

TSAC Minutes
October 1, 2014

Present:

Mr. Mike Caruso
Mr. Joe Dillard
Mr. David Glockzin
Dr. Angie Hill Price
Dr. Margaret Hobson
Mr. Collin Kruger
Mr. Peter Lange
Mr. Chris Lyons
Dr. Beth McNeill
Mr. Michael Murtha
Mr. Robert Pottberg
Ms. Veronica Sprayberry
Dr. Bob Strawser
Mr. Travis Walters
Dr. CJ Woods

Absent:

Dr. Deb Banerjee
Dr. Fuller Bazer
Ms. Courtney Charanza
Dr. Joe Newton
Ms. Flora Reeves
Mr. Rod Weis

1. Mr. Peter Lange started the meeting by asking members to review the minutes from the September meeting. Dr. Beth McNeill motioned to approve the minutes as written, Dr. Angie Hill Price seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.
2. Mr. Lange asked for a nomination for co-chair, and asked if Dr. Hill Price would continue in the role from last year. Mr. Mike Caruso and Dr. McNeill moved to appoint Dr. Hill Price as co-chair, Dr. Robert Strawser seconded the motion and all members approved the appointment.
3. Ms. Debbie Hoffmann said Transportation Services has received requests from student groups for changes in parking for two areas.
 - 3.1. The golf course lot is currently available for student parking from 10 pm - 6 am. When the golf course was renovated, the intention was to light the driving range and extend the hours the course was open. Since that hasn't happened, Student Affairs agreed to open the lot for night parking at 7 pm, with the understanding that should the facility hours change in the future, we will make the appropriate changes to student parking access. We are currently in the process of making changes to signs, our website and maps to indicate the update.
 - 3.2. The other student request involves opening the gates at Fish Pond at nights and on the weekends to allow travel from the north side dorm area to the MSC. Mr. Lange explained that historically, the area was designed as a pedestrian sidewalk. When the renovation of the area occurred and Fish Pond was moved, it was redesigned as a street with restricted access including a pedestrian area.

It is a high traffic area for buses, service vehicles, emergency traffic and pedestrians. Currently, Transit is determining the impact opening the gates will have on the bus routes in the area. We will provide an answer to the student groups by October 9.

- 3.2.1. Dr. McNeill indicated that the area is heavily traveled and it is difficult for the buses to navigate the turn. She indicated she has seen near misses where people don't know which side to use, since there aren't markings like a street or for bikes.
 - 3.2.2. An aerial view of the area was displayed and it was suggested that marking the area could improve the traffic flow. Striping could indicate the radius for the turn.
 - 3.2.3. Mr. Travis Walters said it would be convenient to have it open, but later hours might be a compromise to allow buses unimpeded access. He also noted there is no right of way indicated, and Mr. Lange said it would need to be marked with a stop or yield sign.
 - 3.2.4. Mr. Lange stated that there have been no internal discussions at Transportation Services and that a decision is not needed right away. Since buses run full service until 8 pm, a solution may be to open the gate at 8 pm.
4. Mr. Lange shared that Transit has provided over 1 million rides during the first 4 weeks of school.
- 4.1. That number is over 8.15% higher than last year, although we are starting to see trends, such as a slight decrease.
 - 4.2. He indicated that we plan to ask for \$1 million from the University Advancement Fee. We will be able to net 5 new buses from the order of 10 new buses that will start arriving next spring and then refurbish older buses. The new buses will replace 5 smaller buses to increase capacity.
 - 4.3. A group from TS visited Capital Metro in Austin to inspect used buses that will soon be auctioned as surplus, which we could purchase if granted the UAF request. These Gillig buses are the same age as our older buses, but could be available as soon as 90 days. We would have to decide if they could just be spruced up with paint and put into use. These buses won't provide immediate relief with additional capacity, but we would be able to have buses to use if maintenance with other buses should occur.
 - 4.4. Mr. Lange stated that we have to start looking at routes for next year in order to provide support for the dorms on west campus that will open in fall 2015. Our off campus routes seem to be busiest in the morning and in the afternoon. The on campus routes are busy throughout the day; we may consider removing buses from off campus routes to assist with the on campus routes during the day.
 - 4.5. We will have a representative from Brazos Transit Authority speak at the next meeting to discuss the feasibility of obtaining federal grant money.
 - 4.6. We are short on bus drivers; we currently have around 180 drivers and would like to be at 220 - 240. We have recently increased the hourly rate for Transit Drivers to \$9.50 per hour with step incentives still in place and will also reimburse the cost of obtaining a CDL.

5. Ms. Debbie Hoffmann shared the dates when Alta, the company selected to create a Bicycle District Plan, will visit campus.
 - 5.1. They will be here Wednesday, October 8 through Friday, October, 10. They will conduct a "charette" to gather input from faculty, staff and students on bike related issues; this will be an informal "come and go" event held Thursday evening.
 - 5.2. Mr. Ron Steedly, Alternative Transportation Manager, is organizing meetings with student groups as well. More information will be sent out with details and locations. An online interactive session and an online survey will also be available.
6. Dr. Tim Lomax provided some insight on the Kyle Field game day plan from the first two games.
 - 6.1. Many things are working well - contraflow on Wellborn, shuttles running well. Since there hasn't really been a "normal" game situation with the lightning delay and a blow-out win, we have not seen the impact under usual circumstances.
 - 6.2. We parked about the same number of vehicles for Lamar and Rice and there are still about 3,000 more spaces on campus. The message is "If you want to come to the game and park on campus, we have room for you."
 - 6.3. Ridership for the 'Get to the Grid' was up from previous years, 10k for Lamar and 9k for Rice.
 - 6.4. Area of Holleman at Wellborn all the way to 2818 was very congested. May have to create a barrier to encourage people to use Wellborn Road as the route to the apartments in those areas, but don't want to close it entirely.
 - 6.5. The emptying of West Campus Garage was way too slow. Changes have been made at the intersection of Kimbrough and Wellborn to address that and the south exit of the garage will also be available for future games so cars can exit and travel south.
 - 6.6. Pedestrians will be able to cross Kimbrough from Pickard Pass, but will have to wait for a timed cycle to allow vehicles to pass. Many pedestrians are using the southern route since there is no stopping for vehicles.
7. Mr. Caruso indicated that the student ticket pulls for the remainder of the games will be on the east side of the stadium. Expect more patrons to use University Center Garage on Monday mornings of ticket pull. Lines at the ticket windows may end up close to Houston Street. Also, there is a construction fence going up at the Zone and it will stretch all the way to the street.
8. Dr. Hill Price shared that it took 16 minutes to get from her space in Northside Garage to the street starting at 5:13 pm. Mr. Lange asked her to keep track of the times and give an update.
9. After a reminder of the next meeting to be held on Wednesday, November 5 in Koldus 110/111, the meeting was adjourned.