

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL
Thursday, December 12, 2013
Suite 460, J.C. Kellam Administration Building

Attendance: Ms. Nancy Nusbaum, Dr. Jaymeen Shah, Dr. Roque Mendez, Mr. Cody DeSalvo, Mr. Gordon Green, Ms. Noragene Green, Dr. John McGee, Dr. Joanne Smith, Chief Ralph Meyer, Mr. Stephen Prentice, Mr. Steven Herrera, Ms. Stephanie Daniels, Ms. Linda Sterling (Scribe).

Absent: Ms. Abreetta Goode, Ms. Kathryn Price, Ms. Judy Herington, Mr. Allen Bernabe.

Approval of November 14, 2013 Minutes

Councilmembers approved minutes of the November 14, 2013 meeting. The minutes will be posted to the website.

Ticket Appeals Committee Update

Ms. Nusbaum reviewed the final Ticket Appeals process which was discussed at the last meeting. Committee members will be briefed at the beginning of every fall semester how the process will work. Ms. Nusbaum advised the membership of the committee has been expanded to include ASG and RHA members. The process is now ready to be posted.

University Star Article

Ms. Nusbaum brought a University Star article to the attention of the council where the editorial board had graded 5 areas in February 2013. Transportation Services received a grade of F. In the December 2013 article this was upgraded to a C. Ms. Nusbaum stated that she is pleased about the progress made since February.

Spring Bus Schedule Changes

Mr. Herrera reported that the fall shuttle routes and schedules have been reviewed to see where changes need to be made for the spring. Some timing adjustments are being made and one stop, served by two routes, is being eliminated. Students are being notified already.

Ms. Nusbaum further explained that address information from the university was geocoded on a map to find where the largest concentrations of our students live. Through this exercise we discovered that students are not updating their address information. An e-mail was sent from her and the Registrar encouraging students to update their information. Another e-mail will go out in January. From available information it appears that only 18 students live in the apartments at the stop served by the two routes. Another adjustment being made will impact the residents at the Retreat. The apartment owners completed a new stop across the street from the existing one. Signage will be posted to alert of this change. The stop at Bobcat Village on Aquarena Springs is a safety operating issue. Since most of the students go to the stop in the Mill Street lot, the stop on Aquarena Spring will be eliminated. Lastly,

there is a legacy stop at Strahan Coliseum on Aquarena Springs Drive next to the parking lot that no one is using or de-boarding from so this stop will also be eliminated.

Ms. Nusbaum reported that all bus stop locations are now identified and Transportation Services is working with Facilities/Special Projects to install bus stop signs at the campus stops. Plans are to have them up by the end of January. We are also working with the City of San Marcos and CARTS on getting stop signs installed in the city. Some stops we serve solely, and some we share with CARTs, so both signs will be on those poles.

A member asked if the new apartments on Craddock by Ranch Road 12 will provide their own transportation. Ms. Nusbaum advised that the new Capstone Cottages under construction at Wonder World and Craddock are required by the city to provide their own service. They have contacted Mr. Herrera and made some proposals to us that we will be investigating. The complex at the end of the Blanco River route has also contacted us as well as the complex going in at Cape's Camp.

The construction of the Loop 82 overpass will present many challenges for our buses. Mr. Herrera reported we are already looking at new routes during the construction period.

A member asked if staff know what kind of impacts construction will have on frequency so students may accommodate for that. Ms. Nusbaum advised no one knows at this point, but in most cases two lanes outbound and two lanes inbound will be open; there will be a period where it will drop to one lane each way, and we are unaware what the city will do to redirect traffic to Hopkins or LBJ Dr. As soon as staff has information on when the project will start, Transportation Services will launch a large public information campaign of the changes.

Mr. Herrera stated in the spring, staff will start working with the new provider, Veolia Transportation. We have already provided them our schedules for review to help maximize opportunities for efficiencies and productivity.

Ms. Nusbaum advised the Veolia staff were here in October for a ridership review. First Transit counted ridership in November. The highest travelled routes are now Blanco River, Mill St. and Aquarena Springs, followed by the Stadium route. Campus Loop is not ridden as much as was previously thought. Wonder World now has more ridership than Post Rd. The LBJ Route numbers also resulted in moving a bus from the Mill Street Route to the LBJ Route.

Ms. Nusbaum reported the new contract will result in all buses being equipped with counters whereas only six have counters now. NextBus, a GPS system, is currently utilized to allow students to see when the next bus is scheduled to arrive at their stop. TS Staff will be looking at other companies for the best solution for our students.

Stephanie Daniels has been working with Information Technology (IT) staff on reworking the TXST App for smart phones. The bus App currently in use is difficult to locate and contains errors. Possible information that might be included on the App is location of bike racks and construction sites that would improve the usefulness of the tool for students.

Ms. Daniels also reported bus surveys were sent to 5,000 students. When the chance to win an iPad Mini was offered, the participation rate increased. A report of the findings will be shared with this group. Some of the written comments from the survey are validating changes we are making now. Ms. Daniels reported survey address shuttle service, timeliness, cleanliness, safety, if the schedule met their needs, and allowed for open ended comments. Ms. Nusbaum added that the survey also asked about bike rack usage, awareness of NextBus, and CARTS ridership. In February a parking survey will go out.

Ms. Nusbaum advised that Bobcat Trail will be taken out of service requiring more significant changes with the summer bus schedule.

Parking Permit Rate Changes

Ms. Nusbaum outlined the documents in the meeting packet. The price comparison to other Texas higher education institutions regarding citation fees also includes information about semester and night permits. Ms. Nusbaum reported the President's Cabinet approved: charging TXST vehicles the perimeter rate; eliminating free motorcycle permits for faculty and staff that purchase a red restricted permit and want both; allowing extension faculty to participate in payroll deduction, and allowing per course faculty to purchase a semester only permit only. E&G departments will receive \$115 for each TXST state vehicle in their budget as one-time funding since most of the departments do not have sufficient budgets to cover the cost.

Mr. Prentice explained that the calculations in the handouts are based on historical numbers. Councilmembers discussed how many parking spaces will be lost to construction of residence halls and the Loop 82 overpass project, where commuter parking will be increased to compensate for lost spaces, how much residence hall parking is needed, neighborhood permitting options the city is considering, and options for adding parking back into inventory.

Ms. Nusbaum explained options are being presented to the council for consideration and will be revisited at the January meeting. Transportation Services staff will attend Faculty Senate, Associated Student Government, Staff Council, and Residence Hall Association meetings in February to discuss the options. The final recommendation will be presented to President's Cabinet in March 2014 for approval.

Councilmembers also discussed other options including, purchase of property to replace lost spaces; timing of replacement of lost spaces; the anticipated net loss of parking spaces and cost per space; commuter use of perimeter lots; evening parking use; potential rate adjustments; parking at Round Rock campus; purchase of permits by freshmen and residents; student trends in walking or utilizing the shuttle system and not purchasing parking permits; timing of building parking lots and residence halls; potential to increase citations rates; and semester and night permit possibilities. Ms. Nusbaum advised that semester permits are limited to per course and extension faculty, and there is no plan to add an evening permit for FY15.

A councilmember requested a document listing the parking rate and zone options in an easy format to present to their constituents.

A member asked how many retirees receive free permits and if that was taken into consideration in the faculty/staff permit totals. Mr. Prentice stated there were approximately 250 to 300, and that he didn't think that retirees would pay \$335 per year to come to campus perhaps once or twice per year.

A councilmember felt the fact there is a waiting list for reserved parking spaces denotes that they are not priced high enough. Ms. Nusbaum stated staff will look at the reserve permit rate and reserved spaces in the Edward Gary Street Garage.

Ms. Nusbaum advised that Linda Sterling will be sending requests for councilmember schedules in order to schedule council meetings for the spring semester.

End of meeting.