

## Transit Meeting February 15, 2016

Present; Mr. Rick Blake – Chairman, Mr. Steve Willis, Mr. Gordon Geiger, Ms. Sue Kunkel, Mr. Tony Kusserow and Rich Grenfell – Transit Administrator.

Absent; Mr. Tony Kusserow

Public Comment; Citizens Erik Pfantz and Kyle Gulke were present to discuss pedestrian / traffic safety concerns they have in the east Main Street business district. We discussed trafficking and passenger boarding / alighting issues that transit is now incurring with the angle parking on the north side, but the consensus is the biggest safety issue is with pedestrian traffic, vehicle blind spots and traffic speed. The young men will be bringing their concerns to the Board of Public Works and the Health & Safety Committee later this week.

A motion to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2015 meeting was made by Ms. Kunkel and seconded by Mr. Geiger. C.U.

The Transit Commission reviewed the 2015 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter stats. There were no significant changes during these Quarters. A motion to approve the reports was made by Mr. Willis and seconded by Mr. Geiger. C.U.

The Commission reviewed the 2015 Annual report. 2015 experienced a 2% loss in ridership and fare box revenues. The DHS ridership increased 5% and DHS revenues increased by 3%. A motion to approve the report was made by Ms. Kunkel and seconded by Mr. Willis. C.U.

### Administrator's Report:

- 1) TMI Safety Director & Staff performed 20+ ride checks throughout the system in 2015. There were no traffic safety violations cited against any of our Bus Operators. There were (2) "seat belts engaged while the vehicle was departing" documented.

TMI Safety Director Judy Grenz will be visiting in March to assist with our Driver Training Program. This is a new service offered by TMI to help connect the Company to the front line operators.

All current Transit Bus Operators had an accident / claims free year in 2015 and will receive their Certificate of Achievement from the Mayor, Transit Chairman and Transit Administrator.

- 2) Transit Coordinator Brummond is performing and learning progressively. He is working well independently in dispatch and in his Supervisory role.

- 3) WisDOT is currently experiencing a shortage in staffing to include a Procurement Specialist. All project approvals are going to be delayed during this reorganization. Merrill's Transit Facility Project is going to be reviewed for approval and publication in the near future.
  
- 4) With the absence of a Procurement Specialist, the State is experiencing an incompleteness of Bus purchasing contracts and delivery. Many Cities that have their local share of their Bus Capital Purchases are not yet approved for purchase. Some of these communities Capital Grants have reached their "sunset" and will have to be reapplied for and or extended. We met with (2) DOT staff members on 2/12/16 to discuss our concerns and also seek guidance on how to move this process forward. We are exploring the feasibility of creating a (5) year State wide heavy duty bus procurement specification /contract that will allow all Wisconsin properties to join and purchase from. The Capital Funding needed today for bus replacement in Wisconsin is 85 million. The available appropriation of bus purchase funds is 6.7 million per year. We are going to have to work with our Legislators to recognize this shortfall and to prioritize better formula funding for these Capital purchases. Merrill, along with all Transit communities are going to have to reevaluate our replacement schedules and adjust them by the "crisis needs" throughout the State.

A motion to approve the Administrator's report was made by Ms. Kunkel and seconded by Mr. Geiger. C.U.

Next Transit Commission meeting; **Monday March 21, 2016**

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Kunkel and seconded by Mr. Willis