

**MINUTES— FOX CITIES TRANSIT COMMISSION**  
April 23, 2014

**Commissioners Present**

Chairperson Chuck Rundquist  
Vice Chairperson Carolyn Mewhorter  
Aldersperson Kyle Lobner  
Aldersperson Christine Williams  
Kevin Vonck  
Carol Kasimor  
Lynn Erickson  
Rick Detienne

**Valley Transit Staff**

Deborah Wetter, General Manager  
Sal LaPuma, Assistant General Manager  
Debra Ebben, Administrative Services Manager  
Nikki Voelzke, Community Relations Specialist  
Amy Erickson, Paratransit Coordinator  
Lisa Laughlin, Communications Technician

**Commissioners Excused**

**Others Present**

Chris Behrens, Assistant City Attorney

Chairperson Chuck Rundquist called the meeting to order at 3:00p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There being no questions or corrections to the minutes of the March 26, 2014 meeting, Commissioner Rick Detienne moved that the minutes be approved which was seconded by Aldersperson Kyle Lobner. The minutes were approved (7/0).

Commissioner Vonck arrived at 3:02.

**APPEARANCES**

**Public Participation of Agenda Items**

There were no public appearances.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Election of Chair, Vice Chair and Contact Person and Meeting Date and Time**

Chuck Rundquist was elected chair, Carolyn Mewhorter was elected vice-chair, Deborah Wetter is the contact, and the meetings will continue to be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 3 p.m. A motion was made by Commissioner Kasimor and seconded by Commissioner Detienne. The motion carried (8/0).

**Approval of Payments**

Administrative Service Manager, Debra Ebben presented the check register covering 03/16/14 through 04/10/14 for questions and comments. A motion was made by Aldersperson Kyle Lobner and seconded by Commissioner Rick Detienne to accept the payments 03/16/14 through 04/10/14. The motion carried (8/0).

**Approve a \$1.00 Fare Increase for the Connector Service Effective June 16, 2014**

Due to the change in federal funding policies, the designated employment transportation funds Valley Transit was awarded in the past to fund the Connector have been eliminated resulting in a \$40,000 increase in the local share required. Valley Transit and United Way staff don't believe this additional amount is attainable from United Way and its partners. Therefore, staff is

recommending a \$1.00 fare increase for the Connector which would increase the Extended Service Area (daytime) trips from \$3.00 to \$4.00 and the Extended Service Hours fare from \$5.00 to \$6.00. The only other alternative would be to reduce service. The Transit Commission authorized Valley Transit to schedule a public hearing to consider a \$1.00 fare increase for the Connector. The public hearing will be held at the next Transit Commission meeting on May 14, 2014 at 3 p.m. The Commission will then take action on the proposed fare increase on May 28, 2014 and if approved the fare increase would go into effect on June 16, 2014. A motion was made by Alderperson Lobner and seconded by Commissioner Detienne. The motion carried (8/0).

### **Approval to Exercise the Remainder of Option Year Two for the Connector with Running, Inc.**

The Transit Commission approved exercising the remainder of option year two with Running, Inc. to provide Connector service through the rest of 2014 contingent on funding being available to pay for the service. The plan to increase funding includes a proposed fare increase of \$1 per trip, requests to municipal funding partners to assist in funding the local share of the Connector and having United Way staff approach several companies to ask for their support in funding the Connector. If additional revenues do not become available as expected, some or all of the Connector service will have to be discontinued before the end of 2014. A motion was made by Commissioner Mewhorter and seconded by Commissioner Erickson. The motion carried (8/0).

### **5310 Agreement with East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**

Valley Transit is now eligible for federal Section 5310 grant funding. Prior to 2013 the funding was only available for capital purchases for non-profit organizations serving seniors and people with disabilities. With the 2013 MAP-21 transit funding legislation, several grant programs were combined and transit systems became eligible to use some of the Section 5310 funding to supplement other operating grant funds. Valley Transit is the designated recipient for the 5310 funds in our urbanized area and can use 45% of the funds for operations plus 10% for administering the grants. However, we need to design a process to award the remaining funds to non-profits for either capital purchases to assist seniors or people with disabilities or for mobility management programs. East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission was the logical partner to help us with the process because of their background and experience in awarding grants and the fact that they were not getting any of the funds themselves so were a neutral third party. The agreement designates what each of our organizations will be responsible for and who will take the lead in each. A motion was made to approve the 5310 Agreement with East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission by Commissioner Kasimor and seconded by Commissioner Mewhorter. The motion carried (8/0).

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **March Financials**

Ms. Ebben reported that Valley Transit is slightly under budget as of March 31, 2014.

### **March Ridership and Revenue**

Ms. Wetter reported that both ridership and revenue were down 6.8% in March. The year-to-date ridership is down 9.5% and year-to-date revenue is down 4%. Valley Transit staff spoke with a number of other Wisconsin transit systems and they all have had the same experience with

ridership in the first three months of 2014. Staff will continue to monitor the ridership and are looking at the data generated by the GFI fareboxes and the AVL system to determine whether there are specific locations that are consistently showing reduced ridership this year. If that is true, we may need to look at route modifications to respond to changes in use. Ms. Wetter also pointed out that ridership has grown most years since 2007 with essentially the same level of service. We may have reached a point where it won't continue to grow without service improvements.

### **Riders' Survey Results**

Community Relations Specialist, Nikki Voelzke presented a brief overview of the results of the 2014 Onboard Riders' Survey conducted from January 27, 2014 through February 4, 2014. Ms. Voelzke reported that 43% of Valley Transit riders have been riding the bus for less than 2 years which means that there is significant turnover in ridership. The survey showed that 54% of the passengers use the bus to get to work, 15% use it to get to school and 17% go shopping which has a direct impact on the economic health and wellbeing of our communities. When asked to rate the service Valley Transit provides, 96% indicated satisfaction. Ms. Voelzke told the Commission that she is still having some analysis of the data done by the consultants and when it is completed and a final report is issued, she will send it to Commissioners and post it on the Valley Transit website.

### **Strategic Plan Update and Invitation to SWOT Analysis Event**

Ms. Wetter reported that the first Valley Transit Strategic Plan steering committee meeting will take place on Thursday, May 8, 2014 from 7:30 – 9:30 a.m. at the Radisson Paper Valley Hotel. In addition to the Steering Committee and the Transit Commission, we have invited mayors, town, village and county administrators and staff and several other community leaders who we thought would add a different perspective to the discussion. Valley Transit is hosting an open house on May 7, 2014 from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. at the Appleton Public Library to explain the project to the public and give people an opportunity to share their opinions about public transit in the Fox Cities, how it works now and what it should look like in the future.

### **Discussion – “What is the biggest issue for Valley Transit today?”**

This discussion was tabled for a later date because of time issues.

### **Pending Items**

There was no discussion of this item by the Commission.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 14, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 4:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mrs. Deborah Wetter  
General Manager