

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Wednesday, May 16, 2018

10:15 a.m.

Quincy Street Station

Committee Members present: Libby Adams, Mike Nolting, Dennis Tenpenny, Brian Snodderly and Shelby Fry.

Committee Members absent: Nancy Johnson, Mary Thomas, Linda Kehres.

TMTA Staff present: Denise Ensley, Al Bradley, and Elizabeth Manson.

The meeting was called to order by Denise Ensley at 10:20 a.m. Guest present was Deborah Dawkins, Executive Director of the East Topeka Senior Center.

Ms. Ensley asked Ms. Dawkins if she would like to become an agency member. Ms. Dawkins replied yes, transit is a big issue with seniors and she found the last meeting informative. The East Topeka Senior Center is spending the majority of their funding and hours taking people to their medical appointments. Ms. Dawkins welcomes alternative solutions for their transportation needs.

Ms. Ensley explained that Topeka Metro has been discussing entering into a partnership with the senior centers to help coordinate transportation with the centers. However, the issue of how to determine costs for passengers coming from different facilities is a huge concern. Ms. Dawkins stated they were utilizing Debbie's Ready Ride but she will be closing the end of May due to insurance issues. Ms. Ensley stated TILRC would like to see all cab companies accessible, however, the cab companies feel they are held to higher regulations than the smaller individual companies.

Ms. Ensley announced that Topeka Metro did an open house for the Long Range Transit Plan with an interactive map that allowed people to create their own routes. Computers were set up to allow people to complete an online survey through Metro Quest. As each question was answered, the next question was based off how you answered the previous question. Topeka Metro received 618 completed surveys.

Ms. Ensley asked the committee members if they or someone they know would like to participate in an accessibility video that would be posted on our website to explain the accessibility features on our buses. Mike Nolting volunteered. Libby Adams asked how a non-disabled person who cannot step very high was able to get on the bus. Ms. Ensley explained anyone may request the ramp on the bus be deployed. She further explained how the ramp works on both the fixed route and lift. The fixed route buses also have a kneeling feature, which lowers the height of the bus.

Ms. Ensley announced Topeka Metro has provided training for and leased on of its MV-1 accessible staff vehicles to Capital City Taxi (CCT) so they are now able to transport anyone who might need an accessible vehicle to and from our SOTO businesses. Beginning June 1st, CCT will be utilizing the MV-1 to help transport Topeka Metro Lift passengers in wheelchairs and scooters during our peak travel times. CCT was given permission to install a meter in the MV-1 to do accessible private taxi trips at the same cost as an ambulatory passenger.

Ms. Ensley acknowledged how much construction is going on. She explained that operators are supposed to be announcing detours and deviations to passengers during their routes. Mr. Nolting stated he felt that was not being done. Ms. Ensley asked Al Bradley to remind operators of this practice. Ms. Ensley announced Topeka Metro has a Safety and Security Work Group (SSWG). This group gets together to discuss and provide possible solutions to various issues. Ms. Ensley invited the committee to forward any safety or accessibility issues or concerns them or their clients have to forward them to her and she will present them to the SSWG.

Ms. Ensley announced we now have four Camp Metro counselors. The camp counselors attend events with summer camps, schools and church groups. They teach and promote transit through How to Rides and other promotional activities.

Ms. Ensley announced beginning June 7th Topeka Metro will be providing a free shuttle to and from the Midwest Health Aquatic Center every Tuesday and Thursday through August 9th. Ms. Dawkins inquired how the shuttle would be publicized. Ms. Ensley answered through bookmarks distributed through the schools, the 501 newsletter, bus signage, flyers at Quincy Street Station and Shawnee County Parks and Rec will be on the red couch with an announcement.

Ms. Dawkins asked why she would see a bus south of 45th Street. Ms. Ensley answered that Topeka Metro was looking at/testing routes, or they are taking our new operators to Forbes Field for training.

Ms. Ensley presented the March 2018 ridership report. Fixed route ridership was over 103,000 which is down compared to March last year. There is still an increase with the 24 hour passes, however 40% – 50% still uses cash. Lift ridership is down slightly.

Ms. Ensley discussed various upcoming events at Topeka Metro:

- Seniors Ride Free (5/1 thru 5/31) – fixed route only
- Kids Ride Free (5/15 thru 8/15) – fixed route only
- Memorial Day (5/28) – All Topeka Metro facilities closed
- CCT begins lift trips (6/1)
- Deer Creek Reading Route – Every Tuesday (6/5 thru 8/7)
- Midwest Health Aquatic Shuttle – Every Tuesday and Thursday (6/7 thru 8/9)
- Dump the Pump (6/21) – fixed route only
- Independence Day (7/4) – All Topeka Metro facilities closed

Ms. Dawkins asked how she could show some of her seniors how to ride the bus. Ms. Ensley explained that they could board the bus and ride it around once or she can schedule a How to Ride at QSS with Kris Luber.

Upcoming meetings were scheduled as follows at **10:15 a.m. at QSS**

- **Wednesday, July 18th**
- **Wednesday, September 12th**
- **Wednesday, November 14th**

The meeting adjourned at 11:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Manson
Topeka Metro Operations Assistant