

Transportation Services Advisory Committee

October 5, 2012, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Regent's Room, 1140 J.C. Kellam Administration Building

Attendance Mr. Joseph Richmond, Dr. John Blair, Dr. Jaymeen Shah, Ms. Sharon Wilsford, Ms. Angela Brandenberger (for Ms. Carole Brauer-Dykema), Mr. Michael Petty (for Mr. Juan Guerra), Mr. Cody DeSalvo, Mr. Thomas Gleason, Ms. Nicole Shipes, Dr. Joanne Smith, Chief Ralph Meyer, Mr. John Root, Mr. Stephen Prentice, Mr. Paul Hamilton. QUORUM PRESENT

Handouts

- Council Membership
- Transportation Services Advisory Council Purpose, Transportation Services Mission Statement, Strategic Plan Summary, and Bobcat Tran Services Review Summary
- 2012/2013 Parking Rules and Regulations
- Shuttle Service Maps
- Bobcat Tram Interurban Schedule
- President's Cabinet Bus Information – August 22, 2012

Opening Remarks

Mr. Richmond expressed thanks to the group for their participation and explained that on September 1, 2012, Transportation Services was formed merging Parking Services and Shuttle bus operations. The reporting structure is Mr. Richmond, Director of Transportation Services, reports to Nancy Nusbaum who reports to William Nance. The idea behind this merger is to improve communication and balance. Everyone on campus is affected by parking and transportation

Introductions

Council and Ex Officio members introduced themselves.

Purpose of Council

The council provides a conduit for community input regarding policies and other issues related to safe, comprehensive, economical, and efficient transportation services. These include: parking, transit, pedestrian, motorist, and cyclist services and safety. The council shall submit policy recommendations involving parking and transit to the President's Cabinet for approval.

Meeting Schedule

Mr. Richmond proposed a meeting schedule quarterly in January, April, July, and stated they would be bringing the results of an independent transportation analysis to the group.

After discussion of the validity and power of the committee, and Mr. Richmond's credentials, all members agreed the next meeting should take place in the last week of January 2013. Mr. Richmond advised that the results of an independent analysis of the bus system would be available then, but if any issues come up before that, they can be disseminated to the committee.

Alkek Garage

Mr. Richmond stated he had knowledge of a faculty petition regarding cleaning up Alkek Garage and asked Mr. Prentice to share the history and background on the issue of waste from birds and bats nesting in the Alkek Garage, and measures that have been taken over the years to try and rectify the problem, which he did. Mr. Richmond stated he will be asking for guidance from the council to communicate with the people who signed the petition. He further advised that Parking Services can continue to clean up the mess, but it has a financial impact for maybe 200 parking spaces. Dr. Blair stated those parking spaces are some of the most valuable to faculty and asked if Mr. Richmond could put into writing what has been relayed to the council for education of others.

Charging Stations

Mr. Richmond advised it was brought to his attention that someone in the Alkek garage is plugging in to an electrical outlet to charge their car and it has been reported as theft of state resources. The Council discussed the University's desire to become more sustainable and that the Facilities Department is investigating options for installing charging stations on campus. Also discussed was the legality of this action, considering the allegation of theft of state resources.

The Council voted unanimously in favor of allowing the charging of the car, if the person is able to park in that spot, until a legal opinion regarding the situation can be sought.

Mr. Richmond asked who on the Council would be willing to research how other institutions are accommodating this demand, including the University of Texas at Austin and San Antonio, Texas A&M, Sam Houston and the Texas State University System schools.

Mr. Petty said he would get guidelines from other schools, and Mr. DeSalvo said that ASG could probably come up with many ideas from other universities.

Dr. Smith reminded the Council that this complaint came from the Auditor so contact should be made with that office. Mr. Richmond stated he would bring this issue to his superiors and the University attorney for a legal opinion.

Dr. Shah requested a timeline for when electric vehicle charging stations could be installed on campus.

Mr. Richmond stated it will depend on what information we come back with in January, but he feels it may be at least a year to develop policy in conjunction with infrastructure.

Dr. Smith suggested with that project in RRHEC, didn't we have to put some spaces we had to designate for fuel efficient cars to get the LEED designation. That would be the way you do it right. So it would only be in certain areas.

Bobcat Tram Service Review

Mr. Richmond provided some background regarding the document (handout) and information regarding the bus service presented to the President's Cabinet at the beginning of the fall semester, and explained that the University has entered into an interagency cooperation agreement with the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) to do a comprehensive analysis of the bus system. Their report is scheduled to be done at the end of December, and is anticipated to be a valuable tool for this Council to make recommendations on how to move forward with the ever increasing demands on the shuttle system, and the planned Request for Proposals scheduled for March 2013, to choose a bus service provider when the current contract expires in August 2014. Mr. Richmond also stated that he anticipates when the bids come in on the RFP, we will come to the student body about a fee increase, ~~which can be done in FY15~~ The fee can be increased in FY15.

Dr. Smith advised if the increase will be more than 10%, there will need to be a student referendum held prior to the proposal going to the Board.

Dr. Shah posed two questions regarding the buses; he is concerned about students needing to leave his class early every day to catch the BTI at 3:15 p.m., and is surprised the bus leaves at 3:20 p.m. Dr. Shah would like Transportation Services to figure out how to remedy this. The second issue has to do with students leaving the buses and walking in front of them to cross the street.

Mr. Hamilton stated that we need to educate riders, pedestrians, and bicyclists on how to behave in this community. On the first issue, no matter what time we choose, it won't work well for one group of people. There are 23 different times of day on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday versus Tuesday and Thursday, when someone is getting out of a class or needing to get somewhere. I think we will have to wait until January after the TTI analysis has been done, and that will help decide if we can even continue to do it.

Both Dr. Shah and Mr. DeSalvo suggested doing a survey of students, and Mr. Richmond advised that TTI will do a survey for the BTI, and asked if ASG would like to help with a survey of the local service.

Dissemination of Information to the Council

Mr. DeSalvo stated it would be helpful for ASG to know about what is coming up in order to get legislation that is more targeted and helpful. Mr. Richmond stated conversely, it would be helpful if the Chair could be advised of what issues are coming up for ASG.

Mr. DeSalvo stated that ASG needs to have information for the Council agenda 3 weeks to 1 month before the meeting.

E-mail is an appropriate means of getting information to the Council

A member asked if the press is permitted to attend the Council meeting. Another member opined that there are certain parts of the meeting you can have Executive Session for, but otherwise it should be open.

Other Business

Staff Council proposal from employee for carpool. Some suggested changes and ideas for the program. Written proposal for next agenda.