

AGENDA

Monday, July 13, 2009



Public Service Committee

5:05 p.m.
Carnegie Town Hall
235 West Tenth Street

Members Present: Kenny Anderson Jr., Vernon Brown, De Knudson, and Kermit Staggers

Members Absent: De Knudson

Staff Present: City Clerk Debra Owen and Assistant City Clerk Tamara Jorgensen

Guests: Council Members Greg Jamison, J. Pat Costello and Bob Litz; Planning and Building Services Director Mike Cooper; Public Health Director Judy Buseman; Transit Planner Debra Gaikowski; Assistant City Attorney Gail Eiesland; Licensing Specialist Lorie Hogstad; Steve and Aaron Haddorff from Wheelchair Express, Inc.; Dave Kadinger from Sioux Falls Wheelchair Services; citizen Sue Aguilar; citizen Michelle Erpenbach; and Argus Leader Reporter Jonathan Ellis

1. Call To Order

Committee Chair Anderson Jr. called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

2. Review and approval of Minutes dated May 11, 2009

A motion was made by Knudson and seconded by Brown to approve said minutes.

A voice vote was taken and all members voted yes. **Motion Passed.**

3. Wheelchair/stretchers transport service

Recent activity with the Sioux Falls City Council has involved allowing the taxi companies to raise their rates. Representatives from the local businesses who provide wheelchair and stretcher transport services to the public had been in contact with Brown regarding being able to raise their rates or to deregulate their services. The Public Services Committee has invited Steve and Aaron Haddorff from Wheelchair Express, Inc. and David Kadinger from Sioux Falls Wheelchair to attend this meeting and advise the committee of their concerns and needs.

The following discussions were held:

- Along with Paratransit, there are two companies in Sioux Falls that provide wheelchair services. Sioux Falls Wheelchair has been in existence since 1978 and has five vehicles; Wheelchair Express, Inc. has been in existence since 1978 and has twelve vehicles.
 - While the taxi companies have been allowed to raise their rates 4-5 times since then, the wheelchair company's most recent rate increase was in 1999. Last year, Wheelchair Express, Inc. invoked a fuel surcharge to offset the higher prices of fuel. They were told by the City Attorney's office that they could not do this and they discontinued the charge and are looking for other ways to keep up with the rising costs of doing business.
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- The transport companies would like to have the ability to be flexible with their rates and to allow the market to control the prices. Their service charges are the same regardless of the day of the week or the hour of the day. Neighboring cities around the state charge rates 10-25% higher than Sioux Falls for the same services. Rapid City is the only other city in the state that provides these services and their rates are higher as well.
 - Brown recommended having an additional meeting to include the users of the services to discuss how this will impact them. The wheelchair representatives invited to this meeting should be in attendance along with any City Council Member who would like to attend. Additional invites will go to: the City Attorney's Office, Public Health Director Judy Buseman, Transit Planner Debra Gaikowski, Karen Walton from Sioux Falls Transit and Steve Hey with the Sioux Falls busing system. **This meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 28, 2009, at 4:00 p.m. at the Carnegie Town Hall, 235 W. 10th Street.**
 - Discussion was held indicating that the companies should bring their proposal to the Planning Department – Transit Planner Deb Gaikowski – to include the justification for the rate increases. Gaikowski will have an ordinance drafted for the City Council's review and approval.
 - Discussion was held regarding the process that is used by the Sioux Falls School District for transporting children and whether or not they are considered an 'outside contractor' for the School District.
4. Taxi deregulation
The taxi ordinance that deals with a rate increase is coming before the City Council tonight for second reading. Discussion was held regarding having topics such as this come before a committee prior to coming before the City Council. This item is deferred to the meeting on September 14, 2009.
5. Affordable Housing
This item is deferred to the meeting on September 14, 2009.
6. Review Dance Hall and Events ordinances
This item will be discussed at a meeting with the City Attorney on Tuesday, July 14, 2009, at 1:30 p.m.
7. Council Security
This item is deferred to the meeting on September 14, 2009. Staff from Risk Management will be invited to the next meeting to discuss system changes in the Carnegie Town Hall. Discussion was held regarding having an Executive Session in the near future to discuss Council Security at the Carnegie Town Hall.
8. Open Discussion
There was none.
9. Adjournment
A motion was made by Stagers and seconded by Brown to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 p.m. Anderson, Jr. called for a voice vote on the motion. All members present voted yes. **Motion Passed.**

Tamara Jorgensen, CMC
Assistant City Clerk