



December Operations Committee Meeting
Monday, December 7, 2020
101 Queen City Park Road | Burlington, VT 05401

Present via ZOOM:

Commissioner Baker
Commissioner Sharrow
Commissioner Wallis
Commissioner Waninger
Commissioner Polyte

Jon Moore, GMT General Manager
Trish Redalieu, Director of Human Resources
Jamie Smith, Director of Marketing and Planning
Mathew Kimball, Capital Projects Manager
Nate Bergeron, Union Steward
Chris Damiani, Transit Planner
Hakeem Nuru, HR Coordinator

Absent:

Meeting called to Order

Meeting Opened- 10:00AM

Adjustment of the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Approval of Committee Minutes • November 9

Quorum was present. Meeting minutes were approved.

FY21 Performance Dashboard Presentation & Discussion

Mr. Moore informed the committee that due to time constraints unique to the Dec 2020 committee meeting, some data on the performance dashboard was still being collected. Specifically Maintenance and Rural ridership data.

Mr. Moore highlighted that Urban ridership had declined. He attributed this to the fewer weekend days in the past month, which typically yield in higher ridership, and the departure of college students for the thanksgiving holiday season.

Mr. Moore discussed the on-time performance metrics of both the Rural and Urban routes, which may be artificially lowered. This is due to the bus tracking system erroneously marking trips as early departures, when they arrive early, but wait to depart at their scheduled times.

Chris Damiani (Transit Planner) is working on rectifying this issue with the software vendor (Swiftly).

Mr. Moore noted that there were no grievances filed in the month of November. However, a pervious grievance has been advanced to arbitration, regarding the ending of premium pay in September for Bus Drivers. An arbitrator has not yet been selected.

Commissioner Sharrow inquired about the incremental increase in Founded Customer Complaints. Mr. Moore disclosed that these were face mask related complaints and some complaints may have not been captured in the dashboard for the months of July and August.



Commissioner Waninger inquired about if the Near Miss reporting system introduced in the Public Transit Agency Safety Plan (PTSAP) was accessible to the general public. Mr. Moore clarified it is currently not open to the public, but would be considered in the future.

Mr. Moore added that negotiations for the ADA contract are ongoing, and may lead to the tracking of additional productivity and financial measures in a separate report.

Mr. Moore also addressed Commissioner Sharrow's concerns about potential financial losses in operating the non-emergency medical transportation program, by stating that the new reimbursement methodology agreed to by the Vermont Public Transportation Association (VPTA) should protect against future losses.

Seasonal Service Update

Mr. Moore disclosed that ridership has been low in the Stowe resorts and it is expected to be low in the Sugarbush resort as well. This is in part due to poor current skiing conditions, travel restrictions instituted by the state and additional restrictions issued by the ski resorts (i.e.: reservations in advance, temporary elimination of day passes at Stowe until Dec 19 2020 etc.).

Mr. Moore highlighted that despite the recruitment efforts of the Human Resources Department, there has been difficult to staff the seasonal driver positions due to the current COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result, some CDL holding Drivers, Supervisors and Managers may have to fill the gaps to provide seasonal service at the capacity of previous years. This would likely come at a higher cost.

In the event that further contingency planning is required, the seasonal partners would be contacted. While still making considerations for peak ridership times and transporting resort employees.

Micro Transit and Montpelier Transit Center Reopening Update

Mr. Moore stated the Montpelier Transit Center (MTC) is expected to reopen by January 4 2021, with similar COVID-19 precautions in place as the Downtown Transit Center (DTC). This would also be the launch date of the Micro Transit system.

The MTC is to operate Weekdays from 7AM to 11AM and 2:30PM to 6:30PM, where the center would stay open to the public in the interim hours between the shifts. As well as Saturdays 8AM to 5PM.

Jamie Smith (Director of Marketing and Planning) displayed the interface of the Micro Transit app, named *MyRide by GMT*. MyRide would feature flexible route, flexible schedule service in the Montpelier area. Which will provide curb to curb service for passengers' from the hours of 7AM to 6PM on Weekdays and 8AM to 6PM on Saturdays, beginning Jan 4 2021.

Passengers would be able to book rides based on their requested drop-off time from the app and will be provided information about the vehicle picking them up (i.e.: vehicle type, vehicle color, vehicle license plate, driver name, image of driver etc.).

For riders who may not have access to a smartphone, they will be able to book rides via a home computer, by calling the GMT Call Center, requesting assistance from the MTC Customer Service Representative and by using a tablet station inside the MTC.

To address some key concerns raised, a cohort of riders will be provided with distanced in-person training on the use of the system and be pre-booked into the system by the Sustainable Montpelier Coalition members and GMT staff. Business Ambassadors (i.e. Shaw's, Hannaford, Walmart, CVMC



etc.) will also display information about the MyRide system on their customer service desks, to assist passengers in the field.

Pending the launch date of the application, webpages and social media posts are being developed to assist online marketing and outreach efforts. These are expected to be completed and released by December 14 2020. At which point, GMT staff will be trained with full simulations of the system, while toolkits are developed by the MyRide Advisory Group.

The Micro-Transit application is set to launch on January 4 2021.

Commissioner Wallis inquired if there was an issue with the hours which Dispatchers would be available to provide support to the MyRide riders via the phone. Mrs. Smith clarified that once Dispatchers have completed their shifts, calls would to the MTC customer Service Representative at the MTC.

Commissioner Sharrow inquired about the nature of the training sessions to be held for GMT staff. Mrs. Smith stated that these sessions would be scheduled virtual sessions, tailored to the skill floor required by the employee participating. Implying that Trainers, Customer Service Representatives and Dispatchers would receive more in-depth training, as they would be more customer facing.

Mrs. Smith also stated that COVID-19 occupancy limits would still be in-effect and passengers would not be able to book rides that have reached the occupancy threshold. Mr. Moore suggested that the addition of a real-time passenger count in Micro Transit vehicles would be a welcome addition to the utility of the application.

Washington County Site Analysis Study Update and Discussion

Mr. Moore stated that the site analysis contract has been awarded to the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), who are a known transit advocacy group with experience in similar projects, including in Vermont.

Matthew Kimball (Capital Projects Manager) stated that the project is currently in the data collection phase, where the consulting group is being provided with information related to GMT operations, maintenance, current facility specifications and must-haves for the potential sites.

All of which is to be analyzed this month by the consulting group. After which they will develop an evaluation criteria, preform site evaluations (including ranking for the sites) and a conceptual analysis of the highest ranked sites, all of which is to be conducted between January and March, with the final report to be delivered April 2021.

Mr. Kimball elaborated on GMT's current needs for the future facility. Specifically minimum routing requirements, staffing capacity and maintenance requirements. The consultants have also been provided with the current list of amenities and floor plans of the existing facility. All of which will be used along with the future facility goals, in the selection and ranking of the new sites.

Mr. Moore stated that as this facility would be largely focused on maintenance and operational functions, the site would reflect those needs over the limited administrative work that would be housed on-site.

Commissioner Sharrow suggested that the public should be allowed to recommend potential sites. Mr. Moore stated that external stakeholders would be engaged via meetings and local outreach efforts on a later date.

Commissioner Waninger inquired about the capacity which municipalities in the area would be engaged, especially with the development of a new town center in Berlin. Mr. Moore stated that due to the uncertainty of the final location of the future site, a collection of town representatives from the Montpelier, Berlin and Barre areas would be extended invitations.



Other Business

Commissioner Sharrow inquired about vacant Director of Operations position and pre-negotiations with the union. Mr. Moore stated that pre-negotiation conversations would likely occur early 2021 and the recruitment of the Director of Operations position has not yet begun.

Nathan Bergeron (Union Steward) stated that the union would be willing to begin conversations after January 1 2021.

Adjourn

Commissioner Sharrow motioned to adjourn; Commissioner Wallis seconded, all others agreed. Meeting adjourned at 10:49AM.