

Citizen's Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 19, 2025

In Attendance:

Keri Savage, Kelly Matone, William Kuehner, Zain Rabbani, Marion Beddoe-iobst, Thom Welby, Mary- Claire Boylan, Sarah Cruz

Via Teams:

Bill Schoen, Keith Williams, Douglas Hein

Keri Savage called the meeting to order at 11:31am.

Mrs. Savage reviewed current staffing counts and vacancies for all departments. COLTS has a lot of employment opportunities right now. We have some full time Fixed Route operator openings, and currently seeking part time Transit Center Customer Service Representatives and part time Service Employees.

Mrs. Savage noted the conclusion of negotiations with ATU for an updated Collective Bargaining Agreement.

In the last few months, we have met with the RailRiders and are hoping to gear up to continue or expand the GameDay Express. There is an upcoming meeting next month to finalize details of the updated Game Day Express.

COLTS is in planning stages of the following events, including but not limited to, Scranton's Parade Day, Driver Appreciation Day, Rider Appreciation Day, the League's upcoming Health Fair, and many school and employment travel trainings.

For the Building Project Update: Mrs. Savage noted the following:

The latest schedule update submission reflecting 5/19/25 – 5/30/25 **“Move-In date”**

- The building status is about 90% complete for the new building itself – not the entire project.
- Focus is on finish work including lighting, ceiling tile borders, drywall / paint, flooring, restroom ceramic tile, & restroom partitions / accessories have all progressed in Admin area & the mechanics office Area D
- Mechanical, electrical, & sprinkler work has progressed in the Maintenance area D (high ceiling areas)

Zain Rabbani spoke on Fixed Route ridership. It is a steady improvement, consistently between 3-5% from pre-pandemic numbers. We are currently above state average.

Mr. Rabbani discussed the recent modification of merging Route 55 and Route 43, which ran parallel in the same direction. The change took effect mid- January have eliminated redundancy to improve efficiency. The change increases about 10 minutes travel, but the only part removed was the Expressway. We are still servicing all areas. We have noticed efficiencies in this change as we ran a pilot program on Saturdays. We plan to incorporate the change with weekday route beginning in March. All while monitoring for errors and inefficiencies. If this works, there are a few more we would like to work out in the future.

Kelly Matone indicated that we are at full staff, but will be seeking a part time operator when one current part time operator transitions to a service employee position.

Mrs. Matone noted the status of arrival for 2 Shared Ride vans coming in March of 2025. They are 12 seaters with room

for 4 wheelchairs like the last 9 we have gotten.

Mrs. Matone also noted that ridership is at 92% from pre-pandemic numbers and continues to grow.

Michael Baker and PennDOT have been guiding COLTS through the Shared Ride Technical Assistance Project most of this year. Since the last meeting, the Department issued Radio Guide and Inner Office Communication memorandums to improve customer service and radio etiquette throughout daily operations. The Department also held an Open Door Meeting with Director Matone and Executive Director McGrath, where employees were free to join and discuss any questions, comments, or concerns about the Shared Ride Department.

William Kuehner stated have decreased by about 18% in our accident rate from previous years. The Department is continuing to conduct the quarterly audit for pre- trip/post trip inspections, facility inspections, and shop inspections. Lastly, the Department was finishing the PTASP Update, which will be submitted for Board Approval at the upcoming monthly meeting.

Mary Claire Boylan asked if the Technical Assistance Grant includes a review of Ecolane's method of scheduling. Her organization experiences many inefficiencies and redundancies because of the system. She was assured by Kelly Matone that the Grant will be accompanied by many trainings associated with the uses and features of Ecolane. There will be a particular focus on scheduling. Ms. Boylan also inquired about a route that could service Robinson Park located on East Mountain. The park is in the middle of reconstruction, and she hopes we can work together to provide service when completed.

Ms. Beddoe-lobst indicated that she is having many issues with Operators accommodations for Route #54. She explained that she is visually impaired, and it is very dangerous to cross N. Main Avenue on the outbound. Her most recent experience was serious, in that she was almost struck by a motorist who ran the red light. There was a discussion about "call-stop," and the recent initiative to eliminate the use of such. Instead, Fixed Route Operations will review to assess the feasibility of a route modification to eliminate the need to cross over N. Main Avenue.

Sarah Cruz was present to provide a shout out for the recent social media posts on COLTS' Facebook. She stated that the graphics and creatives are colorful and eye catching. She notices that there is more foot traffic on the page, and she credits the new communications for such.

Lastly, Ms. Boylan offered to provide additional training to employees with the use of a Sighted Guide, so that employees are better equipped to handle and assist those in need.

The next Citizen's Advisory Committee Meeting will be Wednesday, February 12, 2025.

Mrs. Savage asked for a motion to adjourn. Bill Schoen made the motion. Zain Rabbani seconded the motion.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:58am.