

**West Central Indiana Economic Development District
Transportation Citizen Advisory Committee/Disabled Advisory Committee
(CAC/DAC) Meeting Minutes Summary
March 25, 2008 – 10:00 AM
Vigo County Public Library**

1. **Call to Order:** Brad Miller, Manager of the Terre Haute Transit Utility, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. **Committee Members Present:**

Brad Miller – THTU (Chair)	Celeste Biehl
Pat Macke – WCIEDD (Recorder)	Paul Perkin
Jan Mallernee	Lisa Perkin
Frieda Murphy	Teri Brown
Steven Murphy	Jo Ann Hyde
Hope Smith	Lisa Long
Naoni Brown	Mary Harris
Patrick McGoo	Dianna Williams
Dixie Corbin	

3. **Old Business:**

Pat Macke shared with the committee that ridership for 2007 increased by around 20% when compared to 2006. This is one of the largest increases the THTU has seen in several years. She also shared that she thought this is one of the largest ridership increases in Indiana for 2007. Saturday Service and extended hours were the primary factors that drove the ridership up.

Pat reported ADA (paratransit) service numbers have declined primarily because the number of buses were reduced from four a day to two a day. However, the service is still busy and it continues to meet customer demands.

Pat said the system is still having some problems with passengers waiting until the last minute to cancel trips. The utility wants to meet the needs of as many riders as possible, but that's difficult to do if unnecessary trips aren't cancelled in a timely manner. THTU asks, that if at all possible, try to cancel trips at least 24 hours in advance or as soon as you know the trip will not be needed. This will free up seats for other riders.

Pat report the demand for night service is growing. This is great! THTU did around 3,000 trips in January and 4,000 trips in February. As predicted, this new service appears to be fulfilling a previously unmet need.

Brad Miller encouraged committee members to let Mayor Bennett and their city council representative know how much they appreciate the extended service hours. You can either drop these folks an e-mail by visiting the City of Terre Haute website (<http://www.terrehaute.in.gov/index.html>) or you can send them a note.

Question: Is there a night ADA bus available?

Answer (Brad): Yes, we do have an ADA bus available for the night service too. It is not currently that busy. Let others know about the night service. This bus is available during the same hours as the fixed route buses.

Question: Why is the North Plaza bus still going over US 41 to the nursing home? I thought it was supposed to be on demand?

Answer (Brad): I wasn't aware that we were still going over there, I will look into it.

Pat reported THTU finished 2007 in the black even with increased fuel prices. She thanks Brad and his staff for doing a good job of staying within the budget. With the addition of Saturday Service last year's budget was over a million and a half dollars.

Question: Will we lose the extended service after this year?

Answer (Brad): No, we have a two year contract with ISU. In July of next year we will be looking at this contract again and more than likely there will have to be some changes.

No other old business.

4. New Business

Brad reported that he hopes the new transfer facility, which is heated and air conditioned, will be open by the end of April. The contractor just needs to finish painting and take care of some other items. The new facility will be a much safer place to wait for a bus.

Question: Will the new transfer center have venting machines?

Answer (Brad): Yes, the new facility will have venting machines as long as they are not abused.

Question: Will there be bathrooms for the passengers?

Answer (Brad): Yes, there are public bathrooms. This is something passengers have wanted for a long time. Passengers will also be able to buy monthly passes, 14 Ride Tickets and get bus schedules there. The office at the new facility will also be able to provide passengers information about different routes and route times.

Question: Will Greyhound be moving there too?

Answer (Brad): No, we were not able to work things out with them at this time. When we first spoke to them about sharing space they wanted to be included. Unfortunately, they wanted more space than we could give them. For right now they are not going to be in this new facility. We may talk to them again in the future and be able to work something out.

New buses in 2008

Brad reported the utility is purchasing one larger bus in 2008 to help provide coverage for routes that need more seats. This new bus will be longer than the current buses in the fleet and probably be used on the Honey Creek Route because of the large increase in ridership on this route. He shared that if there was enough money left the utility may purchase another small bus too.

Pat shared that ridership on the Honey Creek Route exceeded 4,000 trips in one month. This is more trips than any other fixed route bus has done in years.

Brad said that most of the new riders on the Honey Creek Route are ISU students. Many of them are from foreign countries and they are used to riding a public transit system.

Price Increases

Brad reported that with diesel fuel prices going up to over \$4.00 a gallon the utility will have to look at a fare increase at some point. This increase will apply not only to the regular trip fares, but also to monthly passes and the 14 Ride Ticket. However, before we make the decision to increase fares we will hold a special meeting to get citizen input. Right now we have no plans to increase fares, but we may have to look at this issue again this summer.

Comment (Public): We know with gas prices going up that you can't help it and that you will have to increase the fares. But, the bus is still cheaper than a taxi!

Bus Routes

Brad share that there are currently no plans to change any of the existing routes.

Pat spoke to the group about the possibility of adding a second bus to the Honey Creek Route if ridership on this route continues to increase. However, any request to add another bus to this route would have to be reviewed and approved by a number of different committees. A new air quality assessment might be required too.

Pat also pointed out that all routes will have to be re-evaluated when the new transfer center opens because the point or origin (starting point) for all routes will be the new transfer center. This will require new bus schedules and times to be

changed in the books. Brad reported the utility will print some new books with the times and changes when they get moved into the new transfer center.

Pubic Comment: We think you are doing a good job.

2008 Grant

In 2008 the THTU projects it will cost over \$2 million to operate the transit system. Funding to operate the system comes from federal, state and local government, fare boxes and ISU. It's important that everyone continues to ride and show their support for the public transit system. THTU has added more days and hours to help meet the needs of this community. Bring a friend and ride

Question: When we get moved into the new facility, will my daughter still be able to catch the bus at the old office?

Answer (Brad): Yes, the buses will still start out from the garage and go over to the new transfer center. She can still catch the bus at the office at 14th Street. That is not going to change.

Question: Will the bus system ever offer an "All Year" Bus Pass, which would be less expensive than the monthly passes?

Answer (Brad): I don't see that we will be able to do a "Yearly Pass". Most of our riders cannot afford what it would cost for a yearly pass.

No other new business.

7. **Monthly Drawing Winners**: Frieda Murphy and Lisa Perkin.
8. **Adjournment**: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 11:15 AM. The next regularly scheduled committee meeting will be held on **June 24, 2008** at **4:00 PM** at the **Vigo County Public Library, One Library Square, Terre Haute, IN 47807**.