



New Route Task Force Meeting Minutes

August 13, 2020, 11:00AM

Via Zoom Conference Call

Attending:

Trevor Vannett

Helen Baumgartner

Elton Lassiter

Tom Schiwal

Randee Sailer

Lacey Long

Susan Dingle

Tom Reisenauer

Craig Thomas

Danae Thiery

Staff:

Glenn Lauinger

Deidre Hughes

Taylor Kitzan

Michael Mundahl

Meeting called to order at 11:00 A.M.

1. **Discussion of Survey Results (Riders/Non-Riders/Drivers):** Deidre summarized the survey results in the order listed below.

Favorite part of CAT Bus System: Affordable, travels to University of Mary, friendly staff, site seeing, the Red and Blue Routes, and that we have a fixed route system in Bismarck/Mandan. Deidre discussed that she liked the answer of site seeing and wants to incorporate that more into the new routes, if possible.

Least favorite part of CAT Bus System: Issues with lost passes, missing places of interest, and having designated stopping points. Deidre explained that the issue with lost passes could be resolved if we are able to better educate our riders on our Token Transit mobile ticketing system. Riders are then able to keep their passes on their mobile device and pay for them online. Deidre also asked the Task Force if they liked the current flag down system or if they thought Transit should switch to a designated stopping point system. Susan discussed that the flag down system is friendlier and more accessible. Susan also mentioned that she thought that the current system attracts riders. Helen discussed how it would be harder for riders to get to stopping points if there wasn't a flag down system. Deidre discussed that the Red Route is not best for riders as it is currently a two-hour route. Deidre explained that it would be ideal for this route to be split into two separate one-hour routes, but that means that there would be five routes in Bismarck and one in Mandan. Helen discussed that she did not think it was effective for the CAT Bus to go to the east side of Collins Avenue in Mandan. Helen suggested that the route be changed to go up to the Old Red Trail area of Mandan. Deidre asked Elton how the riders at his agency thought of the current Red Route. Elton replied that the riders comment on how long the ride is, but no complaints of the route itself. Deidre discussed that the software that the CAT Bus System has had since 2012, is now up for bid. The new software should be installed and ready to use by the end of the year. This will allow riders to be able to schedule their rides from their mobile device and see where the bus is located at all times along the route(s).

How often do you use public transit: Deidre commented on how seventy percent of non-riders had answered this question and wants to be able to attract their ridership.

Why are you not utilizing the CAT Bus System currently: Deidre discussed that a majority of the answers were that non-riders have vehicles to get them around, as well as the routes being hard to read and understand. Deidre explained that the new route maps will be complete in about four to six months and can be fixed.

Have you ever used the bike racks on the CAT Bus: Deidre discussed that a majority of the answers to this question were no and that if more scenic routes added to routes would attract more riders to use this service.

Why are you using the CAT Bus System: Deidre discussed that there were a wide variety of answers including using the CAT Bus for recreation, work, school and medical. Deidre commented that having a variety of riders who have different purposes for riding is good for our fixed route system.

Which is your current favorite transfer point and where would you like to see a transfer point? Deidre discussed that the Front Avenue and BSC transfer points are the most popular from the survey. Deidre discussed that the Gateway Mall was proposed as a transfer point, but because of ownership of that property, a transfer point cannot be located within the parking lot. Deidre discussed that herself and the Operations Manager, Craig, were looking at moving the Mapleton Avenue transfer point to Interstate Avenue. This would make the transfer point close to Gateway Mall. Susan and Helen both agreed that this was a better placement for the transfer point because of location and not having to cross State Street. Deidre discussed that she will have to talk with the City of Bismarck to see if moving the transfer point will be possible. Deidre discussed that the survey mentioned not stopping at the NDSU School of Nursing and that she has contacted the director, Wendy Kopp, and is trying to partner with her to be able to work as a shuttle to BSC for nursing students. This will allow students to use the CAT Bus to both locations and not have to worry about parking near the hospitals where it is congested. Elton mentioned that it would be good to make that contact with all of the hospitals as they also have workers and patients that could utilize this in the same way. Tom Schiwal discussed that the City is not set up for public transportation because there isn't a safe, designated place for buses to pullover for passengers on most streets. Susan agreed with Tom and encourages the City to work on a plan to better accommodate public transportation.

If funding was not an issue, what would be most important to you: Deidre discussed that a majority of the answers were having a higher frequency route and having service an hour later Monday through Friday. Deidre explained that if we were to do a higher frequency route that we might have to cut an existing route.

2. **Proposed Black Route Discussion:** Craig explained the new Proposed Black Route would not stop by the South Cashwise anymore and that a different route would instead, so that the Black Route could have the opportunity to go through highly populated neighborhoods further north. This would include Interstate Avenue replacing Mapleton Avenue as the north transfer point, if approved.
3. **Next Steps/Future Meetings:** The Task Force discussed when to meet next and the agreed date was around September 9th. Deidre explained that this would give her enough time to work with Operations on the proposed new routes.

Meeting adjourned at 11:53 A.M.