

FINAL

TRANSIT ADVISORY BOARD MEETING September 23, 2024

TAB Members Present

Allison Bickers
James Darden
Walter Kolis
Connor Manthey
Ken Marlin
Mark Riggans
Cherie Newton
Thomas Shibley
Jeff Souther
Matt Stigall

TAB Members Not Present

LaSandra Boykin
Forrest Shealy

Cobb County and Others Present

Morgan Simmons, DOT
Theo Letman, DOT
Marcia Lankford, DOT
Mark Lambert, DOT
Jamorris R. Brice, Public Guest

I. Call to Order:

Chair Allison Bickers called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. with a quorum of TAB members present.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 22, 2024 TAB Meeting: **Chair Bickers** requested approval of the April meeting minutes. **Mr. Kolis** made a motion and **Vice Chair Marlin** seconded to accept the April 22, 2024 meeting minutes as submitted. All TAB members present voted unanimously to approve the April 22, 2024 meeting minutes as submitted.

June 5, 2024 TAB Special (Called) Meeting: **Chair Bickers** requested approval the June Special (Called) meeting minutes. **Mr. Kolis** made a motion and **Vice Chair Marlin** seconded to accept the June 5, 2024 meeting minutes as submitted. All TAB members present voted unanimously to approve the June 5, 2024 Special (Called) meeting minutes as submitted.

June 24, 2024 TAB Meeting: **Chair Bickers** indicated that there was not a quorum at the June 24, 2024 meeting. **Mr. Kolis** made a motion and **Vice Chair Marlin** seconded to table the minutes for the June 24, 2024 meeting. All TAB members present voted unanimously to table the minutes from the June 24, 2024 TAB meeting.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chair Bickers stated that she received no committee reports. **Chair Bickers** followed up on an email sent to the Ridership Committee regarding a request from **Ms. Simmons** that TAB provide input on the data format for ridership data to be submitted to TAB.

Mr. Manthey agreed to wait for **Ms. Simmons** to walk through the handout information during her presentation to get a better understanding of the request for ridership data format.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Secretary Souther stated that the draft TAB Annual Report for 2023 was emailed to TAB members for them to review and provide suggestions/changes/edits by October 11, 2024, with the report to be completed by the end of October.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Bickers explained the guidelines for public comment to the guest.

Mr. Jamorris R. Brice, a Paratransit rider in Cobb County since April 2024, expressed a complaint about rude Paratransit drivers and requested that the drivers receive customer service training. **Mr. Brice** stated that the Reservationist sometimes fail to inform the drivers that a lift is needed. **Mr. Brice** requested consideration for the CobbLinc service to be expanded from Kennesaw to Canton Road and in Powder Springs from Austell Road to East-West Connector. **Mr. Brice** requested that drivers be tracked, as he stated that the driver falsely reported that he was a no-show when he said no driver showed up at the scheduled time. **Mr. Brice** stated that it should be mandatory that CobbLinc bus riders receive an email about TAB meetings to address their personal issues with the service.

Mr. Stigall shared with **Mr. Brice** that MSPLOST is on the ballot in November which would provide additional funding and services to expand the routes. **Mr. Brice** was not aware of MSPLOST and of it being on the ballot in November.

Mr. Darden requested to discuss **Mr. Brice's** complaints at this meeting and requested a report from DOT on the complaints.

Chair Bickers recommended that TAB listen to the new reporting template from DOT and that the Ridership Committee review and discuss **Mr. Brice's** complaints prior to the October TAB meeting and to present some recommendations for solutions at the October TAB meeting.

Ms. Simmons requested for **Mr. Brice** to meet with DOT after the TAB meeting and she would document the details of his complaints and DOT would follow up with TAB prior to the next TAB meeting.

Mr. Mark Riggins informed **Mr. Brice** that all County Board meetings are listed on the County website. **Chair Bickers** informed **Mr. Brice** that the TAB will meet the 4th Monday for October and November.

TAB members discussed the TAB committees not meeting.

Chair Bickers reviewed the TAB committees and requested individuals to chair the committees. **Mr. Manthey** volunteered to chair the Ridership Committee. **Mr. Stigall** volunteered to chair the MSPLOST Committee. **Mr. Shibley** volunteered to chair the Planning and Communication Committee. **Chair Bickers** stated that **Mr. Shealy** is chair of the Bylaws Committee.

Ms. Newton requested that the member rosters be provided as an Excel version.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. DOT Department Update

Ms. Simmons announced that CobbLinc celebrated its 35th Anniversary on August 2, 2024 with Transdev's operations staff and Transit Division staff with lunch and t-shirts with a 35th Anniversary patch. The TAB members will be provided a t-shirt with patch also.

Ms. Simmons provided an update on capital projects: AVL upgrade is underway, Paratransit software testing and data migration, received Board approval for bus shelter upgrade, KSU Agreement is scheduled for Board approval on 10/22/24. All Board approvals necessary for the Microtransit project have been completed, vendor (Via Mobility) has been selected, and awaiting execution of the contract. The Security Guard and Security Camera projects are targeted for December Board approval. Transfer centers are underway with site selections. **Ms. Simmons** stated that the launch of the Microtransit

service is the next phase and TAB will be invited to the launch and see the vehicles. When Microtransit is launched, the Flex Service will cease.

Ms. Newton stated that the current App is not accessible and inquired if the App is accessible.

Ms. Simmons replied that the App and the vehicles are currently being tested and that maybe **Ms. Newton** could test the App for CobbLinc.

Ms. Simmons reported that all Paratransit Arboc and Promaster vehicles have been received and are fully deployed.

Ms. Simmons reported that full education efforts are underway for MSPLOST, and collateral and yard signs are accessible and available for TAB members. **Ms. Simmons** showed TAB members a video of the Microtransit service that has been created for education of the MSPLOST. Public Service Announcements (PSAs) will be forthcoming. MSPLOST educational events are ongoing and are listed on the County website.

Mr. Stigall added that very few people know about MSPLOST and requested TAB members to inform people that MSPLOST is on the November ballot and to refer people to the County website.

Vice Chair Marlin stated that YouTube and social media would be a good way to provide visibility of MSPLOST to the public. He stated that DOT could have posted an ad of the benefits of MSPLOST as awareness to educate the public versus the negative comments by the Marietta Daily Journal.

Ms. Simmons requested TAB to assist in educating and informing the public. Additional means of visibility with use of water bill messaging, electronic billboards, the videos, CIDs, transfer centers, and public events at libraries, etc.

Vice Chair Marlin stated that for the record, he is not saying that DOT is passive with the awareness/visibility of the MSPLOST.

Ms. Simmons provided transit terms and definitions, per TAB's request. **Ms. Simmons** provided an overview of Monthly Ridership per route and/or service type, average vehicle load per route, farebox recovery ratio, revenue per route and rider, the OTP per route, complaints per 100 passengers, preventable accidents, and non-preventable accidents. DOT staff utilized 2022 as a measurement barometer.

Ms. Simmons will provide the years when the farebox was free to riders at the October TAB meeting.

Ms. Simmons will report back to TAB if all the hotels are still contributing for the Circulator routes.

Mr. Stigall asked if there are some routes being cut?

Mr. Lambert stated that the ATL is undergoing a service study and may determine that some of their routes may no longer be necessary. **Ms. Simmons** said that there is enough capacity to handle the load.

Ms. Simmons reported that the farebox recovery data is solely the cost of all operational expenses.

Mr. Lambert explained why the low numbers because the fareboxes were removed and July had both collections and there were no spares.

Mr. Souther recommended that DOT document the information of data anomalies.

Mr. Riggins asked what happens if the fareboxes break down.

Mr. Lambert stated that there are farebox spares. **Mr. Lambert** said the data provided is for cash only and will get better over time.

Ms. Simmons stated that language will be added to explain the definition for the OTP data.

Mr. Darden requested a breakdown of the customer service complaints data.

Mr. Kolis asked if the data provided is for complaints in total or per 100 because the numbers appear to be very high.

Ms. Simmons said the language will be cleaned up to show better what the data numbers represent.

Vice Chair Marlin asked what the incentives for the contractor are.

Mr. Letman stated that the contractor receives penalties and liquidated damages.

Ms. Simmons requested that Ridership Committee provide their final comments after their meeting on the reporting template.

Chair Bickers recommended TAB members not on the Ridership Committee to also provide comments.

Ms. Simmons reported on the upcoming Travel Training event and provided the upcoming agenda items for the BOC to approve.

B. NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, **Chair Bickers** adjourned the TAB meeting at 8:25 p.m. The next TAB meeting is October 28, 2024.

October 28, 2024

Approved