

Arlington Transit Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

May 14, 2019

7:00 p.m.

Ellen M. Bozman Government Center

2100 Clarendon Boulevard

“Cherry” and “Dogwood” Conference Room

TAC Members Present:

John Carten
Laura MacNeil
Conor Courtney
Deidre Grant
Erika Chiang
Herschel Kanter
Takis Karantonis
Andrew McAllister
Richard Price
Harvey Berlin
Carlota Cobo
Alexa Mavroidis

Attendees Present:

Lynn Rivers (staff)
Pierre Holloman (staff)
William Jones (staff)
Tim Roseboom (staff)
Jim Larsen (staff)
Antoine Buie (WMATA)

Call to Order

- John Carten opened the meeting at 7:01 pm.

Introductions

- Pierre Holloman introduced Jim Larsen, Commuter Services Bureau Chief.

Public Comment

- No public comments submitted, no speakers from the public.

Approval of Meeting Notes from March 12, 2019

- Meeting notes were amended to include TAC member Richard Price as an attendee. The amended meeting notes were approved unanimously.

Shared Mobility Devices (SMD) Demonstration Project Update – Jim Larsen

- Jim Larsen provided an overview of the project which began on 10/18/2018 and is set to conclude on 6/19/2019. The project allows for shared mobility devices such as scooters to operate within Arlington. Currently, there are seven operators who have been approved; however, as of May only six are in operation to include: BIRD, Lime,

lyft, SPIN, BOLT, and skip. Jump is the seventh operation; however, Jump has not deployed.

- Staff has tracked scooter ridership and data shows that ridership is heavily focused within the Metrorail corridors. This is due to access to Metrorail as well as high-density land use around and near Metrorail stations. Staff is also analyzing complaints which have been received since the pilot began. The most common complaints include: sidewalk-riding, improper parking of devices that obstruct pedestrians or vehicles, perceived unsafe or erratic rider behavior, and riders appearing to be under 18 (the operators' minimum age for riding). Since the start of the pilot, 23 crashes have been reported through April 4, 2019 which comprised of: 13 single vehicle crashes (someone falls or crashes their device without colliding with another object), 6 moving vehicle crashes (where a rider is involved in a crash with a moving vehicle), 4 pedestrian crashes (where a rider crashes into a pedestrian), 2 non-moving vehicle crashes (where a rider crashes into a non-moving or parked vehicle), 2 unknown, and 1 cyclist hitting a scooter. There have been zero fatalities; however, 4 riders were reported to have been transported to the hospital for their injuries. Arlington Police enforcement is based on observation during routine patrolling activities, reported injuries, and in response to recurring issues which they identify.
- Staff is also working with SMD vendors in terms of compliance issues. Several compliance issues include: reporting monthly data late, not relocating devices within 2 hours of report, exceeding the fleet cap, modifying service areas without permissions, deploying within a bus stop zone or in the main pathway of a sidewalk, and not limiting their top speed to 10 mph for e-scooters. To help with parking SMDs, staff have installed parking corrals on the street in various locations, including: Ballston, Virginia Square, Courthouse, Rosslyn, Pentagon City, and Crystal City.
- In terms of next steps, the Commuter Services Bureau will request to the County Board at their May meeting to extend the demonstration to a year with an end date of December 2019 in order to: 1) have months of warm-weather data when ridership will be more robust than the colder months at the start of the demonstration and 2) allow sufficient time for analysis. The request also will include an amendment to the existing Memorandum of Agreement (contract with SMD operators) for the 6-month extension and allow the County Manager to appropriate the permit fees from the operators to the Department of Environmental Services for management and analysis of the demonstration during the extension.
- The TAC noted that there may be a lot of lessons learned through similar deployments within the District as well as in Alexandria. The TAC also noted that there are big issues with SMDs being parked within bus stop zones as such creates a challenge in getting to and from a bus stop as well as on the bus. A few TAC members mentioned that they have seen SMDs blocking the entrance/exit of elevators to Metrorail stations and such is a major challenge for persons with disabilities. The TAC inquired about how can data be shared in real time, installation of a blocker on the app which would not allow a person to close a SMD trip if a device was parked within a bus stop zone, working with private property owners to allow for space to park SMDs, and provide incentives to SMD users who place devices within the on-street corrals. The TAC also asked the following questions, are SMD operators losing devices, what is the average age of a device (38 days), is there a committee or group overseeing SMDs (no), is there a website for more information (yes, such was provided to the TAC), what are the SMD rules between localities, and are their restrictions to where people can travel (no)? The TAC also requested an easier reporting mechanism for reporting incidents, complaints, and feedback regarding SMDs as well as having operators provide color standards to make it easier for persons with disabilities to recognize.

WMATA Budget & Summer Platform Work Update

- Tim Roseboom noted that WMATA's proposed FY2020 budget was approved. The budget includes several changes to fares and fees. A major change which was included was extending every Yellow Line train to Greenbelt and eliminate the Silver Spring turnback with all Red Line trains going to Glenmont.
- Mr. Roseboom stated that WMATA will begin the summer platform work starting Memorial Day weekend. WMATA has extended the end day from Labor Day weekend to September 9. The summer platform work will shut down six Metrorail stations along the Yellow and Blue lines, four in the City of Alexandria and two within Fairfax County. Between Memorial Day weekend and September 9, WMATA will waive parking fees at Springfield-Franconia, Huntington, and Van Dorn Metrorail stations. Mr. Roseboom also noted that staff has worked and will continue to work with WMATA to ensure there are no issues with summer platform work shuttles occupying space within Pentagon City. WMATA has been and are continuing to coordinate with VDOT regarding construction in and around the Pentagon. With the summer platform work, over 10,000 daily Metrorail riders will be impacted. Transportation demand management programs have been put in place in the City of Alexandria, Fairfax County and throughout the region to include: shuttles at the six stations which will be shut down, encouraging employers and employees to telework or utilize a flexible work schedule, using other modes such as bikes, ferry, and carpools

Arlington Transit (ART) and STAR Performance and Service Update

- William Jones mentioned that there will not be an update on STAR at this time. Mr. Jones provided an overview of how and why does ART evaluate service. ART's service evaluation process includes three steps: 1) analyzing route performance, 2) consider how to change service based on route analysis, and 3) proposed service change. The service evaluation process is based on established performance standards. Standards were updated through the FY2017-2026 Transit Development Plan (summer 2016); and the FY2017 Master Transportation Plan Update (winter 2017). Both updates went through a public review and comment process and were adopted by the County Board.
- In FY2018, ART's overall average farebox recovery was 30.5% and average subsidy per passenger was \$3.18. Regarding on-time performance, ART's on-time performance decreased from 90% in FY2017 to 85% in FY 2018 which falls below the Master Transportation Plan's standards. ART is looking to changes which will improve on-time performance. The most productive ART routes include the 41, 42, 45, 55, 75, and 77. The former ART 92 and 54 had the highest subsidy per passenger and had low productivity which were reasons why both routes were cut. Proposed changes to the ART 53 were based on the service evaluation as the 53 fell below standard in terms of passengers per hour during the midday.
- Regarding FY2019, Mr. Jones noted that ART's ridership for March was higher in March 2019 (242,621) than in March 2018 (238,605) which represented a 2% increase in ridership. Mr. Jones also stated that upon preliminary analysis, ridership from April 2019 was higher than April 2018 as well.
- The TAC inquired does the elimination of routes increase productivity and if ART will focus more on productivity by providing more service on routes and in areas which have high ridership or provide more coverage to areas which may not have high ridership but need access to some form of transit. The TAC also noted that it is possible that ART's maintenance issue as well as a decrease / transition of bus operators as possible reasons for several routes to fall below certain performance standards.

Age Friendly Arlington (Herschel Kanter)

- TAC Member Herschel Kanter provided an overview of Age Friendly Arlington. Currently persons over the age of 65 represent 14% of Arlington's population and such continues to grow. Arlington joined AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities in June 2018. Involvement is led by the Arlington County Commission on Aging and Area Agency on Aging, endorsed by the County Board. Mr. Kanter noted that based on AARP data, 8 out of 10 adults age 50 and older want to stay where they live.
- In terms of what makes a community a great place to live, the following were noted: community support and health services, outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, and communications and information. The process of developing an age-friendly community includes enrollment, conducting a survey and listening session in year 1, creating an action plan in year 2, implementation in years 3 – 5 and in year 5 provide a progress / status update. Mr. Kanter noted that Arlington has developed an Age Friendly Arlington Task Force, made up of former Commission on Aging (COA) chairs. Mr. Kanter also stated that Arlington's application to join the AARP Network was approved. Arlington is currently conducting listening sessions and collecting data. The COA committees are drafting goals and implementation strategies with the goal of completing a plan sent to AARP in June 2020.
- The TAC inquired about data on the number of individuals over the age of 65 who: 1) utilize public transit, 2) drive, 3) use transportation network company services such as Uber and Lyft, or use programs such as STAR. The TAC also noted that increase in property tax may impact some individuals who do not qualify for low income programs who are aging in place.

Report from the Report from Accessibility Subcommittee (Alexa Mavroidis)

- Alexa Mavroidis stated that at the April Subcommittee meeting, it was noted that representatives from Red Top heard complaints from individuals who use wheelchairs and not properly being secured. It was noted that the Subcommittee is trying to get a better sense of if this is a widespread issue as the Subcommittee has only heard from a couple of people about wheelchair securement. Lynn Rivers noted that staff has looked at the number of concerns and complaints regarding wheelchair securement since 2011 and since that time, staff has only received 33 complaints/concerns from STAR users. Most of the noted complaints dealt with individuals who utilized larger wheelchairs.

Additional Items from Committee Members and Staff

- Pierre Holloman noted the TAC will hold its annual Transit Capital Projects Tour on July 16, 2019 and TAC members should arrive by no later than 6:30 pm at the Bozman Government Center. Mr. Holloman stated that more information will be emailed to the TAC as the event nears.
- Lynn Rivers noted that the Board is expected to vote on a selected Columbia Pike Transit Station ITB general construction vendor at their June or July Board meeting.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 pm.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 16, 2019, at 6:30 pm.