

Minutes
Citizens Advisory Board
Tuesday, June 25, 2019

I. **Roll Call** 10:09 a.m.

Present: Adam Kerman, Jemal Powell, Sheila Schwartz, Lucille Zuccherro, Richard Bascomb

Via Conference call: Ericka Williams

Absent: Sheila Schultz, Mir Ali

Other Attendees: Rocky Donahue, Charlotte Obodzinski, Ryan Ruehle,

II. **Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Powell made a motion to approve agenda, seconded by Mr. Bascomb. Motion carried

III. **Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Schwartz made a motion to approve the minutes with Mr. Powell seconding the motion. Motion carried.

IV. **Chairmen's Report**

Mr. Kerman attended a meeting in Harvey. He related information concerning some experimental changes to Metra schedules.

V. **Member Comments**

Mr. Powell stated he had attended the last Pace board meeting at the new scheduled time last week. At that meeting it was announced Ventra would be worked into the system to include ADA and Dial-a-Ride services. Mr. Kerman asked if Mr. Powell if he is going to attend the next meeting of the RTA paratransit meeting, because he would not be able to attend. Mr. Powell said he would attend.

VI. **Capital Bill Update**

Mr. Donahue updated the members on the Capital infrastructure bill recently passed by the general assembly. The bill amounted to \$45 billion dollars. This included the gas tax being doubled from \$0.19 to \$0.38, and \$1 added to a pack of cigarettes, among others. The region is set to receive \$2.7 billion in state bond money. This translates to \$220M - \$230M in on-going funding. Pace received \$228M in earmarks. This will include monies to improve/construct the Wheeling garage, North Shore garage, I55 garage, ADA

paratransit and transfer locations, River Division, Southwest Division, Route 294 Bus on Shoulder and Harvey Transit Center. The governor is signing the bill on Friday in three different regions in Illinois including Moline/ Rock Island, southern Illinois and Joliet. Mr. Powell asked if any monies would go to vehicle replacement with Mr. Donahue answering by stating state money would be used to purchase and improve infrastructure and Pace would continue to use federal funds for the purchase of new buses and other equipment.

Mr. Powell asked about the Harvey transit center. Donahue replied he met with the Mayor of Harvey yesterday, who was very excited about the possibilities of updating the center including addressing the possibility of a Transit Oriented Development for the area. Mr. Donahue suggested a joint venture with Metra could perhaps get a “better bang for the buck” by coordinating their efforts

Regarding the Joliet Intermodal Center, Mr. Powell asked when the project would be finished. Mr. Donahue reminded the members that the project has yet to be started due to many factors. Mr. Kerman wanted to be put on record as saying this project has been mismanaged from day one. He also reminded Mr. Donahue the location of the project was predicated on the garage being in its current location and there is a good possibility the garage will be moved. Mr. Donahue is meeting with Joliet for an intergovernmental agreement that may get to our board, optimistically, in August. He also mentioned there may be another location opened to handle the I55 corridor.

Mr. Powell asked about a more permanent solution to a problem at Orland Square. Mr. Donahue explained that the mall was not happy with buses laying over on the property. Pace has reached an agreement to build a small transit center behind the mall facing east which would allow a pedestrian walkway to the mall. Pace has committed \$600,000 to the project to make this happen. This work will be similar to Lombard with shelters and other amenities.

VII. **Pulse Update**

Charlotte Obodzinski showed pictures from the field including the vertical marker, Golf Mill Mall and Dempster Street. Another picture showed station construction along the route for the platform that is being used by Pace and CTA.

There is a rail for the drivers’ safety, a tactile tread for people with visual impairments, as well as a blue tag on the pavement to show where the front door should be opened. The vehicles are starting to be wrapped.

Service will begin August 11, 2019. Openings at the Chicago stations will be rolled in as they are completed.

Ms. Obodzinski stated marketing efforts will include billboards, exposure at the Polonia Center and will include more targeted internet advertising. External Relations is heading up the coordination efforts.

VIII. **Driving Innovation: The Pace Strategic Vision Plan Update**

Ryan Ruehle, project manager, provided his presentation, similar to one given to the Pace board in May. When complete, *Driving Innovation* will become the successor plan to *Vision 2020*, which has guided Pace's strategic plan for nearly 20 years. Pace has hired a consultant team led by Sam Schwartz Consultants, and assisted by three sub-consultants. The Schwartz team is assisting Pace project staff, who report to the Pace board, as well as the board of directors committee on planning.

There are five working groups consisting of staff from each business unit. In January workshops discussed Pace's most pressing issues. The top five issues identified were 1) Technology; 2) Focusing on successful Bus-on-Shoulder and Pulse service models; 3) Internal agency communication; 4) Reducing the instability of Pace's funding structure; and 5) Communications and customers. More than half of the scoped work items have been completed or are in progress with an expected completion date of January, 2020. The final plan will contain a 5-year action plan with specific details for initiating the plan recommendations.

There are two sets of project goals – The Organization goals include Adaptability, Collaboration, Diversity, Environmental Stewardship, Fiscal Solvency and Transparency. The Service goals include Accessibility, Dependability, Equity, Productivity and Responsiveness.

One of the agency's challenges is capturing large enough passenger loads to justify traditional bus service. Pace is spending nearly three times as much money for ridership in low demand areas. Pace receives more than 90 percent of riders in medium and high demand areas, which together represent only a quarter of the service area.

Paratransit trip flows are concentrated, primarily in the City of Chicago and in particular on the south side of the city. There is also information that shows where delays of Paratransit service are most concentrated as well as the density of trips on a per square mile basis.

Moving forward, Pace will update its strategic plan every few years, rather than waiting two decades like we did up until now.

Mr. Kerman interjected comments about changing off-street parking requirements and other zoning requirements to aid Pace service in areas that do not have walking paths. He opined that the solution has to be Dial-a-Ride in the far suburban areas. Fixed route in the rural area just does not work. Mr. Kerman suggested the current dispatching is a prime example of not getting dispatch right. The day-ahead reservation requirement is not a last-mile solution. Additionally, having to transfer between buses is an impediment to efficient service. It is not the transfer, per se, but the amount of time waiting for the transfer trip, particularly in the suburbs.

IX. **Public Comment**

No Public comment

X. Adjournment

Ms. Schwartz made a motion to adjourn with a second from Mr. Powell at 11:18-
Motioned carried.