

CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE MINUTES

January 23, 2020

The City Council Community Planning and Transportation Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met at 4:05 p.m. in the Conference Room on the 23rd day of January, 2020, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT: Councilmember Petrone and Chairman Holman

ABSENT: Councilmembers Bierman, Hall, and Wilson

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember Joe Carter, Ward Two
Dr. Marilyn Dillon, Ph.D., Mobility Management Administrator/American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator for Embark
Mr. Taylor Johnson, Public Transit Coordinator
Mr. Angelo Lombardo, Transportation Traffic Engineer
Ms. Beth Muckala, Assistant City Attorney
Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works
Mr. David Riesland, Traffic Engineer
Mr. Michael Scroggins, Information Technology (IT) and Marketing Manager for Embark
Ms. Kathryn Walker, City Attorney
Ms. Syndi Runyon, Administrative Technician IV

Item 1, being:

PUBLIC TRANSIT RIDERSHIP REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER AND
TRANSIT REIDERSHIP FARES.

Chairman Holman said the Community Planning and Transportation Committee (CPTC) meets every fourth Thursday at 4:00 p.m. to review the monthly report for public transit ridership, not only for the past month, but for year-to-date. He said CPTC discusses issues relevant to the public transit system, which is more important now because the City is operating the bus system.

Mr. Taylor Johnson, Public Transit Coordinator, introduced Dr. Marilyn Dillon, Mobility Management Administrator/American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator for Embark and Mr. Michael Scroggins, Information Technology (IT) and Marketing Manager for Embark.

Item 1, continued:

Mr. Johnson said the fixed route service transported 24,379 passengers in November, which is a 6% increase compared to December 2018. The daily average ridership was 1,163, an increase of 20%. He said FYE 20 to date ridership (July – December) is 152,689, a decrease of 7% over the same period last year.

The paratransit service transported 1,830 passengers in December, a decrease of 18% compared to December 2018. Average daily ridership was 87, a decrease of 7%. FYE 20 paratransit ridership is 11,340, a decrease of 33%. For the month of December, the paratransit service had 0.66% trip requests denied due to capacity, which is a very low number.

Chairman Holman asked Mr. Johnson to explain the decrease in ridership numbers and Mr. Johnson said the City is comparing numbers to Cleveland Area Rapid Transit (CART), which was operated by OU for 30 years. He said Staff is being cautious with the comparison knowing the service being provided by OU is now being provided by Embark, as of August 5, 2019, so the City is essentially comparing two separate entities. He said gas prices also play a role in public ridership.

Mr. Johnson highlighted transit activities and said Staff continues to discuss the Joint Transit and Public Safety Maintenance Facility to be constructed near the current City Fleet Maintenance Facility on Da Vinci Street. He said City Staff gained access to the Federal Transit Authority Grant and reporting system and continues to work on documentation to gain access to program grant funds. He said Oklahoma State Representative Sterling and Senator Stanridge went on a ride along on January 17th. He said the Mayor's Read and Ride event will take place tonight.

Mr. Johnson said the Committee had requested information on the number of bus stops that have shelters and/or benches and said there are currently 35 shelters and 11 benches. Chairman Holman asked how many bus stops have neither and Mr. Johnson said there are 115 total bus stops. Mr. Johnson said once ridership numbers become more concise, Embark and the City will be reviewing bus stops that need benches and/or shelters to be provided based on ridership numbers.

Chairman Holman said he rode the full loop of the Main Street route and noticed people standing in front of Crest to catch the bus even though there are no signs that this area was a bus stop and asked why there are no signs indicate this location as a bus stop. Mr. Johnson said the City needs permission from Crest to install a sign since that is private property and there is no sidewalk with an ADA access point so a sidewalk would need to be constructed and Staff is working with the property owner on these issues.

Mr. Johnson said the Committee also requested technology for speech impaired citizens who want to schedule Embark Plus rides and Ms. Marilyn Dillon, Mobility Management Administrator/American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator for Embark, said citizens can use the Oklahoma Relay Service provided by the State of Oklahoma at no charge. She said citizens simply dial 711 and the 711 operator will type the message to an Embark Plus scheduler and relay the scheduled time back to the caller.

Item 1, continued:

Councilmember Petrone asked what it would cost to reinstate Saturday service and Mr. Johnson said Staff is currently working with Embark on costs for that service to provide to Council.

Mr. Johnson said he would like to discuss fare structures at the next meeting, if possible.

Items submitted for the record

1. Public Transportation Monthly Report for December 2019
2. Norman Transit Ridership Totals for December 2019

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Item 2, being:

DISCUSSION REGARDING CENTERLINE STRIPING AND ALL-WAY STOP SIGN
INSTALLATION ON RURAL ROADS.

This item was postponed to February in order to obtain Councilmember Wilson's input for Ward Five.

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Item 3, being:

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS.

None

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The meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.