

Minutes of the Board Planning and Development Committee

Open Session - December 1, 2005

Mr. Solomon called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Present were:

Committee Members:

Mr. Christopher Zimmerman (Chairman)
Mr. Marcell Solomon (Vice Chairman)
Ms. Catherine Hudgins
Mr. Dana Kauffman
Mr. Gordon Linton
Mrs. Gladys W. Mack
Mr. Robert Smith
Mr. Jim Graham

Other Board Members:

Mr. Dan Tangherlini

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Zimmerman requested a modification to the minutes of the November 3, 2005, P&D Committee meeting, Action Item A, "Railcar Capacity Analysis," 18th paragraph, which references WMATA's investment in the railcar capacity study being a relatively small amount of money and instructed the staff to correct this phrase to state that the investment in the railcar capacity study was important information for WMATA's billion dollar investment in railcars. There were no other changes or amendments. The Minutes of the November 3, 2005, P&D Committee meeting were accepted and approved with the amendment.

II. ACTION ITEM:

Short-term Parking Improvement Program (P. Wilkins/ C. Maxey/ R. Stoner)

Mrs. Pamela Wilkins, Mr. Craig Maxey, and Mr. Ray Stoner briefed the Committee on short-term parking program enhancements and sought P&D Committee's approval on creating a system-wide time change to 10:30 a.m. for revenue collection at "pay-on-exit" stations; and initiating a Pilot Program at four Metrorail stations to determine the suitability of Limited Use (LU) SmarTrip® cards for occasional users and tourists. Mrs. Wilkins noted that at the request of Mr. Kauffman the "Lot Full Program" would be deferred.

Mr. Zimmerman raised concern about customers having problems with their cards and not being able to transfer the value of the card to a new one; however, there is a problem with having to pay for a new card. Mrs. Wilkins stated the difficulties with automatic reimbursement would be addressed at a future time.

Mr. Zimmerman questioned how much the cards cost. Mrs. Wilkins stated that the cards will be sold for \$5.00 with a \$4.00 value for parking. WMATA would pay a little more than a dollar since they will not be purchased in volume needed for quantity discounts. The cards will only be used to get out of the parking facilities, not for rail or bus. The card holder will be investing

20%, i.e., \$1.00, of the \$5.00 purchase price (\$1.00 card + \$4.00 parking value) rather than 50%, i.e., \$5.00, of the \$10.00 purchase price (\$5.00 card + \$5.00 transit value) as with the traditional SmarTrip® card.

Mr. Linton stressed the importance of having ample time to educate the customers about the cards to prevent problems. Mrs. Wilkins stated that proper signage will be essential. Mr. Tangherlini stated that the staff was going in the opposite direction of a simplified program and suggested WMATA should only have one durable card for all customers.

Mr. Zimmerman agreed. Mrs. Wilkins stated the Limited Use card is paper-generated for short term usage; additional testing will be required before purchasing 100,000 more cards. The LU was created to prevent occasional users from paying \$5.00 on a card that will not be used again, and the complaints about the excessive cost of the SmarTrip® cards for infrequent parking users have existed since June 2004. In addition, Mr. Zimmerman raised concerns that the implementation of the limited use card would make WMATA more dependent on one company's (Cubic's) technology and further limit WMATA's future options. Mrs. Wilkins replied that the Next Fare 4 development will allow WMATA to use cheaper isocompliant cards and enter into partnerships with other companies.

Ms. Hudgins suggested that WMATA is spending a lot of time and money fixing a problem for limited users and believed that the station managers would have to spend a massive amount of time explaining the concept to the tourists. Mrs. Wilkins assured the Committee that proper signage could guide customers effectively and that station managers are very pleased that a low-cost card is being considered.

Mr. Smith found it interesting that WMATA would spend so much time fixing a problem for tourists with cars and felt it was too complicated a message to explain. Mr. Zimmerman suggested that this is a difficult route to go just to save the tourist \$5.00. In addition, Mr. Zimmerman stated that advertising on the card could reduce the net cost to WMATA. Mrs. Wilkins stated she only met with the marketing director two days ago but could bring back a full report on costs.

Mr. Tangherlini and Mr. Solomon stated WMATA should have developed the concept further because they believed WMATA would have to expand it once implemented. Mr. Tangherlini also asked whether the LU card might be used for student pass pilot program. Ms. Wilkins replied that it is something that WMATA could explore.

Mr. Kauffman motioned for the Committee to change the time frame for revenue collection at "pay-on-exit" stations from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. It was seconded by Mr. Solomon. The Committee unanimously agreed to change the time frame for parking fee collection.

Mr. Kauffman suggested since the proposed LU card usage is so narrowly targeted that WMATA defer the issue. It was seconded by Mrs. Mack and suggested that the staff return with statistics on the number of infrequent users and tourists that might use the cheaper card.

III. Information Items:

A. Strategies to Improve Passenger Flow on Platform and at Stations (J. Hughes / M. McBride)

Mr. James Hughes and Mr. Michael McBride presented several strategies to improve passenger flow on platforms and stations using low-cost techniques already in use by other agencies.

Mr. Smith, Mr. Kauffman and Mr. Zimmerman suggested creating a concept for the platform markings that would compensate for the trains not stopping at the designated decals. Mr. Hughes acknowledged this point and stated WMATA would pick an appropriate size for the decals that would address the problem for the trains not stopping.

Mr. Linton asked if it would work on 4 car trains versus 6 or 8 car trains. Mr. Hughes reported it would.

Mrs. Mack and Ms. Hudgins proposed instead of using arrows on the decals to simply use colors indicating movement. Mr. Hughes stated that we can try both systems but warned that they could send conflicting messages. Mr. McBride stated the color system was attempted in other agencies but it was not as effective.

Mr. Tangherlini raised concerns about the visually impaired and how they would be affected from changes in escalator allocations between up and down. Mr. Hughes replied that WMATA has been working with the visually impaired and have ways to make the information available to them and assist them if necessary. Mr. Tangherlini also asked that a different color palate for the stand to the right signage for the escalators be similar to traffic control standards.

Staff will report progress back to the Committee Spring 2006.

B. Space Utilization Master Plan (G. Boykin /D. Couch)

Mr. Greg Boykin and Mr. Dave Couch updated the Committee on the results of discussions regarding WMATA's inventory of existing non-passenger-occupied buildings. The results of the Space Utilization Master Plan analysis were presented covering phase-out leased property, underutilized properties, and consolidated functions and facilities.

Mr. Kauffman inquired about the District II property being outgrown. Mr. Boykin stated from conversations with Chief Hanson that since September 11, 2001, the facility has been used for different functions, and the staff has grown and the facilities usage has changed.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Zimmerman raised concern about the sale of the Stone Straw building and how the Space Committee report relies heavily on the outcome of the Stone Straw sale. Mr. White reported that WMATA 's strategy is to sell the building when market and zoning conditions are good.

Mr. Smith inquired if the staff is attempting to affect a zoning change at the Stone Straw sale.

Mr. Malasky commented that we could or the change could be pursued by the purchaser. Mr. Zimmerman questioned the basis of the future projection statement that staff will move on this when the market is favorable. Mr. Malasky commented that it is part of the District's Master Plan for the area.

Mrs. Mack was pleased that WMATA would get out of leasing facilities and the relocation of the Lost and Found but was unhappy about the \$7.7 M associated cost. Mrs. Mack also asked why it would take 3.5 years to end the leases when WMATA has escape clauses to get out of the properties.

Mr. Couch stated that first WMATA would have to get through the design phase, and second to keep the phone facility operating, WMATA would have to buy a new phone switch for the CTF and run the two centers parallel for 6 months. This will take 3 or 4 years. Mr. Couch also mentioned that from the \$7.7 M the phone system would cost \$1.0 million. Relocation costs and build out cost would make up the rest.

Mr. Tangherlini asked why WMATA needs a call center. He felt WMATA should look at other alternatives. Ms. Leona Agouridis stated that the call center handles 7000 calls a day (3.2 million a year) for all regions. She said WMATA has been implementing technology to reduce costs and considers outsourcing to be too costly. Mr. Zimmerman and Mr. Linton agreed that for high level service an efficient system is needed. Mr. Tangherlini raised concern as to why WMATA wants to wait 5 years to sell Stone Straw for an expected \$6.0 M to \$8.0 M when operating cost will still apply over the 5 year period. Mr. Couch replied that the current value for the building is in the \$3.0 M to \$4.0 M range. Mr. Zimmerman also raised concerns with not selling the Stone Straw building now and questioned why this action was needed when the real estate market is "hot". Mr. Gary Malasky suggested that under local conditions it is not the best time to sell the building.

Mr. Zimmerman questioned the existence of uninhabitable buildings. Mr. Couch responded that WMATA is following environmental rules and there are problems with mold and asbestos.

Mr. Zimmerman and Ms. Hudgins requested a report with the operating costs associated with each facility as a next step. Mrs. Mack requested that the report be broken out with capital costs year-by-year.

Mr. Kauffman suggested that WMATA place the Stone Straw building on the market now to determine what the market may bare. Mr. Kauffman also requested information on why WMATA wants to maintain the archives and print shop facilities.

Mr. Tangherlini requested further information on the Storage and the Systems Buildings and he also acknowledged that the report was well written.

Mrs. Mack requested staff to provide how the space calculations were developed for the facilities.

The Space Utilization Steering Committee will present their findings to the Budget Committee.

Mr. Zimmerman moved the Board meet in Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter.
The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.