

Minutes
Citizens Advisory Board
Tuesday, September 17, 2019

I. Roll Call

Present: Adam Kerman, Jemal Powell, Sheila Schwartz,

Absent: Lucille Zucchero, Richard Bascomb, Ericka Williams, Sheila Schultz, Mir Ali

Other Attendees: Rocky Donahue, Melinda Metzger, Charlotte Obodzinski, Erik Lewellyn and Christian Turner.

II. Approval of Agenda

No quorum present to approve agenda.

III. Approval of Minutes

No quorum present to approve minutes.

IV. Chairman's Report

Chairman Kerman allowed a change of items on the agenda.

V. Member Comments

None

VI. 2020 Budget

The 2020 budget is balanced with no fare increases or any service cuts to balance the budget. Due to poor performance, some routes may be eliminated or restructured. Public hearings will be held to gather feedback.

The year will end with a \$1.4M deficit, but funds will be used from the general fund to balance the books. On the revenue side, the source of shortfall appears to be with internet sales and the legacy system, which does not meet today's needs. Ridership is down 5% not because of the legacy system but to some extent with rideshare like uber, lyft and the like; working from home reduces rider numbers and suburban corporations are moving back to Chicago from the suburbs. Additionally, the state's funding for half fare and free rides has gone down from \$35M to \$17M, PTF funding to support sales tax, cut by \$5M, also did not help.

Realigning of routes will take place in Phase 2 of the North Shore Planning Initiative. Trips in south Cook will be restructured and savings will be reinvested into Route 350.

Chairman Kerman wanted to know how many trips will be added to Route 350. Ms. Snorden state she will forward the information to him.

Mr. Donahue continued to enumerate the poorly performing routes throughout the region being reviewed for elimination: Routes 186 and 187 in DuPage County, Route 540 in Kane County, Route 669 in Cook County and Route 806 in McHenry County. Saturday service is the focus for cuts on Route 509 in Will County, Route 559 in Kane County and Route 570 in Lake County.

Chairman Kerman expressed his concerns and offered some alternatives for those remote areas. Ms. Snorden and Mr. Donahue added information about Uber and Lyft models under review.

The ADA paratransit budget is balanced to RTA marks. We are in the midst of renegotiating new contracts and are projecting a 7% growth in the city over 2019. Suburban ADA is just under \$195M vs \$250 for the general budget. Subsidy costs are close to fixed route, but the operating budget has yet to reach equity.

Capital Budget will be \$340M over the next 5 years, which is almost 9% compared to the historical rate of 5%, including Federal dollars, giving us a budget of around \$500M. This is unheard of in recent years. Pace plans to expand garages in the Northwest area with the purchase of the Wheeling plant, expanding the Elgin facility to allow us to eliminate the lease of additional space in East Dundee. South division needs more space and we will expand the PNRs for BOS.

VII. South Cook County Fare and Service Integration

Ms. Snorden gave a high-level overview. It is understood ridership is down on Metra, particularly on the Rock Island and Electric lines. There were 2 town hall meetings held earlier in the year.

VIII. ADA Paratransit Technology

Ms. Metzger reported that \$20M in new state funding is earmarked for technology updates and transfer locations for paratransit services. Pace is working to upgrade the system to Trapeze level 18; we are currently at level 14. With the recent influx of state funds, this will be possible. Interactive voice response is new for 4th quarter 2019. Tripcheck will be improved to give real time information within one half hour of arrival time. It will allow riders to change and cancel trips on their computers. Ventra fare payments will be allowed on ADA paratransit trips. Online trip booking will be via desktop and mobile app.

IX. Pulse Milwaukee Update

Ms. Obodzinski provided the Pulse Milwaukee Update. Chicago permitting issues have been resolved so Pace is moving forward with Milwaukee Pulse station construction. Construction is completed for the northbound stations. Dempster line had its kickoff last

week. Work should be started in 2021. The environmental 12-month review of the Halsted line has begun. BRT could be its own service along the Halsted section. 95th Street line has been tabled for the moment, so funding is being transferred to the Halsted section and means that 95th street won't come up again until the end of 2020. The next three projects are Cermak Rd., Roosevelt and Harlem.

Chairman Kerman offered observations regarding the new Pulse service as he rode many times during the first few days, as well as connector routes to the Pulse service.

X. Public Comment

None

XI. Adjournment