

City of Lawrence
Public Transit Advisory Committee
City Hall Riverfront – Ad Astra Room
September 9, 2019 minutes

PRESENT: Heather Thies, Nick Kuzmyak, Mike Wasikowski, Phyllis Farrar, Allen Ackland, Lance Fahy, Bill Wilson
MEMBERS ABSENT: Sarah Trumble, Natalie Yoza
STAFF PRESENT: Robert Nugent, Wendy Koerner, Serena Pearson, Jessica Mortinger, Ginger Doll and Robert James (First Transit)
PUBLIC PRESENT: Jill Jolicoeur, Douglas County

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Heather Thies, chair, called the meeting to order at 4:10. Quorum met. Introductions went around the room.

2. Approval of Minutes (Action Item) – Allen Ackman made a motion to approve the minutes. Nick Kuzmyak seconded, all in favor, no opposed.

3. Mobility as a Service (Presentation) – Robert James, Vice President of Technology and Innovation at First Transit provided a presentation on Mobility with a service called Mobility as a Service or MaaS. Lawrence was chosen as a model town for deployment of this service and would like to partner with Lawrence Transit on implementing a solution. The service will take all of the mobility providers including bikes, on-demand services, TNC's (Uber, Lyft) etc. and put them together in an interface. The vision is that the transit agency becomes the mobility manager for the region.

There would be a way to plan and pay for your trip all at once and you can plan your bus trip, then bike trip, Uber trip. It will have real-time information such as you would find with Uber and Lyft, as well as fixed-route information.

For the user, this is one a one-platform interface to plan and pay for your trip. There will be a lot done on the back-end that the user would not see. At some point you can put other things in such as parking.

There are also (micro-mobility) services such as Veoride, the bike share service that can be integrated into this as well. If there are scooters at some point, this can also be included. Also, automated vehicles could also be added.

This app can be put in a kiosk form as a tablet in any business. This is called a "mobility hub." It can be a multimodal pick-up point for people. Ideas are downtown, library, stores, agencies, health building, etc.

The first step is to get online trip planning, then next step is the real-time information, then tie in Uber, Lyft, bikes, etc. Then, install driver tablets on Night Line and T Lift buses so it will be an on-demand service. It would be branded as First Transit Moovit app.

This would require replacing Trapeze with real-time on-demand service. Currently, people call in advance to schedule trips on T Lift and Night Line. With this service, you would just request a trip when you need it. It will be more interactive and will ask people 30 minutes in advance if they still want the trip. You can also schedule rides in advance. It would integrate the third-party mobility providers, provide a photo validation and mainstream paratransit services.

There could also be corridors with on-demand routes (similar to flex-routes.) This can also be extended to regional providers as well, such as Kansas City. It would also be a way to eliminate barriers for people and make transit very useable. People have come to expect this type of service since Uber and Lyft have become mainstream.

Lance Fahy asked how to people without cell phones would be able to pay for service. Robert James explained there are other means such as smart cards and pre-paid debit cards. Initially you can still use cash.

Bob Nugent also explained that the app will allow users to see the various costs of each transportation service. This app allows us to take the next step in transportation.

Nick Kuzmyak asked about the cost of the service to the city and if there are cost sharing options. Robert James said that there is an upfront cost, but they can help with grant requests if available.

Allen Ackland asked what the benefit to Uber and Lyft would be. Robert James replied that there could be subsidies, plus they would have access to a larger pool of users. They would need to provide accessible vehicles in order to meet ADA requirements.

4. Quick Updates -

a. Marketing/Communications – Serena mentioned that the Senior Resource Center is having their grand re-opening and Lawrence Transit will be doing a marketing table at the event. Also, the LMH Health fair will be this weekend and will have be working this event as well. There is an upcoming Southwest Transit Association in conjunction with the multi-state KPTA Conference in Kansas City that staff will be attending next week.

b. Amenities – Bob mentioned that new amenities will be put out until the end of the concrete season for new buses and shelters. There has been some problems with some vandalism and tagging. There have been about two shelters tagged each week. Bob has been working with the police to see what can be done. This has been happening after service stops on the weekends so it is probably not bus riders doing the vandalism. Police are getting photos of the tags so they can build a database.

6. Public Comment – None. This is Bob Nugent's last meeting since his last day at Lawrence Transit will be October 4. The committee thanked him for his work at Lawrence Transit.

7. Next Meeting – November 11, 2019

8. Adjournment – 5:35