

Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee

Minutes

November 10, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am in Port Authority's Neal H. Holmes Board Room at 345 Sixth Avenue, Fifth Floor, Pittsburgh, with the following in attendance:

Roll Call

<u>Via WebEx Board Committee Members</u>	<u>Board Members and Solicitor</u>
Jessica Walls-Lavelle	Jennifer Liptak
Ann Ogoreuc	Representative Lori Mizgorski
Stephanie Turman	Michelle Zmijanac

Opening Remarks

Ms. Jessica Walls-Lavelle stepped in for Committee Chair Mr. John Tague, Jr. opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

Approval of Minutes from the October 21, 2021, Planning and Stakeholder Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

Ms. Walls-Lavelle asked Committee members if there were any corrections to the minutes. There were none and members approved the minutes.

Resolution:

- Authorization to Approve Title VI Analysis and Public Comment Period for COVID-19 Related Service Changes (Ellie Newman) - **Approved**

Ms. Newman will be running through our Title VI Analysis for some pandemic related service changes. Title VI is our federal statute that governs how we serve low income and minority communities and make sure that we provide equitable service to all communities. This comes into effect whenever we make a service change those effects more than 30 percent of service hours or mileage. In November of 2020 we put in 20 major service changes that we consider to be temporary. Just responding to the very changed ridership conditions due to the pandemic. Some of them were reductions and some of them were additions, at this point they all have lasted more than 12 months, so while we consider them to be temporary the FTA now considers them permanent. So that is why we had to do a Title VI Analysis to fully understand what the impacts of them had been.

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Additions - During the pandemic and before we had vaccines and everything, we put into effect some place service additions and collect impact we had capacity restrictions on vehicle, PAAC only allowed 30% of seated capacity onto our vehicles and at the same time we had some routes still had high ridership and this called persistent crowding especially for routes that only came once every hour and you could only put 15 people on them and it was very restrictive for riders. So, we looked at the routes that had most problems with this and some cases doubled service or certainly significantly increased on many routes. Three of these were Routes 1, 12, and 59, all of these in many cases were hourly routes that maybe went to 30 minutes service or 40 minutes of service. We also did a major service change on the P68, extending that to Forbes Hospital. We did a service addition to the Red Line we actually coupled that with a decrease on the Blue Line, so that one is a little bit different, it essentially provides the same level of service on the rail overall, kind of shifting from one route to another.

Reductions - In terms of reductions, we made 15 reductions on mostly commuter routes, these routes in some cases went down as much as 90% percent drop in ridership. We were still running normal level service which really didn't make sense for us to do, so we went through and found the route that had the biggest decrease in ridership and cut those routes back quite a lot. We needed to do this so we could put those additions on those routes as mentioned before and also so we were having significant out of service. We couldn't support the manpower needs with all of our COVID-19 related quarantine. There were many reasons why we needed to do these reductions here. As a group these reductions did not have a negative impact but there were some potentials for harm on the individual routes, such as 58, 65, P12, P7 and P76.

Route by Route analysis:

- **Route 58 Greenfield** - this is largely a university route about 40 percent of our ridership uses a U-pass on this route and so when the schools shut down we really didn't have much ridership here, this one was flagged because it does have a low income population that it serves in terms of its area, so this one was much higher than rest of the county low income population, that is why this one was flagged. Route 65 Squirrel Hill is a somewhat infrequent commuter route between Squirrel Hill and Downtown, this one had a huge ridership drop of about 85% percent, just tracking it throughout the whole pandemic we have seen of almost no ridership return on this route, but it does serve some low-income areas in uptown and South Oakland, so this is why this showed up on the report as well.
- **Route P12 Holiday Park Flyer** – is a commuter route that comes from Plum, Monroeville area and then gets on the highway and busway into Downtown, this one is potentially concerned because it has a fairly large unique service area that means that there is no other route that serves some of these areas, if there is a

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major cut it means these people don't have much options to get some other routes and this one was flagged do to potential impacts on minorities populations.

- **Route P7 McKeesport Flyer** – starts in McKeesport and goes through Duquesne gets on the busway into Downtown. This one I think is the only one that was caught due to minority and low-income potential impacts. However, this route has no unique area whatsoever. So, this is a route that even if this particular one is cut back everyone that lives in this service area still has at least one other route within in walking distance that they can take.
- **Route P76 Lincoln Highway Flyer** – has a somewhat similar service area to the P7 but its kinds of goes the other way around McKeesport. This one is also flagged due to potential impacts to minority population, and it does have a much larger unique service area. However, we are still seeing very low ridership, it is still about 75% percent down from pre-pandemic ridership.

Individually the service reductions that we just went through could have potential impacts on minority or low-income populations. If you look at the whole reductions as a whole they don't show a negative impact however, but it certainly tells us that we should continue to monitor the ridership on these routes and look towards finding a way to return them if we can. We will be holding a public hearing in January to get comments and get feedback from the public and that will use that feedback to guide what we do in 2022 in terms of service changes.

Ms. Newman would like to ask the committee for authorization to approve the Title VI Analysis and public comment period for the service changes. So, this Title VI report is going to be in our Triennial report that will be submitted to the FTA every three years. We are planning to enter into a 60-day public comment period soon after this month to get feedback on these changes and we will be hosting public open house events to get feedback directly from the public. This resolution will approve the Title VI report and authorize Port Authority to proceed with the public comment period.

Questions from Board Members and Others

Board Members did not have any questions