

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, October 22, 2014, for the purpose of holding the Bi-Annual Transit Meeting.

Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:02 p.m. The meeting was held in Room 201 of the Greenbelt Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Council Members Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Rodney M. Roberts, and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan. Council Member Edward Putens arrived later in the meeting. Council Member Judith Davis was out of town.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: David Moran, Assistant City Manager and Terri Hruby, Assistant Director of Planning.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: James Hamre and Ginger Murphy, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA); Lou Farber and Nikolajs Timrots, Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T); Matt Johnson and Anna Socrates, Transit Riders United of Greenbelt (TRU-G); Tauren Dyson, Prince George's Sentinel; Tom White, Greenbelt News Review; Bill Orleans, Eric (no last name provided), Brian Gibbons and Steven Holland.

Mr. Farber provided an overview of the County transit system. He indicated there were 410 bus shelters County wide. He noted a \$2.3 Million grant for ADA related improvements such as bus pads.

Mayor Jordan asked about funding support from the State. Mr. Farber responded he felt good about State funding, but was nervous about County funding given a recent announcement about a budget shortfall.

There was discussion of Veolia and it was announced their name had changed to Transdev. Mayor Jordan asked about Transdev's contract with the County. Mr. Farber responded that they were in the option phase and he expected the contract to last another year. Mr. Herling asked if the driver issues had been resolved. Mr. Farber responded that DPW&T met regularly with Transdev to address any issues.

Mr. Hamre introduced Ginger Murphy who is the new service planner for Prince George's County. He stated that the Silver Line was operating as expected and commented on new Bus Rapid Transit lines in Arlington and Alexandria, Virginia.

Mr. Hamre reported on Metro Momentum which began in FY 2015. He indicated the average bus age was 7.2 years old and their target was 7.5 years. Mr. Roberts asked about types of buses WMATA used. Mr. Hamre responded that the goal was a 50% CNG and 50% diesel-hybrid fleet.

Mr. Hamre reported a 4% growth in ridership. He indicated the FY 2016 budget process was underway and indicated that staff had put in a request for Sunday service in Greenbelt. There was discussion of capital projects. Mr. Hamre stated that the test track contractor had experienced labor and delivery issues and the project is behind schedule. He expected it would be completed in six months.

Mr. Hamre noted a study of the C2 bus line has recently been completed and recommendations would be forthcoming.

Council reviewed the County ridership and performance data. Looking at the October 2014 report, Mayor Jordan questioned the Route 11 ridership decrease. Mr. Farber responded he would investigate. There were comments that it could be weather related. Mr. Timrots also indicated that there had been some problems with drivers not identifying the buses properly and this could account for some of the

decrease.

Mr. Johnson stated that there had been a problem with the 15X bus not stopping at the Greenway Center stop. Mr. Holland reported that was still occurring as recently as last Thursday.

Ms. Hruby asked about the \$2.3 million ADA grant and if the City could benefit from it. Mr. Farber responded that if there were particular stops the City had identified, there might be a way to partner. Mr. Hamre encouraged Greenbelt to consider a grant application to fund bus stop improvements.

There was discussion of complaints and how they are addressed. Mr. Hamre indicated that complaints or comments about Metro bus or rail could be made via phone, online and with a twitter account. Mr. Farber responded that complaints about TheBus could be lodged by phone or using countyclick on the County website. Mr. Herling noted he usually received responses from WMATA to his complaints within a couple of hours.

Mr. Herling asked about Sunday service. Mr. Hamre responded that \$500,000 was requested for Sunday service. He said hearings on the budget would likely happen in January or February.

Mr. Orleans stated that there is a pot of money at WMATA available for specific bus stop improvements. Mr. Orleans asked Mr. Hamre to discuss the nature of the Sunday Service proposal. He asked about bicycle racks on County buses. Mr. Farber responded that the County still planned to install these racks. It was suggested that support for this service could be expressed at WMATA hearings as well as to the Maryland Department of Transportation and Maryland General Assembly.

Mr. Johnson thanked Council for holding the work session and thanked the transit agencies for sending their staff. He passed along the following concerns of TRU-G members.

1. Earlier bus service on the G routes.
2. Stressed that Sunday service was essential and reiterated their support for it.
3. Appreciated the late night G service and wanted it expanded to Saturday nights
4. Requested driver discretion to discharge passengers at stops closer to the Greenbelt Metro Station entrance, especially in inclement weather.
5. Requested ½ hour headways on midday on the 16 Route.
6. The proposed FBI development should consider transit riders first and not last.
7. He asked when the community would be considered in the FBI development process. Mr. Hamre indicated that when Metro had a formal proposal there would be a process for public input.
8. Regarding comments on Planet Metro blog – will WMATA shed routes in Prince George's County? Mr. Hamre responded that a study would be conducted.
9. Lack of shade in the bus loops at the Greenbelt Station was a problem. He suggested taller hedges or anything that would provide shade.
10. TRU-G was pleased with Route 11 and how it was working. They were also pleased with the timed transfer.
11. TRU-G was happy with the City's Shuttle UM program.

Mr. Putens asked about bus service for the new residents at Greenbelt Station. Ms. Hruby indicated that this was likely waiting for the signalization and intersection improvements at Greenbelt Road and Greenbelt Station Parkway.

Mayor Jordan noted the parking increase at Greenbelt Metro and asked how the funds would be used. Mr. Farber indicated the County had requested increases to build up funding for its transit oriented development program.

Mayor Jordan thanked the representatives for attending the work session. He suggested Council meet with WMATA and DPW&T in six months.

The meeting ended at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*David E. Moran
Assistant City Manager*