

King County Transit Advisory Commission (minutes)

December 14, 2021

6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Teleconference:

Here is the link to join the meeting via computer: <https://zoom.us/j/99560291505>

Here is dial in information: 1 (253) 215-8782, Meeting ID: 995 6029 1505

6:00 p.m. Welcome & Introductions

- Name
- Pronouns, if you would like to share
- Access needs

6:05 p.m. Consent Agenda, and Announcements

- Announcements
 - Last call: TAC chair and vice-chair nominations
 - Did not meet quorum; nomination period extended
 - TAC retreat – February or post-recruitment?
 - TAC members preferred a post-recruitment TAC retreat
- Consent agenda
 - Present:
 - **TAC members:** Mina, Cheryl, Oskar, Sonja, Angela
 - **Metro staff:** Shelby Cramer, Lizette Carrasco, Anahi Sandoval, David Goodman, Stephanie Pure, Ina Percival
 - Vote: Meeting minutes – October, November 2021
 - Did not meet quorum
 - Vote: TAC chair (Oskar Abian)
 - Did not meet quorum

6:15 p.m. Fares Forward presentation

Facilitators: David Goodman, Metro Fares Forward Team

Refer to presentation. TAC feedback follows.

- Like ORCA card, supports no cash option.
 - Thinking about those who are dependent on cars, and trying to get more folks on Metro versus cars, they might not want to purchase an ORCA card, because it would be intermittent used.
 - What about tourists? How do they find an ORCA card?

- Worked with Port of Seattle to talk about how people can do bulk purchases, or make a pass accessible when purchasing an airline ticket
 - Haven't engaged much with tourism industry.
 - A more robust ORCA system might make transit more accessible to tourists
 - What if a bus breaks down? Tickets issued? Or tap again to get onto a replacement bus?
 - Not sure how this works, but great point to keep in mind.
 - Next Gen workarounds would be incorporated into this
 - Ina – not talking about eliminating cash in the system, just on coaches.
 - Some strategies discussed are lowering card fees.
 - Open to being nimble
- Cash fares increase conflicts? How will that eliminate fare conflicts completely?
 - Idea is that when you tap the ORCA, it will always take the right amount of fare. It won't get rid of all conflict.
- Cash revenues – Access fares are cash. People who have resources use ORCA, those without resources can't buy an ORCA, or put much money on it.
 - Save money to get a monthly pass, under current system you have to pay it up front. And at the end of the month, if you haven't used it enough to make the fee worth it. To address this, we're looking at fare capping.
 - Pay as you go – as soon as you hit the max amount you'd pay for a monthly amount, you ride free.
 - You shouldn't only get the benefits if you can pay up front.
 - Increase the number of businesses that offer ORCA as a transit benefit to employees.
 - Increasing access to ORCA cards that already have value on them.
 - Need to understand behaviors and needs – informs the communications materials and education.
- What about connecting EBT cards to ORCA?
 - Electronic sticker – technology things that could be available to us with Next Gen.
- How to pay on street cars?
- More ORCA machines in the airport.
- Cash stats. What is the percent of people who use both?
 - Data exists, David can share it following the meeting.
- What about free fares?
 - We are doing an income-based fare model.
 - We want to continue to collect fares because we don't want to diminish service. We don't want the entire community to subsidize transit.

- Transit operators are not supposed to deny service if they can't pay. Operators that do are in violation. Is this true? If it is, then conflict related to fares shouldn't be an issue
 - Two issues that intersect. We are working with folks doing fare enforcement in order to make sure policies sync up. Info we're gathering should inform their work, and vice versa.
 - Variety of ways conflicts come up at farebox
 - Approach has been to be ambassadors of information
 - Stephanie – the policy for the drivers is that their primary function is to drive. Not to say that drivers don't ask people for fares, but the bus driver is not required to enforce the fare. That's the distinction.
 - Suggestion: that sounds too ambiguous. The driver has a lot of discretion. So they can take a more confrontational stance. Encourage more hands-off approach.
 - In driver's manual "operators should not enter into fare disputes with riders."
- Temporary physical passes they can use? Might offer to tourists?
 - Mobile ticketing is an easy fix for tourists. More things coming in terms of access.
- Ticket vending machine? Does this mean if someone doesn't have an ORCA card, they can get a ticket. How many stops would vending machines be available at? Wouldn't that be a high cost?
 - There will be new vending machines online with Next Gen, but not a viable alternative to offer them in many places.
 - Looking at ways to mitigate. Includes increasing our retailers. Like 7Eleven for example.
- When will you start cashless system? When will you get approval from King County Council (KCC)? Will there be advertising of the change?
 - KCC has already approved Metro researching alternatives to cash collection on-board
 - Don't have a set timeline for implementation. We want to spend enough time to understand when we can go cashless. Setting the time based on information, research, and conversations in community. Also informs the strategies we use.
 - Will have a significant outreach and communications campaign.

6:50 p.m. Customer Communications advisory group

Facilitators: Shelby Cramer, Lizette Carrasco, Metro Community Engagement

- Briefly discussed. TAC members will receive more in-depth email follow-up

- New initiative, the Customer Improvement Initiative, is seeking TAC member representation. Advisory group purpose is to strengthen Metro's communication and marketing efforts
 - 12-month commitment, 4 hours per month, compensated.
 - Specific duties: review current comms, identify needed engagement/research, advise and review plans as needed

6:55 p.m. Recruitment Feedback

Facilitators: Shelby Cramer, Lizette Carrasco, Metro Community Engagement

- Briefly discussed. TAC members will receive more in-depth email follow-up
- Any organizations we should reach out to?

7 p.m. Adjourned at 7:05