



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION REVIEW BOARD

ALD. ROBERT BAUMAN, CHAIR
ELIZABETH NICOLS, VICE-CHAIR

**John Doherty, David Jasenski, Sandra Kellner, Don Natzke,
Abdulkadir Omar, Jeffrey Polenske, Terry Radtke and Mariano
Schifalacqua**

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Friday, March 9, 2012

9:00 AM

Room 301-A, City Hall

Meeting called to order at 9:02 a.m.

Present: 8 - Schifalacqua, Omar, Doherty, jasenski, Radtke, Natzke, Kellner,
Bauman

Excused: 2 - Polenske, Nicols

Individual also present:

Mark Rausch, Clear Channel Outdoor

1. Roll call and approval of previous meeting minutes.

Mr. Natzke moved approval of the minutes of February 10, 2012, seconded by Mr. Omar. There were no objections.

2. Communication from Milwaukee Downtown Business Improvement District, Yellow Cab Co-Op, Shuttle Services, Milwaukee County Transit System, Milwaukee County Office for Persons with Disabilities, Department of Public Works-Infrastructure, Transit Express, Legislative Reference Bureau and Clear Channel Outdoor related to Public Transportation.

Ald. Bauman said that a presentation on a report from Transit Now would be postponed for a future meeting due to Kerry Thomas, a representative of the organization, being unable to attend the meeting.

Mr. Omar commented on the status of the taxicab medallion legislation. Since 1992, people have been buying permits from each other with sales prices of \$100,000 or more. Like other cities, such as Chicago and New York, legislation is being proposed to the state to allow municipalities to replace taxi permits with medallions. He, Yellow Cab, American United, Independent, and some drivers were in support. He testified at a recent committee meeting. Current number of permits is capped at 321. There were

complaints of a shortage of cabs after bar close. He believed there are enough cabs during the day, but not at bar closing time.

Mr. Omar added that the city would have to the right to auction off additional medallions each year. For the first five years, 2% or a cap of six may be auctioned. After five years, the city would do a survey to determine if additional auctions are needed. Those holding current permits would be allowed to purchase medallions for \$500 for medallions and the city would collect 10% on a medallion transfers.

Mr. Omar said that the proposed legislation benefits the city, drivers, and banks. The city would receive increased revenue from the issuance of medallions. Drivers would be able to enter the taxi marketplace, obtain loans, and purchase newer and more environmentally friendly, appealing vehicles. Banks would be invested by holding a medallion as collateral.

Mr. Natzke and Ald. Bauman questioned if the rates or costs would increase with the introduction of medallions.

Mr. Omar replied that the rates would not be affected. Drivers would have newer and safer cars requiring less maintenance, less gas, and costs.

Ald. Bauman said that the city supports the medallion system city and signed onto a modified version from the cab industry, which gained bipartisan support and the necessary votes.

Mr. Schifalacqua said that the medallion legislation is an enabling one. The city would have to adopt its own ordinance.

Mr. Rausch said that Clear Channel Outdoor will move forward with the Department of Public Works (DPW) to work on scope issues. There are 120 shelters in Milwaukee County with 115 shelters in the City of Milwaukee. Some were not planned and illuminated since installations in 2008. They will go back to these, of which about 55 are in downtown and on Wisconsin Ave. They will be having discussions in a month or two with MCTS regarding extending the current contract, which is expiring in 18 months. The decision will be made by Milwaukee County.

Ms. Kellner reported on bus security in the Milwaukee County Transit System. Milwaukee Police Department boardings and presence have increased and become a deterrent. High security incidents have been reduced and high security calls have decreased by 45% from December to January. Active CPOs are riding on buses, also. A letter and/or information should have been sent to Chief Flynn regarding the increased police presence and reduction in incidents and calls.

Ald. Bauman said that the information presented by Ms. Kellner should be put out to the public and the board may be able to do that.

Ms. Kellner said that the Milwaukee County Transit System and the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee will push forward a mobile application. It is a Milwaukee County project promoting parks, the zoo, the airport, and transit. She added that they will be moving forward with an automated voice announcement system, which will have a voice announcement and text display of the next stop approaching on buses.

Mr. Omar asked about the green line.

Ms. Kellner replied that the green line goes down to the airport and has been getting good responses on these routes. She said she can bring in ridership statistics.

Ald. Bauman questioned the process of gathering ridership information.

Ms. Kellner said that they rely on the automated passenger counting system (APCS). Units are mounted on 10% of buses to electronically count passengers. The units can be moved to another bus. Information is transmitted wirelessly to a server. Other processes include seeing the number of passes processed and, to a lesser degree, physical counts by operators stationed at an intersection. She believes Milwaukee's ridership gathering process is uniform with the nation.

Mr. Natzke said that the number of people using wheelchairs on buses increased with 5400 in February 2012 compared to 2300 in February 2011 and numbers are consistently going up in the last three years. Ms. Kellner added that there have been steady increases in ADA and bicycle boardings with numbers still climbing.

Mr. Natzke asked about the change in human service vehicles with the state patrol no longer investigating them.

Mr. Doherty answered that there is a feud between the Department of Transportation (DOT) and Family Services. The State Patrol does not want to inspect these vehicles without being paid. Vehicles under contract with a transit authority using 85 21 funds will continue to be inspected, including those from Transit Express and First Transit. There is no mechanism currently to inspect other human service vehicles that are in operation. He suspected that DOT will go back to inspect human service vehicles but may not want to fiscally absorb it.

Mr. Doherty said that the State of Wisconsin licenses human services vehicles and is exempted from the city process. The state has not inspected these vehicles for the last month.

Mr. Natzke said that there is a safety concern. Many vehicles may not be in good repair, not have proper restraints, and be worn down by the road. City residents may be negatively impacted.

Mr. Doherty said that the city has a license process for the drivers, which can check for a person's criminal and driving record. However, many operators may be operating without state licensing and inspections along with the city's driver license.

Ald. Bauman requested for the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) to report on the standards of city and state licensing related to public transportation drivers and public transportation vehicles. Also, he asked for LRB to give a status update on valet parking services.

Ms. Kellner said a 2011 statistics book is being compiled but may not be ready in the next month. She added that she can bring in and distribute to the board summary tables depicting an overview of the transit system and data over a period of time regarding ridership.

David asked about the status of the street car project.

Ald. Bauman gave an update on the street car project. Clearance was received from the FTA to proceed. The city will review eight proposals from different firms in the next four weeks and then the city will enter into a contract with one. An owner's representative from the chosen firm and proposal will work with the city to prepare the actual RFP for final design. The owner's representative will supervise the final design and construction.

Ald. Bauman said that the RFP for final design is tentatively set for late summer or fall. The timeline was set back due to the election cycle and the FDA taking nine months to decide that the project imposed no significant environmental impact. Final design will be in a year or so with the date of completion in December 2015, which is 18 months later than the original contemplated date of completion.

Ald. Bauman added that there are concerns about the cost of inflation and diminishing purchasing power with cost of construction increasing over time.

Mr. Jasenski asked about the utility question and lawsuit.

Ald. Bauman replied that it is still an open question at this point depending on what the Public Service Commission decides and what the subsequent court reviews decide. Many issues haven't been resolved on how to proceed, and there have been no decisions on final hearings. There are still jurisdiction issues with the city questioning the Public Service Commission's right to consider the question given the fact that it would interfere with interstate commerce as the funds are federal funds involving interstate transportation infrastructure. If the Public Service Commission gets to the merits, the city will lose. If the opposition's goal was to slow down the process, there has been some success.

Mr. Doherty inquired on strategies or a fallback position in the event the utility costs have to be borne by the project.

Ald. Bauman replied that two areas to cut costs are shortening the route and purchasing used street car equipment, such as Kenosha style PCC cars. PCC cars cost 2 million dollars as opposed to 15 million dollars for newer, state of the art street cars. Operating costs would be less with PCC cars. PCCs are far more reliable with less maintenance and have simpler, less sophisticated machinery. However, PCCs lack air conditioning, have wheelchair accessibility limitations, and have less appeal.

Mr. Omar said that he is interested in having discussions to have international flights come directly through the airport to increase more tourism and business in the city. Ald. Bauman said that the county and airport management would have jurisdiction on the matter and not the board.

Ald. Bauman explained that PCC stood for President's Conference Committee, a group of street railway presidents or chief mechanical officers who came together to build the best street car. They largely succeeded with creating a standard template. Street cars went out of service in the late 60's and 50's.

Meeting adjourned at 9:48 a.m.
Chris Lee, Staff Assistant