

**Transportation Solutions  
Regional Transit Working Group**

Meeting August 29, 2008  
Minutes

Present: Karl Gills, Tracey Rogalski, Bruce Pitts, Russ Martin, Darcy Trask, Sandy Evans Hall, Nancy Stahoviak

City Staff: John Eastman, Jonathan Flint

1. Employer sponsored transportation – Insurance Issues – Karl Gills  
Workers Comp – if you contribute to transportation costs with financial compensation, providing or paying directly to employee, and the employee gets in an accident getting to or from work, that will be a workers comp issue. Purchasing bus passes or participating in a centralized database for rideshare would not be considered workers comp if an accident occurred.
2. Transit Surveys – Jonathan Flint  
Jonathan reported on surveys conducted on the regional transit bus in January, April and July of this year. The annual average income of the riders has increased and the bus ridership has increased since April, probably due to the increased price of fuel. The facility in Craig will allow for buses to park in a climate controlled area which will help this winter.

Jonathan announced that Philo has been talking to Greyhound and they're interested in bringing back their route through Steamboat and Craig.

The regional transit is currently charging \$5 each way with a \$35 punch pass for 10 rides. With the increase in fuel prices, that fare may need to increase. It also may need to increase to accommodate capital cost of the facility and replacement of the buses. There is a possibility to add a 3<sup>rd</sup> bus in the winter with a 6 a.m. departure from Craig and a 4:40 p.m. departure in Steamboat to return.

Larger buses have helped add capacity from 37 to 57 people but there is a chance that buses will be full this winter, leaving people behind. It's hard to identify which time frame on which day could exceed capacity and plan for that.

Ridership groups include construction, which is growing the fastest. Also increasing the ridership of professionals, and some hospitality although the times don't work as well for the hospitality industries. Reverse commuting is also happening more often.

The bus costs are approximately \$90 - \$95 per hour to operate. Each bus operates an average of 5 hours. There are currently 2 buses in operation and a total of four

in the fleet. Passengers pay about \$100,000 of the total \$300,000 operating costs per year with the remainder paid through intergovernmental agreements. Federal funds are for capital only and can't be used for operating costs. In the past those funds averaged \$500,000 to 1,000,000 annually but now there is more competition for the grant monies. The SST fleet is in good shape right now.

3. Study on S. Routt Transportation – Nancy Stahoviak

There are three options that the consultants are discussing in Chapter 3 of their report:

- a. Rideshare Program – [www.erideshare.com](http://www.erideshare.com) or [www.alternaterides.com](http://www.alternaterides.com) are examples of national programs. We could establish a ride share program and website in Routt County
- b. Vanpool – Shuttle service with prepaid passengers
- c. Continuous bus service

In Chapter 4, the consultants discussed various funding options to include establishing a Rural Transportation Authority (RTA), a lodging tax, a sales tax, an ITA or employer subsidies.

Nancy informed the group that September 30 the consultant would provide recommendations at a meeting of the working group in Oak Creek Town Hall at 7 p.m. There would be a public meeting in S. Routt following this presentation.

John Eastman spoke of programs in Ft. Collins, Boulder and Aspen and will investigate and bring more information to the next meeting.

4. Other needs to identify?

Kathleen Titus was going to contact DRCOG to talk about local rideshare programs. Start with commuting, reliable, dependable process. There also needs to be some way of dealing with family emergencies – in some areas, there is a Free Ride Home program which allows for one or 2 free rides per year on demand. Nancy will call Kathleen and see if she has any further information and John E. will talk to the other areas mentioned above to see what they do.

Aspen had a brochure which talked about the costs of driving vs. the cost of carpool/vanpool. It would be important to have someone market and promote whatever is done.

Darcy spoke of the hospitality wage and benefit survey that she is doing and offered to add some questions about regional transportation needs of employees. She has also been participating in a business visitation survey and noted that the businesses were consistently rating the transit in Craig very low. (it is not existent, but perhaps this points to a need to have transit there)

Russ said that there are going to be parking spaces at Dry Creek for carpoolers for both Twentymile mine and Craig to Steamboat transit. Twentymile is running a

bus. Russ would be willing to facilitate a survey in Steamboat. He noted that shelter is important as well a more signage and posted schedule. The Haven might also be able to maximize trips by carrying more passengers.

Jonathan said that now they are not leaving anyone behind but they are getting close to being full on the regional transit. Fridays especially, the young people in Hayden are not in school and may use the bus to get to Steamboat to go skiing.

A reservation system might have benefits to maximizing capacity but how do you handle no-shows? Jonathan will get costs for providing a 3<sup>rd</sup> bus – approximately \$55,000 for 122 days in the winter. The biggest challenge is getting drivers as we already have a bus to use.

Employer data – Darcy will work on the hospitality survey and Karl and John Eastman will look at developing a survey for larger employers. John will contact Ft. Collins.

#### 5. Next Meeting Agenda

- a. Rideshare opportunities
- b. Survey employers (large)
- c. Survey communities – additional needs
- d. 3<sup>rd</sup> bus from Craig
- e. Recommendations from S. Routt Study

**Date for next meeting:**

**Friday, Sept. 26 at 1 p.m.**

**Invite Twentymile, Craig, and Moffat County representatives**