



SPECIAL TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES: February 12, 2009

The Special Transit Advisory Board convened in regular session on February 12, 2009, at 101 E Abram, George W Hawkes Central Library - Administration Board Room, Arlington, Texas 76011, with the meeting being open to the public and notice of said meeting, giving the date, place and subject thereof, having been posted as prescribed by Chapter 551, V.T.C.A., Government Code, with the following members present, to-wit:

Members Present:	Martin Kelly, Board Chairman	Place 4
	Alan LeBlanc	Place 1
	Riley Henderson	Place 2
	Mary Lou Almendarez	Place 3
	James Campbell Quick	Place 5
	Marilyn Priddy	Place 6
	Mary Odom	Place 8
	Kassem Elkhilil	Place 9
Members Absent:	Vicki Niedermayer	Place 7
Staff Present:	Tim Jones, Acting Transit Manager	
	Paul Price, Operations Support Supervisor	
	Jan DeBaun, Transit Operations Supervisor	
	Natalie Tutt, Customer Service Representative	
Others Present:	Ryan Schrauner, Handitran Passenger	

I. Call to Order

Martin Kelly, Board Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. in the Administration Board Room of the George W. Hawkes Central Library, 101 E Abram Street, Arlington, Texas 76011.

II. Items for Board Information, Discussion and Action

A. Approval of Minutes for November 13, 2008.

Tim Jones pointed out a typographical error in the February 12, 2009 agenda on line item (D) The correction should read First Quarter.

Mary Odom requested a correction to be made to the second to the last page, second paragraph that refers to the Epworth facility as a workshop should be changed to a day rehabilitation center.

Martin Kelly requested a motion to approve the minutes. James Campbell Quick moved to approve the minutes as written, Riley Henderson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Service Reports for October, November and December 2008

Paul Price reviewed each chart.

1. Trip Requests – Paul explained this graph represents the percentage of trips that were actually completed after being scheduled. It also includes a breakdown of passenger generated reasons why the trips were not completed for the quarter October through December 2008. The pie graph indicates approximately 80% if trips were completed, 9% were canceled, 9% were refused and 1% were no shows.

James Campbell Quick asked of the 10% of trips that are not completed due to cancellation could this give opportunity to schedule a prior refused trip. Paul Price explained that because we schedule trips in advance it is complicated to re-book a prior refusal.

Tim Jones explained how on-time performance was measured in the past and how it is measured now.

Marilyn Priddy asked for an explanation of a cancellation and how it affected other rides when her son canceled for a period of two weeks. Paul explained that having cancelled in advance, the time slot vacated could be utilized for other trip requests. Mrs. Priddy commented that in October 2008, parents cancelled rides due to refusal and took their special person to the location in their own vehicles. She felt the cancellation rate may be inflated. She has seen improvement since October, so the cancellation percentage may be lower in the next quarter. She was also confused about the pick-up time because the bus always arrives at different times and the pick-up time is continuously changing.

Martin Kelly asked what percentage of “passenger initiated cancellations” occurred 24 hours prior to the trip. Paul Price explained that approximately 70% of cancellations initiated by the passenger are received 24 hours in advance. The other 30% are received within the 24 hours prior to the scheduled trip time.

2. Trip Request Summary – The goal of 95% of trips scheduled was not met during the first quarter. This is due to increased passenger demand, limitations on driver resources and budgetary restraint.

3. Refusal Summary – The refusals are broken down per month. The average rate for the first quarter was 9%, however since October this rate has gone down, which is encouraging.

4. Percentage of Trips “On Time” – Handitran maintained an average of 91.5% on time for the first quarter. Tim Jones explained that prior to Ecolane, pick-up times were approximate by looking at a clock or watch and writing down the time. Ecolane captures the exact time. If a driver is one second late, the system calculates a late trip.

Marilyn Priddy asked if the percentage was calculated from the promised time or the pick-up time because the pick-up times are constantly changing. Paul answered that the percentage is calculated from the promised time.

Mary Odom asked if the new system calculates a late drop-off. Paul Price explained that the system only captures the pick-up time to report lateness and not the drop off time.

5. Total Weekday Trips – 7,778 in October, 6,181 in November and 6,466 in December. There has been a drop in requests, but it's getting back to the threshold.

6. Trips in Bus Vs Taxi –53% Bus and 47% Taxi. There has been no change.

7. Pantego Trips totaled 402 for the first quarter, which is average.

8. Trinity Railway Express Train Station – We have noticed a decline in the number of requests for TRE in the first quarter. October requests totaled 89, November 58, and December 47.

Riley Henderson requested a comparison from the previous year.

Kassem Elkhilil asked if the routes were zoned to maximize trips. Paul Price explained that trips are grouped according to location, destination, and priority. Priority being within the 30 minute window of the requested time or appointment time if scheduled according to a drop off time.

9. Fort Worth Bus Stops (Lancaster and Eastchase) – Of the 53 requests we were encouraged to see we were able to transported 41. There is an extreme distance in offering this service and ride share is difficult to do during these trips.

C. Ecolane Project Update

The report mentions that the vendor has worked hard to get back the levels of on time performance and to reduce ride time per passenger. Paul added that user error was the problem in most cases. Our staff was not familiar inputting data into the system. Once staff became familiar with the system, the glitches were resolved quickly.

Paul advised that testing with selected passengers will start for our web-based interface pilot program to take place within the next month which will allow Handitran customers to schedule, check times and cancel their rides via the internet.

Tim Jones added by the end of this year Handitran will begin testing another aspect of the software whereby passengers will have their estimated time of arrival text to them. This will be an additional tool for passenger use.

Mr. Jones added, when the system crashes, it buffers. We have 45 minutes to re-coup. By the end of next week all fail safe factors will be in place. Paul added that we can access from anyplace that has internet access and even from a blackberry. This gives us confidence in the system. He added that the system shines where it reacts when a bus is taken out of service.

Alan LeBlanc requested an internet demonstration at the next meeting.

D. 1st Quarter FY 08/09 Report to Council

The board reviewed the report.

Alan LeBlanc made a motion to accept the report as written, Riley Henderson seconded. All were in favor.

III. Public Participation

Ryan Shrauner, Handitran Passenger, brought up that driver's have to bypass a passenger's house when the driver has another passenger to pick up. Tim Jones explained that the software vendor is making adjustments, fine tuning, and perfecting the system to reduce the time a passenger is on board. They are re-geo-coding addresses and we have had fewer complaints on this issue. In the next several months, as the system matures, it will be an occasional issue.

He also stated the phone is silent and he doesn't know if he is still connected or on hold. He cannot hear the music if there is music. His hold time has been around 10 minutes. Paul Price explained the reason is it's an old CD player that we utilize. Paul will check the CD player.

Martin Kelly advised the board that Tim Jones would not be with us at the next board meeting due to retirement. Mr. Kelly congratulated Mr. Jones on behalf of the board. Tim Jones had words. He extended an invitation to board members to view a demonstration of the new software in action at the Handitran office located at 1101 W. Main Street.

Kassem Elkhalil advised of his absence at the next board meeting. He will be out of the country May 9-June 1.

IV. Board Requests for Future Agenda Items

1. Taxi Cab Program
2. Alicia Winkelblech
 - * Future Transportation Plans
 - *Report on New Stadium and Parking
3. Stimulus Package for Handitran
4. Live Demonstration of Ecolane

The next meeting is Thursday, May 14, 2009 at 3:00p.m., at this same location.

III. Adjournment

Alan LeBlanc motioned to adjourn the meeting; James Campbell Quick seconded.
The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:44p.m.

NOTE: Minutes of all Special Transit Advisory Board meetings are a matter of public record and are kept on file in the Handitran Administrative Office, 1101 West Main Street, Arlington, Texas 76013. Any Board member or interested party has the right to review these minutes at the Handitran Administrative Office.
