

Meeting of the Ridership Committee – via Zoom

Minutes of the GP Metro Ridership Committee meeting of Thursday, January 20, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83957849696?pwd=QnBKcmRZQTM4Q205dCswcmE5cEo0Zz09>

Passcode: 460291 | Webinar ID: 839 5784 9696

Phone: (312) 626-6799 | Telephone participants: *9 to raise hand, *6 to unmute

<p>Committee Members Present: Ed Suslovic, Chair John Thompson Jeff Levine Merrill Barter Hope Cahan Bill Rixon Pious Ali (4:10)</p> <p>Committee Members Absent: None</p>	<p>Staff and Others Present: Greg Jordan, Executive Director Glenn Fenton, Chief Transportation Officer Mike Tremblay, Transit Development Director Denise Beck, Marketing Manager</p> <p>Non-Committee Board Members present: None</p> <p>Public: None</p>
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1. With a quorum in place, the meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. by Ed Suslovic, Chairman.

2. Public Comment:

No members of the public were present.

3. Approval of December 14, 2021 Ridership Committee Meeting Minutes.

Motion made by John Thompson, seconded by Jeff Levine, to approve the minutes from the December 14, 2021 Ridership Committee meeting as written. A roll call vote was taken by Lauren Shaw, Executive Assistant. With approval by John Thompson, Hope Cahan, Jeff Levine, Merrill Barter, Bill Rixon, and Ed Suslovic, **the motion passed unanimously by all those present.**

4. Ridership, Fare Revenue, and Service Update

December, typically one of the lowest months for ridership, was 11% lower than November, and a larger drop than usual, possibly due to the ongoing Omicron variant. The highest drop was on school routes (Route 9 and Husky). Most routes saw drops of less than 5%, or even increases vs. November 2021.

Route changes:

Route #1: Construction on Fore St. has forced a detour away from Atlantic, Fore, and Morning, but a stop has been added on Congress. As snowbanks melt, a neighborhood street may later be added.

Breez: Due to high demands for parking, the Breez route will be changed to access the park and ride in Brunswick, beginning February 14th. A bus shelter will be added later. This will decrease travel time.

TouchPass/UMO Transition: Getting information out through signage on buses, shelters, and community newsletter that the TouchPass mobile app will not work after 3/31/22. Translated information is being worked on; flyers in five languages will be on the DiriGo and Metro websites.

5. 2022 Ridership Recovery Coordination

Four ARPA applications went in 12/31/21. Mike Tremblay gave more detail of each project.

1. Joint application (with SPBS, BSOOB, and Casco Bay Lines) for a promotional 50% fare reduction, proposed for April-December 2022 - \$1,128,018
2. Multiple service improvements: microtransit in Falmouth, service span/frequency improvements, route extensions, additional weekend/holiday service - \$2,868,704
3. Transit signal priority funding, in partnership with Portland - \$500,000
4. Bus stop improvement funding, in partnership with Portland - \$750,000

There are a total of 10 applications, which, in total, exceed available funding. PACTS is scoring each and we hope to hear results by April.

6. Transit Together Existing Conditions Report – see attachments

In December 2021, Nelson/Nygaard provided an update on their existing conditions study, which includes outreach efforts, origin/destination analysis, market analysis, population density, employment density, micro-transit analysis, future needs, and under-served areas. All takes the public voice into account. Keying in on Commercial St. and Riverside St. in Portland, which have gaps in service. Also discussing the BRT corridor in Gorham – ideally operating more frequent service. Public outreach is key.

This study is taking a hard look at the current network to determine what the major priorities are to improve that network. Looking at travel times, connectivity issues between agencies, etc. Not looking beyond at this time. Includes how to get passes to residents and cost to drive/park vs. cost to ride. The micro-transit study portion is looking at the whole region, and will probably find needs in Gorham and Falmouth. Proposing a micro-transit pilot in the Falmouth/Route 1 area.

7. Title VI Program

Every three years, transit agencies are required to update and submit their Title VI Program to the Federal Transit Administration. Metro's most recent Title VI Program was submitted to the FTA in April 2019. The 2022 updated Title VI Program must be approved by the recipient's board of directors prior to the submission date of April 30, 2022. Denise Beck, Marketing Manager, reviewed what changes Metro has and will make, including many materials having been or in the process of being translated into five languages (Arabic, French, Portuguese, Spanish, and Somali). Volunteers have been recruited to ride the buses and show others how to ride. Metro is also reviewing how many employees speak other languages and how best to help them work through a language barrier, including using telephone translation services. When complete, the program will be brought to the Board for approval and the minutes of that meeting will be included with the updated program and submitted to FTA.

8. Future Agenda Items

- PACTS Projects: Transit Tomorrow/Transit Together/Rapid Transit Study (Ongoing)
- Performance Metrics/Benchmarks (Feb, 2022)
- Bus Stop Improvement Project (Feb, 2022)
- Metro & Regional Transit Marketing (Feb, 2022)
- Rock Row Transit Service Development (Feb, 2022)
- Metro Strategic Plan (Feb, 2022)
- Proposed UNE Medical Center (Mar, 2022)
- Transit Ridership & Traffic Data (Mar, 2022)
- Partnering with bicycling entities, including Portland's proposed bicycle sharing program - **Added**

9. Upcoming Meetings

- Board of Directors – January 27, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.
- Finance Committee – March 2, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. (February Canceled)
- Executive Committee – February 9, 2022 at 3:30 p.m.
- Ridership Committee – March 17, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment

John Thompson moved, seconded by Pious Ali, to adjourn. A roll call vote was taken by Lauren Shaw, Executive Assistant. With approval by Hope Cahan, Jeff Levine, Bill Rixon, John Thompson, Pious Ali, Merrill Barter, and Ed Suslovic, **motion passed unanimously by all those present and the meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.**