

**Transportation Services Advisory Committee Minutes
September 1, 2021**

This was a Zoom Meeting

Present:

Dr. Fuller Bazer
Mr. Bill Cox
Mr. Joe Dillard
Dr. Angie Hill Price
Ms. Erin Jones
Mr. Jim Kovar
Mr. Peter Lange
Ms. Helena MacCrossan
Mr. Tom Reber
Ms. Flora Reeves
Ms. Staci Rende (Nathan Shelley)
Mr. Dale Rice
Ms. Mary Schubert
Mr. Steve Schulze
Dr. Patti Smith
Mr. Fawaz Syed
Mr. Mark Welsh
Ms. Deborah Wright
Ms. Tamra Young

Absent

Mr. Andy Deuel
Mr. Rio O'Neal
Dr. John Stallone

Guests:

Ms. Lilia Gonzales

1. Mr. Peter Lange opened the meeting at 11:35 a.m.
2. Mr. Lange welcomed the 2021-2022 TSAC members and went through a brief introduction, the history of TSAC as well as the role and responsibility of its members. You can find the full presentation on our website (scroll to the bottom of the page for presentations): <https://transport.tamu.edu/About/tsac.aspx>
 - 2.1. TSAC started as an advisory committee and fulfills the need to address and discuss transportation-related impacts to campus (faculty, staff & students).
 - 2.2. TSAC generates a lot of great conversations and ideas. Dr. Hill Price commented Transportation Service has some great ideas but there are sometimes unintended consequences. It's the responsibility of the TSAC members to think about those unintended consequences and bring them to the forefront as well as discuss with constituent groups.
 - 2.2.1. Dr. Hill Price also mentioned not everyone knows Transportation Services is not centrally funded but an auxiliary. Often Transportation Services is tasked with items from the administration and TSAC can help navigate through those items.

2.2.2. Mr. Lange followed up that Transportation Services relies on the committee members to provide feedback from their constituent groups, political climate we haven't considered, etc. He stated we do occasionally agree to disagree, but we often find consensus about solutions to work for the majority.

2.2.3. Mr. Lange also provided more information regarding Transportation Services acting as an auxiliary vs. centrally funded.

2.2.3.1. **Fleet** – maintenance facilities and fuel center. Rarely discuss Fleet issues since it is a Service Center and regulated as such.

2.2.3.2. **Parking** – all revenue comes from user fees, permits, visitor parking and citations. There are times when we receive central funds for large road repairs, etc. but it is rare.

2.2.3.2.1. Mr. Lange explained when you have an operation funded by user fees and a global pandemic hits, the impact is major. Transportation Services had a \$15 million loss due to COVID.

2.2.3.2.2. Eliminated 27 budgeted positions although we have recently requested 11 of those positions be re-created. Did provide us with salary savings.

2.2.3.2.3. We have pushed back the start date on multiple major projects. Mr. Lange explained typically we aren't concerned with a project that is \$5-6 million but we are acting conservatively and watching fall trends carefully.

2.2.3.2.4. Mr. Lange mentioned some positive trends we are watching such as:

- 2200 more permits sold than in 2019
- Some increase in enrollment. Freshman class, for the first time ever, has the largest purchase of permits.

2.2.3.3. **Transit** – our bus fleet includes 38 new buses (35 diesel, 3 electric) and 9 more in production. A percentage of Transit is funded by the Advancement Fee (just over \$9 million received) with a portion that is an auxiliary, such as Charters.

2.2.3.3.1. Transit offers on and off campus routes. We are seeing ridership is down about 19% from 2019 which equates to more cars on campus.

2.2.3.3.2. Dr. Hill Price asked if we were attributing the trend to COVID.

2.2.3.3.3. Mr. Syed stated he heard a lot of people were taking other options since the buses are full, stuck in traffic, off schedule, etc.

2.2.3.3.4. Mr. Bill Cox stated he's seeing more students walking and is watching the number of hits on Aggie Maps which is up 30% over 2019.

2.2.3.3.5. Mr. Lange commented we are seeing some traffic issues on Polo Rd. Bringing Polo Rd. Garage online only added 700 permits in the area but having the REC Center and Dining in this area, is also adding some impact.

2.3. Mr. Lange informed the committee about the TSAC website, and they can find the minutes and presentations to share with their constituents.

3. Mr. Lange asked for a volunteer to serve as co-chair and went over the responsibilities of the role.

3.1. Mr. Dale Rice nominated Dr. Hill Price.

- 3.2. Mr. Lange submitted Dr. Hill Price for vote and the committee voted unanimously.
- 3.3. Mr. Lange and Dr. Hill Price will serve as TSAC co-chairs for 2021-22.
4. Transportation Services updates – Mr. Lange
 - 4.1. Covid continues to impact Transportation Services with close contact and positive cases. We continue to work around the issues and are still able to provide all services.
 - 4.1.1. Electric buses – full buses with normal loads and still returning with 65-67% charge. The buses are working well and exceeding our expectations. We continue having issues with the chargers – able to make it work without all chargers operating but requires planning and preparation on our end. Takes approximately 4-5 hours to charge.
 - 4.1.2. Dr. Hill Price asked about the battery life for the buses. Mr. Lange explained 12 years is the standard, but we are expecting 10 years. Battery packs are replaceable but expensive. At the time of replacing the batteries, we will fully know the effectiveness of cost – diesel vs. electric vs. battery replacement, etc.
 - 4.2. Virtual Permit Update – overall it's going well. Issues that have arisen are being addressed and fixed or have a work around created.
 - 4.2.1. To date there were 2200 citations written, 2/3 were written as warnings with no fines. We created an 'Oops' email to address those warning citations and give customers more information on what they need to do to keep from getting future citations.
 - 4.2.2. Mr. Lange mentioned something we will be presenting to TSAC later this year is the idea of perpetual permits which would make registration, bulk issue, etc. all unnecessary. There are a lot of details to review, discuss and address. Will be an interesting challenge.
 - 4.3. Quiet Zone –
 - 4.3.1. F&B Rd. will have a 5-day closure at the intersection with Wellborn Rd., planned for some time in the first two weeks of Oct.
 - 4.3.2. George Bush – working through paperwork. The off-track items have been completed, working through agreement on wayside horn.
 - 4.3.3. Working with Union Pacific, TxDOT, Cities of Bryan and College Station, etc. Final application 'Notice of Establishment' may be as soon as spring 2022, which states we've done our part and then Union Pacific will be responsible for completing their portion.
 - 4.3.4. Project is all centrally funded and about \$5 million.
 - 4.4. Tesla Super Charger – This is a level 3 charger, can charge a Tesla in 20 minutes. Transportation Services has a donor who has donated \$150-160K and Tesla will put in \$500-600K in equipment creating 8 spaces/chargers in Lot 51. We are trying to be the first to offer this on a university campus. If successful, the same donor would like to contribute toward a 2nd installation on west campus.
5. Mr. Peter Lange asked if there were any questions or additional comments.

Meeting was concluded at 1:00 p.m.