

CITY OF FLORENCE TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
September 18, 2013 ** MEETING MINUTES **

CALL TO ORDER –

Chairperson Rose called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM.

1. ROLL CALL

L.A. Rose, TAC Chairperson; Bill Craig, TAC Member; Jane Ashley, TAC Member; Susan Hekimoglu, Lane Transit District (LTD); Jacque Betz, City Manager; Mike Miller, Public Works Director; Don Patton, Bus Rider; Kelli Weese, Planning.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

*This is an opportunity for members of the audience to bring to the Transit Advisory Committee's attention any items **NOT** otherwise listed on the agenda. Comments will be limited to **3 minutes per person**, with a maximum time of 15 minutes for all items.*

Alan Campbell: Introduced Morris Walker who does video work and specifically YouTube videos. He provided a dvd to Kelli Weese and can provide more if requested.

Morris Walker: Stated he was a resident of Florence 20 years ago and did a program called "Going places with the Walkers". He has since been traveling nationwide doing production work. Referred to the video given to Kelli stating it was a promotional video of the recent Rhody Car Show produced by he and Alan. The committee might consider if a Youtube video would help with promotion.

Bob Sneddon: Coast Radio. Realizes it is outside of the budget year but wanted to let the committee know that KCST could increase awareness of the Rhody Express. He can tailor a plan to any budget. He or Scott can do creative and production work.

Scott Steward: Local marketing consultant working with the radio and newspaper on occasion. Here to see how he can provide assistance and at the request of Cosette Rees whom he met at the Council meeting.

Bill Johnson: Greentrees Board member present out of interest of the Rhody Express.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

LA Rose asked for additions or corrections to the June 26, 2013 minutes. There were none.

LA moved & seconded to approve.

5. DISCUSS OUTCOMES OF SEPTEMBER 16th CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

Weese: Distributed copies of City Council staff report from the last Council meeting.

Betz: City Council recommended adding the casino stop and keeping the GT and Senior Center stops. This is a change since TAC last met and the reason for the change is the result of public outreach process. Comments were received related to GT & Senior Center not knowing ridership was down to the point of their stops being eliminated. CoF met with LTD prior to the posting the staff report. Staff decided that since this is a pilot project ridership would be evaluated over the year to see if there are increases at GT and the Senior Center and with the addition of the casino stop. Staff understands the risk associated with increasing the route 10 minutes but thinks it is a risk present anyway with traffic etc.... GT & Senior Center are interested in increasing ridership and as such Don is willing to be a member of TAC and Bill is present from GT. Staff attributes the decrease to the adhoc status of TAC and non-promotion of the Rhody Express by staff. Funding is at risk of being lost for the Rhody Express. However since CTCLUSI is offering to spend \$40,000 for the pilot project that will go towards updating brochures, route maps it makes this a good opportunity to reinstate the committee. TAC will be involved by meeting on a monthly basis to assist with the transition of the casino pilot route and assist with general bus service promotion.

6. PUBLIC OUTREACH METHODS DISCUSSION:

Hekimoglu: Glad TAC is back together. Ridership is back up in just the last couple of months. Max thinks the pilot route can be decreased to 60 minutes, through unlooping of Safeway stop, altering Tanglewood stop and changing ADA stops. She will continue to work with LTD planning and graphics staff and Max to determine actual route time and time points and produce promotion materials accordingly.¹ A stop (signage etc...) will be needed at the casino. Major bus stop points will be posted with the time changes. November is the goal to implement the route change but will defer to what the group thinks is needed such as January 1st.

Betz: LTD should check with CTCLUSI and see what their timeframe is. Thinks Jeff Stump should be part of TAC to represent the Tribe. PW not expected to help with equipment movement but will be available to help LTD and CTCLUSI. Need to factor in production of advertising and the brochure needs to be reviewed and updated.²

Hekimoglu: LTD will update map and time points and post signage at the stops indicating the changes.³ (Hence staff/TAC to update remaining parts of brochure⁴). Marketing is needed. Thinks the casino and senior center buffets/luncheons are an opportunity to promote a Senior Ride Free Day sponsored by a business.

Johnson: Casino has their Senior Buffet on Mondays and the Senior Center serves luncheons Tuesday and Thursday. So there are three opportunities available for that type of promotion.

Betz: How is the best way to get information to GT residents?

Patton: GT office manager, Louis is the best way to get information to GT residents. Monthly potluck is available for presentations and distribution of materials.

Johnson: GT is happy to write articles or include articles. Flyers could be inserted in the GT newsletter.

Betz: There are two elements to public outreach: longer term promotion and the immediate transition. Because MOU is between Tribe and LTD then they will work together on the transition plant and city can help. This group will not be involved in discussing how the \$40,000 will be spent. If targeting November 1st to start the pilot route then in October this group can review the materials created and discuss a media promotion plan.³ She wants to ride the new route if ready in November to see how it goes. The City does not have marketing funds set aside for TAC to promote the Rhody Express. Group can make a recommendation to the budget committee to include that in the future.

Hekimoglu: Would like to have a few months experience with the new route so that in March LTD and the Tribe can separately but collaboratively apply for grant funding that would include marketing. October will have draft brochure for review.

Betz: Need to look at where brochures are kept--Casino, Senior Center, GT. Is Book & Bears still a drop point?. City of Florence is good distribution point. Missing Darby and Clara for their input.

Patton: Books & Bears a good place but never seen anyone use the stop.

Weese: Over the next month TAC could look at locations and select a couple of locations to be in charge of keeping stocked.⁵

Betz: A topic of importance with the senior population is maintaining their independence. Promotion should encourage the Rhody Express as an option not a substitute for independence and using their car.

Hekimoglu: Promoting the casino buffet with a discounted meal when presenting a bus ticket is a way to get potential riders comfortable with using the bus before having to give up their car. Also suggested that a volunteer be available as a "Bus buddy" to get someone comfortable riding their first few times.

Weese: In the past TAC has held promotional weekends to get as many people to ride as possible.

Betz: Have a presence at community events and festivals. Add the casino to this as well. Doesn't cost a lot of money but provides visibility.

Hekimoglu: Agreement with Florence includes hours of free bus service for promotional purposes. Group should come up with a list of events in which to have the bus and/or a promotional table present.⁶ Casino could do something similar to have the bus on-site during evening events.

Rose: Rhody Express was at the Winter Folk Festival in the past. The \$40,000 could be used for supporting these events. As well as volunteer staff.

Betz: GT is a flag stop. How are less mobile people getting service?

Hekimoglu: Stated they would become ADA eligible and the bus would come in.

Betz: How can we increase awareness of this opportunity?

Patton: Newsletter, meetings, bus stop is actually on-site in front of the club house. Maybe golf carts could be used to get people to the stop.

Johnson: GT bench is not sheltered, which affects ridership because they do not want to wait in the rain. So those who want to ride wait inside the clubhouse and miss the bus because they do not get inside. LTD will talk with Max to coordinate a flag system or place a shelter outside.⁷

Betz: Suggested attending a GT meeting to talk about the Rhody Path project and the Rhody Express.⁸

Ashley: Something that would save the driver some time is to improve his wheelchair ramps (lift). Safeway and Oak Street are difficult for the driver to maneuver due to the wheelchair ramps (lift). Hekimoglu will look into it.⁹

7. NEXT STEPS:

1. LTD pilot route assessment with River Cities Taxi
2. LTD and CTCLUSI to create a transition plan: start date, location for a sign or stop at casino, marketing & promotion, needs related to signage, shelter etc....
3. LTD will bring a draft Brochure in October & group will discuss a media promotion plan.
4. CoF to review other parts of brochure to determine any additional changes that might be needed.
5. TAC will select brochure locations and who will be in charge on posting at specific sites.
6. TAC will establish which community events to have a presence at (bus and/or promo table).
7. LTD will work with RCT on coordinating a system for p/u in GT (Adding a shelter or a flag system)
8. CoF staff will coordinate with GT to schedule a presentation at a membership meeting on the Rhody Express and the Rhody Bike Path.
9. LTD will discuss wheelchair lifts with RCT.

8. SET FUTURE MEETING DATE:

October 16, 2013

ADJOURN AT 2:08 PM