

LCTA Ridership Committee
February 17, 2015
2:00 pm

Present: Lee Horton, Norm Gavlick, Valerie Kepner, Patrick Conway, Joseph J. Fedak, Linda Slater, Angel Mathis, Bob Caruso, and Sid Halsor.

At the January meeting, it was noted that bus fares cover approximately 16% of the costs of running LCTA's buses. It was further noted at this meeting that the national average is 30%.

There was further discussion of Penn DOT's desire to have public transit users use a universal card that may be used to ride public transportation throughout the state.

A question regarding PennDOT's reimbursement formula was addressed. There is a year or two lag in PennDOT funding, so if LCTA were to extend service hours, it will not receive any increased funding for another year or two.

The plan is for one bus to run into the CenterPoint Commerce & Trade Park by March 2015; LCTA will take two routes and combine them into one in order to service CenterPoint.

LCTA has distributed a survey to 6500 employers in NEPA asking about their employees' transportation needs; employees (via their employers) will eventually be surveyed to get their feedback as well.

Norm Gavlick (and LCTA) is in regular talks with Senator Yudichak and other local politicians relating to the potential for expanding bus service *before* expanding light rail in the region.

A bus rider noted that the boards in the Intermodal do not reflect bus schedules for any bus beyond the #16; some of the bus schedules on the boards report incorrect times.

There was a complaint shared regarding a van driver not offering help to a van rider having difficulty navigating his/her way to the van.

The television inside the Intermodal is not set to a channel that broadcasts weather-related changes to LCTA's services; it would be helpful if it was.

A question was asked if LCTA administrators would consider calling for weather-related changes to services earlier rather than later in order to enable riders to make better decisions.

This led to Norm Gavlick sharing a proposal that LCTA is currently contemplating. What did those in attendance think about an "extreme weather service" that would allow buses to run even if they could not navigate the snow routes? This "extreme service" would eliminate any of the outlying areas and neighborhoods but run the major thoroughfares to at least get riders to their towns of residence.

There was a request for service to Hazleton, specifically Amazon.com, Inc., a major employer in the area. Norm Gavlick and LCTA are talking to Senator Yudichak about this as well. A follow-up question asked if it was possible for the summer Frances Slocum service to coordinate with the Hazleton bus service.

Norm replied that LCTA is working to get service to the Crestwood Industrial Park and Hazleton's LCCC students.

Has LCTA given recent thought to servicing the Shoppes At Montage as there are many employment opportunities available there? Norm responded that this was not currently a priority as LCTA is currently focusing on getting service into more industrial parks.

Norm Gavlick and Lee Horton continue to put together an expanded Saturday van service.

Are LCTA's fixed route drivers allowed to back out of their stalls without the assistance of an LCTA spotter? The answer was yes. All regular safety procedures are to be employed by the drivers when backing out without a spotter.

There was a request that LCTA put up a system-wide map at the Intermodal. Lee Horton will look into this.

It was noted that LCTA will be able to use Shared Ride vans to take riders home from LCTA board meetings in the future.

It was reported at an LCTA board meeting (held after this Ridership Committee meeting) that the report came back from the city of Wilkes-Barre regarding the quality of the air in the Intermodal, and the air quality is actually better than the air *outside* of the Intermodal.

The next LCTA Ridership Committee meeting will take place March 17, 2015 at LCCC's Wilkes-Barre Center on Public Square.