

**MINUTES— FOX CITIES TRANSIT COMMISSION**  
May 22, 2013

**Commissioners Present**

Chairman Chuck Rundquist  
Rick Detienne  
Lynn Erickson  
Aldersperson Jeff Jirschele  
Carol Kasimor  
Aldersperson Kyle Lobner  
Kevin Vonck

**Valley Transit Staff**

Deborah Wetter, General Manager  
Sal LaPuma, Assistant General Manager  
Debra Ebben, Administrative Services Manager  
Amy Erickson, Paratransit Coordinator  
Lisa Laughlin, Communication Technician

**Commissioners Excused**

Carolyn Mewhorter (Vice-Chairperson)

**Others Present**

Sandy Behnke, Human Resource Director  
Chris Behrens, Assistant City Attorney

Chairman Chuck Rundquist called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There being no questions or corrections to the minutes of the May 8, 2013 meeting, the minutes were approved (7/0).

The Transit Commission welcomed a new member, Rick Detienne.

**APPEARANCES**

There were no public appearances.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Approval of Payments**

Administrative Services Manager Debra Ebben provided a brief summary of the check register covering 04/17/13 through 05/09/13. A motion to accept the payments 04/17/2013 through 05/09/13 was approved (7/0).

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**Labor Contract with Teamsters Local 662**

Sandy Behnke, Human Resources Director gave a brief overview of the additions and changes to the proposed labor contract with Teamster 662. The contract would be for two two-year periods, one contract for 2013-2014 and a second contract for 2015-2016. The agreement includes a 0% increase in 2013, a 2% lump sum payment in 2014, a 2% lump sum payment in 2015 and a 2% across the board wage increase in 2016. The agreement also increases the amount of time it takes to get from the initial pay rate to the top wage rate. In the current contract it takes 30 months for an employee to get to the top wage rate. Under the new contract, the time will be increased to 72 months, saving Valley Transit approximately \$108,000 on existing employees' wages in 2014 - 2016. The contract also includes stepped increases to the employee contribution to health and

dental insurance over the next four years.

### **April Ridership and Revenue**

Ridership in April increased 8.5% from 2012 with year to date ridership up 1.7%. Revenues increased 27% in April, but year to date are still 0.6% (\$1,533) behind 2012 due to lower pass and ticket sales in the first two months of the year. Evening ridership was up 14.1% in April and is up 6.6% year to date over 2012.

Ms. Wetter indicated that Route 2 ridership has been below last year's ridership in each of the first four months this year. She speculated that some of the decrease is because Route 2 and The Link (Route 9) overlap for part of their routes and because The Link runs every 30 minutes all day, people getting on that section of the route may be using The Link instead of Route 2. Significant detours on several routes this year are beginning to affect ridership and will continue to do so throughout the summer and early fall. Staff will continue to review and analyze ridership data on routes showing decreases to determine what the likely reasons are for the decrease and whether action needs to be taken to improve the ridership numbers for those routes. Staff will report back to the Commission on their findings.

### **April Financials**

Overall Valley Transit is slightly below budget through April. The only expense categories over budget are Utilities, which is higher in winter months and lower during the rest of the year, and Training & Conferences, which was due to FTA Drug & Alcohol training and training sessions on the maintenance asset management system.

### **Route 9 – The Link Update**

Sal LaPuma, Assistant General Manager presented an update on Route 9 - The Link. Mr. LaPuma reported that Route 9 is steadily growing in ridership and has surpassed the goal of 50 rides per day with ridership averaging 65 per day in April, 2013. Results of the on-board survey conducted in 2012 showed that the average Route 9 rider is a City of Appleton resident and is a retired female between the ages of 55-64 making less the \$15,000 per year. She uses The Link mostly for shopping/personal business and medical appointments. She has been riding Valley Transit for 5.5 to 15+ years and rides nearly every day. She doesn't have a driver's license and doesn't use Valley Transit's website or use social media. She doesn't have a cell phone with texting capabilities. She rates Valley Transit services as excellent and strongly agrees that Valley Transit improves her quality of life. A future survey of The Link riders is scheduled for the summer of 2013.

### **Connector Analysis Report – University of Wisconsin Oshkosh**

Ms. Wetter provided the Commission with the results of the Connector Analysis Report produced by Ben Artz, Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh at the request of United Way and Valley Transit. The result of the analysis was that the benefits to the Fox Cities of the Connector service were \$1,206,099 which was more than three times the cost of the service.

### **Operations Update**

There are numerous detours at the present and Valley Transit is working hard to limit the impact on the customers and communities involved. Mr. LaPuma and his staff are working on a possible change to Route 20. Route 20 is experiencing significant construction delays along the route making it increasingly difficult for the route to stay on schedule. When Route 20, which has a large number of transfers to other routes in the system, is running more than 5 minutes late, it doesn't connect with the other routes at the Transit Center with the result that many customers miss their connections causing delays in their trips. The proposed change will be made in June after discussion with the communities involved and after informing the Route 20 customers.

The demolition of Washington Place is continuing across the street from the Transit Center with limited interruption of services.

### **ITS Update**

Mr. LaPuma reported that the ITS system has been up and running for about 1-1/2 years. Generally it is working well but Valley Transit still has 3 buses with GPS software issues that we continue to troubleshoot with the vendor. The SMS/Texting/Email portion of the new ITS system, which gives passengers "real-time" next buses information, is being installed presently. Mr. LaPuma was able to obtain for Valley Transit at no cost the TransitNow portion of ITS which is also installed but has some issues with the 3<sup>rd</sup> party aggregator. TransitNow is a web portal that allows passengers to subscribe to receive system alerts, information and next bus times.

### **Legislative Update**

Ms. Wetter reported that there are no new legislative updates. The State of Wisconsin is continuing the 2014-15 budget discussion. The Joint Finance Committee is expected to act on transit funding before the end of the month. The proposal to take transit out of the Transportation Fund is still in the budget.

### **Pending Items**

Valley Transit continues to work on and report back to the Commission on pending items.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The next scheduled meeting will be at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 12th, 2013. The meeting adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Ms. Deborah Wetter  
Secretary