar replied that there was a cell phone version for the trip planner, but to active plans for an app such as Michael described, however that might be something to include in future plans. Rod asked what DART has in the works regarding new technologies. Gunnar said that the current implementation of the real-time schedule information is the priority. Dina asked about replacement and installation of bus shelters in the downtown area. Ethan explained that DART is going to work on this project in 2014. Jim added that Principal is putting in a new shelter of their (DART approved) design, and that the city and DART are working on educating the Cowles Commons committee that a shelter in that area is needed.

Kirstin was asked about Marketing goals, and replied that they are working on "My DART" tools for the Real Time project. Jay asked about the status of "smart" cards and Gunnar said they were encompassed in the Fare Policy project. Alexander asked that the development of usable apps for schedule information be included.

Gunnar thanked all for their input and said he would have the goals ready for the group to adopt at the next meeting.

## **3. Fare Policy Update**

Gunnar's power point presentation (attached) outlined the background and current status of this project. He said that since the last TRAC meeting, DART held public meetings and solicited surveys, and he then went over the feedback received through the public process. He said that initial conclusions from public input were:

- Smart card system was well received.

- Answers were consistent among all subgroups (ethnicities, income levels, and users of different types of fare methods).
- Additional options were welcomed, such as day passes, 7 and 30 day passes, and bonus trips.
- Discontinuing free transfers would upset public but they understood the reasons.
- There are suitable alternatives to tokens, such as cash cards, day passes.
- Public asked many perceptive questions about how the new system would work, and these questions need to be addressed as part of the public education campaign.

Gunnar said the timeline for this project would be ongoing with installation of the new fareboxes and implementation of the new policies to take place sometime in the first half of 2015.

#### **4. Bus Stop and Amenity Guidelines**

Ethan announced that the DART Commission adopted these new guidelines at the January Commission meeting, and that prior to the adoption there were no such guidelines regarding bus stops. Through his power point presentation (attached) he said the guidelines do three things:

- Identify the various components of a DART bus stop.
- Set standard guidelines for the design and placement of bus stops and amenities.
- Describe the process for developing and maintaining both current and future DART bus stops.

After giving a quick summary of the guidelines, Ethan asked for questions or comments. Michael asked about the difference between a “cut-out” and a “bump-out”. Ethan explained that a cut out takes the bus out of the traffic lane and into an area cut into the parking, while a bump-out extends the sidewalk or parking into a traveled lane of the roadway. Alexander asked if cut-outs were less safe for bus passengers, and Ethan said there was no hard data, but observation would confirm that they are safer for bus riders since they are out of the trafficway. Michael also asked if it would be possible to put route numbers in Braille on the bus stop signs. Ethan said that since the signs are at the top of 7-foot poles, it wouldn’t work. Tonia asked why the signs had to be so high, and Ethan said it is a requirement of the City of Des Moines. Gunnar added that the bus stop sign poles do have holes at intervals in them so that blind bus passengers can distinguish that they are at a bus stop. Michael then asked if the ADA requires that an approaching bus notify passengers at a bus stop the route and destination. Jim said that DART announces this information after opening the bus doors at a stop to all sight impaired individuals. He added that buses make announcements through the AVL system automatically. This is now working on 57 of the buses, and all new buses will have this capability. Alexander asked about the bus benches, and Gunnar explained that they were not owned or placed by DART – that they were a private entity under contract with the City of Des Moines.

#### **TRAC COMMUNICATIONS**

Tonia said she heard that the private carrier bus station has moved from its long-time home on Keo Way to a location on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, and asked if there were a bus route close to the station. Jim answered that the new address for that station is 1501 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue (2<sup>nd</sup> & Clark). The closest DART bus stop is on Route 15 at 6<sup>th</sup> & Clark, 4 blocks away. Jay asked where the Megabus picks up passengers, and was told it now picks up at the Center Street Park & Ride at 6<sup>th</sup> and Center Streets.

Dina gave a special thanks to DART for picking up people to take to the cooling-off shelter locations during the heat wave last summer.

## **STAFF UPDATES**

### **Gunnar**

- Staff will open up the Real Time scheduling data to the public for third party developers to create apps.

### **Kirstin**

- The new website design is in the works and will be unveiled soon.
- There will be a “DART Date Night” promotion in February on the 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Schedule changes will be introduced on February 23.

### **Jim**

- The new shelter has been installed at Southridge.
- There is a service change in Ankeny due to the re-location of the park-and-ride that was located for many years at the HyVee drugstore, and has been moved to Lot “L” at DMACC.
- The Route 73 planning study is in the works with conversations being conducted with the Urbandale Business Park.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

## **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Snow Removal
- Bus Stops

## **NEXT MEETING DATE**

March 12, 2014

## **MOTION TO ADJOURN – 1:07 PM**

It was moved and seconded that the TRAC adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.