

Portland Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 3:30-5:00 p.m., City Hall, Pettygrove Room

Members in Attendance: Owen Ronchelli, Chair; Lenny Anderson; David Brandt; Carolyn Brock; Bill Danneman; Reza Farhoodi; Jon Joiner; Susan Pearce; Cora Potter; Zoe Presson; Bob Richardson; Vern Rifer; Ian Stude

Staff Attendance: Dan Bower, Kay Dannen, Julie Gustafson

Guests: John Sporseen

1. Meeting to Order:

Owen Ronchelli, chair, called the meeting to Order. The minutes from the May 7, 2014 meeting were approved.

2. Public Comment

Anderson asked if it would be possible to invite a member of the operating group to be a member of the committee as they would bring a different point of view to the table and they have a lot of ideas that could help improve Streetcar. Stude added that it should be a non-voting member and rather a representative similar to the current staff to maintain the current nature of the committee. Pearce moved to direct staff to find a mechanism to include operators in the conversation. Anderson seconded. The motion carried. Bower stated that he would work with the committee to achieve this goal.

3. Non-Service Animals on Streetcar – Topic from the Committee on Accessible Transit (CAT)

Presson presented that at the last CAT meeting a member of the general population reported that her service dog had been attacked by a non-service animal. This is an ongoing issue that should not be occurring per the current rules stated by both TriMet and Streetcar. Some such situations force the service animal to be retired as they can no longer perform their duties. Ronchelli asked how the TriMet staff at the meeting reacted to this concern for guidance to how Streetcar should react. Brandt stated that there are no real regulations or licensing of service animals and that it is a difficult thing to regulate as most people will respond that their animal is a service animal which ends the conversation. Presson responded that there is a follow up question that can be asked "What service does the animal provide". Potter added that she just took an ADA course for transit providers where they were trained to ask the follow up question provided by Presson. Brock stated that the rules are being abused by people with companion and other non-service animals as it is difficult for bus drivers and other personnel to confront passengers with these questions. Vern Rifer asked what rules are in place for Portland Streetcar. Bower responded that service animals are allowed and that Portland Streetcar rules are consistent with TriMet's rules.

Richardson asked if it is possible to have a monthly certification session for animals to be allowed on Streetcar. Bower responded that certification would be a very large endeavor for Portland Streetcar and that the first step would more likely be some sort of education or notification on the vehicles reminding the riders about the rule as well as enforcement. Anderson supported the idea of clarity with the rules to prevent future issues. Rifer moved to direct staff to educate the riders and general public on the rules surrounding animals on the Streetcar. Potter seconded the motion. Stude suggested partnering with an animal organization like the Humane Society to help deliver the message from an organization more familiar with animals as to why these rules exist. Brock suggested partnering more specifically with an agency that is certified in service animals to better frame the message. Ronchelli asked Rifer if he would amend his motion to include the suggestion of partnering with a service animal organization. Rifer added that Streetcar needs to be in sync with TriMet and that policy should not be changed. Potter added that staff should check with TriMet on

the companion animal policy to see if there is discussion of changing that moving forward. The motion was amended as suggested and passed unanimously.

4. Marketing/PR Ideas

Farhoodi asked what the reaction was from the public to the service interruptions and shutdowns during the Rose Festival parades. Gustafson responded that the majority of the response was grateful for the advance work staff went to prior to the shutdown to provide notification. Signs were posted on every streetcar for 10 days prior to the Grand Floral Parade as well as in all of the impacted stops in the days leading up to the parade. Notification was also posted online on the website and via Twitter and Facebook multiple times in advance and on the day of the parades. Farhoodi encouraged staff to fight harder to keep service operating and to move the parade off of 10th Avenue. Bower responded that staff has been working at this for a long time and that there is hope for an opening for change moving forward.

Gustafson reported that sales on the Mobile Tickets app hit usage records in May following the posting of the marketing signs in the streetcars and stops. She added that GlobeSherpa was recently honored as the Oregon Tech Startup of the Year. Joiner asked if the IT department is in house or contracted. Gustafson responded that the upgrades to the app are handled through a contract with GlobeSherpa but that the community responses are handled by Streetcar staff. Joiner asked if staff is satisfied with the performance of GlobeSherpa. Gustafson responded that they are very responsive to the needs of both Streetcar and the users.

Gustafson reported that the Streetcar Mobile Musicfest in May resulted in positive media and blog coverage talking about the event and the unique atmosphere. One story was from a regular rider who happened upon the event on her commute home and the music put her in a great mood and gave her a unique multi-generational experience that lifted her mood and made her commute home very pleasant. Stude suggested expanding on the success of the Musicfest with other formats such as comedy or art for example. Gustafson responded that ideas like this have been discussed by the committee who puts on the Musicfest and that support from groups like the CAC will help move that idea further.

Richardson suggested using the website to feature mini videos showcasing the businesses along the route and that, if they follow a certain criteria including how they are connected to streetcar or getting there by streetcar, a new video will be featured on the website weekly or daily.

5. Operations/Staff Updates

Gustafson reported that the Jasmine Block project is moving forward and that outreach has begun to the impacted businesses and residents. Construction is set to begin the first week of August and is scheduled to last approximately 6 weeks and will include a streetcar shutdown from SW 11th & Clay to SW Lowell and Bond as well as a 3-4 day closure of 4th Avenue at Harrison. Farhoodi asked if service will be increased prior to the opening of the bridge such as running the CL Line down to South Waterfront. Bower responded that the only enhanced service planned is the shadow train service.

Bower reported that Portland Streetcar, Inc. will be signing a five year lease for a new office space on 11th Avenue between Marshall and Lovejoy that will be both a driver relief point as well office space for the Executive Director, Community Relations and Customer Service functions. He added that he is open to ideas to make the space engaging to the public. The office space will open mid-July.

The purchase of the option vehicle, 026, will be in front of City Council on June 25. Anderson asked what is happening to United Streetcar with the merger of Vigor Industrial and Oregon Ironworks. Gustafson responded that it is a wholly owned subsidiary of Oregon Ironworks and will be included in the new merged company and will continue as a wholly owned subsidiary. Pearce asked if another tour of the facility could be planned. Gustafson responded that there is not as much activity at this time but that a tour can be planned in the future. Bower suggested a tour of the Maintenance Facility for the committee.

Gustafson reported that there was an issue at NextBus when the new schedules were input that caused all of the previous tracking data to be lost which caused issues with the arrival signs and websites. This all occurred during the Rose Festival traffic and Fleet Week Bridge lifts. The data error has been corrected and the signs appear to be predicting correctly. Also during this issue the link third parties, such as PDX Bus and the Transit Appliances, use was deleted from NextBus' system and had to be rebuilt to fix those issues. Gustafson reported that things appear to be up and working now and added that staff is working diligently to stay on top of the issue.

6. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

The next meeting for the Streetcar Citizens Advisory Committee will be Wednesday, July 2, 2014, 3:30pm-5:00pm at City Hall, Pettygrove Room.

Please call Julie Gustafson at 503/242-0084 or email at julie.gustafson@portlandstreetcar.org if you have any questions regarding this committee.

The CAC meetings are open to the public.