

**IOWA NORTHLAND REGIONAL
TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

TUESDAY, MAY 11, 2021

MINUTES

Durant called the meeting of the Iowa Northland Regional Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) to order at 1:00 p.m.

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| Meeting Attendees: | Lisa Sesterhenn | Black Hawk County Health Department |
| | Stephanie Houk Sheetz | City of Cedar Falls |
| | Aric Schroeder | City of Waterloo |
| | Todd Rickert | Grundy County Social Services |
| | Kyle Clabby-Kane | Iowa Workforce Development |
| | David Sturch | MET Transit |
| | Lon Kammeyer | MET Transit Board |
| | Kyle Durant | INRCOG |
| | Codie Leseman | INRCOG |

The first item was to review and consider approval of the agenda. It was moved by Sheetz, seconded by Schroeder to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Next was to review and consider approval of the minutes for the February 25, 2021 Transit Advisory Committee meeting. It was moved by Clabby-Kane, seconded by Sheetz to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was a presentation on the MET Transit fixed route restructuring. Sturch and Leseman presented on the route restructuring. Sheetz asked about public input. Sturch said the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requires a public input process for any major route changes, so MET Transit would make changes after public input is received. Sheetz asked about the timing of the changes in Waterloo and Cedar Falls. Sturch said MET Transit will keep the Cedar Falls route intact for now. There was discussion about splitting Route 9 into two separate routes, but that would create a budget issue. There are no additional routes planned in Waterloo, so the operating cost is expected to be similar. Durant asked if the TAC could assist in marketing and education outreach. Sheetz said Cedar Falls has been more active with external communications and has hired a new communications staff person, so the city could post announcements at kiosks and on social media. Leseman said everyone on the TAC can help articulate to their clients and colleagues that the routes will change and that the changes are meant to reduce travel times.

Next was a presentation on the survey results of the SNAP-Ed Physical Activity Access (PAA) project. Leseman presented the results from the 2020 PAA survey of seniors with low incomes in Waterloo. The survey results show that seniors with low incomes tend to ride the bus and walk more frequently than the overall population which emphasizes the need for improving transit and pedestrian accommodations. Seniors living in predominantly Black neighborhoods reported bicycling at a higher rate than the overall senior population surveyed. Leseman said a second round of surveys is being planned for summer 2021.

The next item on the agenda was agency updates. Durant asked if there are any updates on the bus benches. Schroeder said the City has continued to work on corridor projects and incorporating benches or shelters as part of those overall reconstruction projects. For the overall bus bench system, discussions have been in limbo. There is some desire to send out a request for proposals for a company to take on the responsibilities of owning, maintaining, and removing snow at bench locations in exchange for advertising – which is essentially the system the City had previously. However, that system did not work well, as snow removal was not a priority for the company. The alternative is no bench advertising, and the city bids out the snow removal. The downfall is that would involve a decent expense with no advertising revenue. If this alternative were selected, the number of benches installed may be limited. Leseman asked if this is a discussion that should be brought forward and if INRCOG staff can help. Sturch

said he likes the corridor improvements and MET Transit can work with the cities on the route changes. Leseman said it would make sense to install benches along new routes where multiple buses travel such as the Crossroads area and the North Crossing area. Durant recommended keeping this item for future agendas.

Durant said the City of Waterloo is working with the company Bird to implement an electric scooter rental program focused on the downtown Waterloo area. The City hopes to get the project rolling in June. Leseman said Main Street Waterloo, the Leisure Services Department, and the Traffic Department have been leading the effort, and they will be seeking City Council approval at an upcoming council meeting.

Durant said Ben Kvigne, Director of Transit for OnBoard Public Transit (previously RTC), is resigning. Sam Barrett is the new Transit Director, and his first day is today. INRCOG staff will make sure he is invited to future meetings.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Codie Leseman
Acting Secretary