

MINUTES OF THE MAY 10, 2006, MEETING OF THE CITYLINK ADA ADVISORY BOARD

A meeting of the CityLink ADA Advisory Board was held in the conference room at CityLink Transit, 1189 S. 2nd St., Abilene, Texas on Wednesday, May 10, 2006 at 3:30 p.m. Brigitte Lett – Board Chairperson called the meeting to order, the following members were present:

Brigitte Lett
David Barnhill

Pam Barnhill
Patsy Daniel

Bill Daniel

Also present and attending the meeting was: Donna Reiff, Special Education Teacher AISD who has been invited to become a member (alternate) of the Board, Theresa James, City of Abilene Attorney, Amy Foerster, General Manager, and Bobby Sharpe, Special Services Administrator.

Members not present include: James Shepard, Shirley Hudson

Board reorganization was discussed. Mr. Sharpe informed the Board the recommendations for Board appointments have been sent to City Hall but have not heard the status of those recommendations.

Ms. Foerster informed the Board that CityLink is processing grants and that funding has been received and is being applied to vehicles and operations. CityLink received federal grant monies to fund several projects such as refurbishing the passenger lobby and restrooms. The federal grant will fund 80% and the other 20% must come from other sources. The state grant continues to be cut every year. This past year CityLink received \$800,000, this coming year expecting to receive only \$400,000. Ms. Foerster reported that CityLink has begun selling vinyl advertising spots on our vehicles with Communities of Abilene Federal Credit Union buying the first four spots, and then Goodwill-West Texas is looking to purchasing space soon. Ms. Foerster also informed that CityLink will be requesting a fare increase again this year that will ask for van fare to increase from \$1 to \$2, van fare for outside of service area to increase from \$1.50 to \$3, bus passes for elderly/disabled from \$11 to \$15 monthly, single rides from \$.35 to \$.50. CityLink's fares are still lower than other comparable transit agencies. Ms. Foerster explained that CityLink's fuel budget increased \$200,000 this year and if the fares are not increased, we may need to cut some services unless the City of Abilene increases their funding share. Patsy Daniels, Board member, suggested implementing a minimal charge for van passengers for travel to the pick up location not just paying the fare while riding on the vehicle. Ms. Foerster informed that Board that a consultant from Houston, Allen Rodenstein, has been working on a study of transit options and coordination.

Ms. Foerster reported to the Board CityLink's Evening Service ridership for the month of March 2006 has decreased over 2% as compared to the current month last year. Ridership for this fiscal year to date has increased 4.5% from last year. Revenue for the current month has decreased by over 5%, compared to this month last year but the revenue for the fiscal year to date has increased over 17%.

Ms. Foerster discussed with the Board CityLink's ridership statistics covering the fifth month, Marcy 2006, of the fiscal year 2006. Fixed route ridership for the current month has decreased by over 3% compared to this month last year, reporting 44,165 passengers during the month of March 2006. Passenger revenue for fiscal year to date has increased over 58% as compared to fiscal year to date last year. Demand response passenger trips equaled 8,552 for the month of March 2006, an increase of over 3% as compared to March 2005. Demand response ridership for the fiscal year to date has increased by over 8% compared to 2005. Passenger trips for the fiscal year to date totals 46,909 whereas fiscal year to date last year was 43,726. Revenues for March 2006 were \$6,731 and revenues from March 2005 were \$5,870, which is an increase of over 14%. Revenue for fiscal year to date is up over 16% as compared to last fiscal year to date. Evening service ridership has decreased by over 2% showing 1,573 passenger trips for the month of March 2006 as compared to 1,610 passenger trips for the month of March 2005 but has shown an increase for fiscal year to date of 4.5%. Revenue for March 2006 was \$1,779 and revenue for March 2005 was \$1,888, which is a decrease of over 5%. Revenue for the fiscal year to date has increased over 17.5% compared to last year.

Ms. Foerster gave a status report of CityLink's Charter Service. For the month March 2006, CityLink's Charter Service had 218 passengers compared to March 2005 which had 423 passengers.

Ms. Foerster explained to the Board the status of the Capital Vehicle Replacement Program. The new bus bid was awarded to Lassiter Bus and Mobility who will produce a newer model bus that will be in the same fashion as the 2000 model buses CityLink has in the existing fleet. Ms. Foerster stated the ramps will be better and easier to operate, will have a heavy duty motor, and transmission. The new model buses will have a life expectancy of 15 years. CityLink's older model buses, 1992 Chance, had a life expectancy of 7 years according to the Federal Transportation Administration but we have been operating them for 14 years. Ms. Foerster informed that she will be traveling to the Lassiter factory in California next month to attend the pre-production meeting to discuss the specifications of the buses and paint scheme. CityLink should receive the new buses in approximately 330 days. The City of Abilene/CityLink is purchasing 4 buses now with the option of purchasing 11 at the same price with plans to purchase 5 more buses next year. There were two bids that were submitted, one from Lassiter for \$254,000 per bus whereas the other bid submitted was for \$269,000 per bus. Ms. Foerster reminded the Board of the request for Congressional Earmark funds from Congressman Neugebauer to purchase replacement vans. Ms. Foerster stated that she has not yet heard of the status of the request. Staff will begin writing the new specifications for these vans to include a more heavy duty vehicle capable of operating 18 hours per day 6 days per week.

Ms. Foerster informed that Board that CityLink may ask for more support letters from Board members and persons from the public once we begin to apply for additional funding/grants such as the United Way Community Investment program.

Ms. Foerster addressed Sunday service with the Board. The subject of offering limited service on Sundays has been mentioned to the City of Abilene. Ms. Foerster stated that the JARC grant would pay 50% of the operating cost with the other 50% coming from local match. CDBG currently assists with funding the Evening Service and hopefully funding can be secured from

the United Way Community Investment program to cover the remaining costs. The Sunday service would only be for work related trips and would operate in the same manner as the existing Evening Service i.e. demand response, reservation only trip scheduling.

Mr. and Mrs. Barnhill informed the Board they continue to receive calls and complaints from CityLink passengers concerning the lack of air conditioning on the buses. Ms. Foerster informed that she has asked the City of Abilene for funds to hire an additional mechanic due to CityLink having only one mechanic on active duty at the present time. Once another mechanic can be hired, then hopefully together they can address some the air conditioning problems

The Board asked that CityLink staff/management consider offering semester student passes instead of monthly student passes which may increase revenue and ridership. Ms. Foerster stated CityLink would review the feasibility of offering this option.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

The minutes approved this _____ day of _____.

Chairperson, CityLink ADA Advisory Board