

Specialized Transportation Advisory Committee

February 25, 2022

MINUTES

Via Zoom

1. Roll call and introductions

- a. Jennifer Sweten, Mountain Line.
- b. Ron Knight, Fleet Manager, AWARE.
- c. Shanti Johnson, Communications and Outreach, Mountain Line.
- d. Mike McCollough, Missoula Development Services.
- e. Jon Sand, Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization,
sandj@ci.missoula.mt.us.
- f. Tom Thompson, Peer, Summit Independent Living.
- g. Anna-Margaret Goldman, Board Representative.
- h. Lisa Chamberlain, Chapter President for Montana Association for the Blind,
missoulaMAB@gmail.com.
- i. Travis Hoffman, Summit Independent Living, thoffman@summitilc.org.
- j. Chris Broadhurst, Bitterroot Resident, Montana Association for the Blind
- k. Deborah Postma, City of Missoula.
- l. Billie Ayers, Missoula Fairgrounds, bayers@missoulacounty.us.

2. Public comment

- a. Shanti Johnson welcomed Billie Ayers from the Missoula County Fairgrounds to share information about coordination and transportation for

an Accessible Day at the Carnival, a new addition to the Western Montana Fair. The fair was very successful last year, with approximately 122,000 visits. With the new carnival, they would like to open 7 of the safer rides for an hour to folks with mobility challenges for free. Billie was seeking ideas from this committee for transportation options, reaching out to the community about this opportunity, and making sure this is a successful and utilized event. An estimated number of attendees is needed two weeks in advance to provide numbers to carnival operator and to arrange transportation. Mountain Line will be offering 7-day service at this time, Routes 1 & 6 run past the fairgrounds, twice an hour, this expanded service also opens up paratransit service for Sunday. Early entry for the event will be around 10 or 11am on Sunday, August 14, 2022. The Fairgrounds are considering different avenues of outreach to service providers; mailing lists, STAC representatives, and a representative from ORI. In addition to organizing transportation for the Accessible Carnival Day, there is also continued interest in expanding sustainable transportation options to the fair, especially as development occurs on site and parking becomes more limited. There is also interest in utilizing the trolley for the Fair and they are working with Missoula In Motion on how to incentivize all forms of sustainable transportation.

- b. Chris Broadhurst, Montana Association for the Blind: Had a question, as low vision or blind person, why is there no public bus service through

Missoula from the Bitterroot? He commented on the amount of people coming into Missoula from the south, and those who've have had to cancel appointments due to the limited public transit service from the Bitterroot or lack of a ride from Stevensville. Bitterroot Bus and iRide Vanpool are not convenient and hard to depend on these services when limited. Regional service would be very popular.

Mountain Line is limited by initial district and areas around Missoula. Jennifer offered to reach out to the director of Bitterroot Bus. Travis noted he'll will check in with Hamilton Summit staff, as they have had recent conversations with the area transportation agency.

3. Approval of January 28th meeting minutes

- a. Correction in 5.b.1 - MDSC instead of MSD – Shanti updated in previous minutes.
- b. Mike McCollough made a motion to approve with correction. Travis Hoffman seconded. Passed unanimously.

4. Mountain Line update

- a. Mountain Line has had productive conversations with the Paratransit software app provider and are now at the point to coordinate testing in March. Jen will reach out to those who have expressed interest. The goal is to have a bug free and accessible app roll out in April.
- b. The agency is planning an early spring deployment of ITS, the onboard computer system. This will be installed on all buses and will allow

increased ADA announcements. Mountain Line has control over the timing of announcements so adjustments can be made to provide ample opportunity for riders to notify the driver of a stop after an announcement.

- c. Mountain Line is resuming regular schedule service (published on paper schedules) on Monday, March 7, 2022. This will result in increased frequencies on Routes 1 & 2, 8, 12. Shuttle Van Service will also resume.
- d. The agency has been successful in recruiting and training operators to provide 7-day service starting on Sunday, July 10, 2022. A first in transit history for Missoula! Hours, and other details will be announced as the date approaches.
- e. March 18, 2022 is National Transit Operator Appreciate Day. During the month of March Mountain Line will be celebrating their amazing team. The agency is accepting cards, notes, etc. to show community appreciate for the Mountain Line team.
- f. Lisa Chamberlain had a question to clarify holiday service after the 7-day service is implemented. The initial plan is to run service on all holidays, similar to the current Saturday schedule, except for: New Year's Day, July 4th, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day.
- g. Lisa Chamberlain noted during their Paratransit ride last Wednesday, the driver was excellent, however, didn't know what a white cane is. The agency will provide additional training opportunities for operators.

5. Update on city planning efforts & current projects

- a. Work continues on the Higgins Ave multimodal corridor plan. The project has been delayed due to coordination with MDT on design alternatives. Design alternatives will be available to the public the week of March 14th. Public presentations will occur at City Council, TPCC, TTAC, as well as other engagement opportunities throughout the spring. Please visit EngageMissoula.com for more information. A Walk/Move Audit is planning to be scheduled the first week of April. The public engagement process will help inform the audit. The extent of the project is from Brooks to Broadway which includes a transit corridor, multimodal users, and varying land uses.
- b. The City of Missoula Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Board has a vacancy. Applications will be accepted through the Mayor's office. Please contact Jon Sand if you are interested in applying.
- c. Deborah Postma, the newest member of the City Transportation Planning team, provided updates on public meetings for the Westside sidewalk projects. On March 16th there will be two virtual meetings (3 and 6pm) to discuss restriping, bike lanes, safety improvements, and sidewalk installations. Please visit <http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/2839/Right-of-Way-Infrastructure-Projects> for more information about City infrastructure projects.
- d. Travis Hoffman was curious about the status of the roundabout resolution with City Council. Bob Giordano is planning to present about this at STAC next month and wants to ensure someone from STAC is on the roundabout

policy committee. Bob Giordano and Ben Weiss also plan to bring this before Public Works Committee this spring and untimely City council.

e. Jennifer Sweten inquired about the status of the Front/Main Conversion.

Project concepts were presented to the public this fall, however after concerns about designs and feasibility, it's back to the design phase.

Funding sources continue to be identified for this project.

6. Other business & announcements

a. N/A

7. Next meeting will be held at 10:30 AM, 3/25/2022.