

Minutes February 18, 2017

Richard called meeting to order at 2:05 PM. We suspended the regular order of the meeting to accommodate our invited guests. We had five candidates for at large positions on the Lincoln city council. Each candidate had been provided the following question:

Most governments recognize that farebox revenues cannot cover the entire cost of any transit system. Elected officials make provisions, in the local government budget, for tax dollars to cover the shortfall. Public transit systems are usually financed by one of two different ways: General funds. Dedicated (or earmarked) sources of funding.

What are your thoughts on these two different approaches ?

Deborah Andrews:

Deb thinks we need a dedicated source of funding. She believes that Star Tran needs a lot of work. She does not think that the funding should come from any additional tax source. She believes we could redirect money from other areas. She suggested diverting money from LES, or some of the City funded art projects. She said she believes that services for citizens are essential. She told us that she had lived in Portland Oregon for a while. She said they had a very good bus system there including light rail, but she did not support that system because it was built on debt. She says she attempted to ride the bus but wasn't able to figure it out. She was quite critical of the current system and of several other City services.

Lou Braatz:

Lou explained that he is a lifelong Nebraska resident and very proud of that. He is a father, a husband and a Nebraskan. He believes that dedicated funding is the answer. He would like to

see the city charter changed to guarantee adequate funding for StarTran operations and expansions. He would like to aim high on the funding. He also expressed a strong interest in water, streets, police, etc. He would like to see a Park and Ride system to cover the outskirts of the city. These areas should be clearly marked as a Park and Ride dedicated. He has only one car and his wife takes that to work. He and his three daughters use the bus system as their main means of transportation.

Roy Christensen:

Roy started by telling us that he was the one who pushed the city to start operating CNG buses. He also said that he had been instrumental pushing the city to do the TDP. He said that he is a big supporter of the transit system and that he was instrumental in getting the additional funding. Marilyn interjected that Cfit also deserves some of the credit for the additional funding. Roy suggested that one way to create a better funding system would be to you require businesses along the bus routes and in the downtown area to pay for some of the funding. He also made it clear that he would not support additional taxes for further improvements. He suggested offering \$.25 fares. He also told us that he has a commitment from Black Hills energy to build a CNG fueling station.

Tom Nesbitt:

Tom was originally from Lincoln and came back a number of years ago to help with his ailing parents. He was very well-informed about public transportation in general and StarTran in particular. He is 100% in favor of expanding StarTran services. He considers transit in the same category as police and fire. He believes it should be a dedicated funding system. He mentioned that he is a registered Republican, but he emphasized that that does not mean that he will vote along partisan lines. He made it very clear that regardless of what the issue is and what his party

believes he will vote his conscience. He was President of the union that represents the State patrol officers. He also discussed the fact that he is active in the Chamber of Commerce and LIBA and that he will use his influence to get those organizations to understand the importance of transit.

Braydon McLaughlin:

Braydon told us that he is 35 years old. He is president of the Near South Neighborhood Association. He worked for Department of Roads Planning Department. He indicated that he also believes that the city needs a dedicated funding source for our transit system however he floated the idea of filling in with Uber or Lyft to fill some of the voids in town. Several members of CFIT expressed grave concerns about that proposal.

Regular meeting minutes:

Ralph made a motion to accept the January minutes with the second by Marian. Motion passed.

Marian gave the financial report. There was a check to Marilyn for \$23.83 for a black ink cartridge, another check to Marilyn for \$10 to reimburse \$10 in cash given to Richard. \$25 debit for the Cricket phone. \$10 for Richard for supplies, and a check to Marilyn for \$16.64 for refreshments, leaving a balance of \$588.86. There was a motion by Marilyn and a second by Ralph to accept financial report. Motion passed.

Fundraising is still on hold. Amy will update us at our March meeting.

Richard had a design plan for our next T-shirt project. No action was taken.

Richard reported that our ridership numbers are up on the Star Shuttle, likely due in part because of our promotional efforts. Richard also reported that there will be a detour on Route 40, Heart Hospital and Route 54, Vet's Hospital. 16th St. will be closed for three months from A St. to F St. 17th St. will be temporarily made into a two-way street. Temporary bus stop signs will be posted along the 17th St. This detour should cause minimal delays. Richard also reported that Star Tran has a few free flashlights that can be used to flag down buses in areas that are not well lit. Richard handed out some Bus Rider Guides. Marilyn will find out if these are available in digital image form for the visually impaired.

Old business: None

New business: None

There was a motion by Ralph and a second by Audrey to adjourn. Motion passed.