



PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
Regular Meeting

Date: April 1, 2013

Meeting Called to Order: 5:30 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned: 6:30 p.m.

Present: Jo Beth McFadden (Chair), Richard Morton (Vice Chair); Mike Riedmuller, Kenneth Brink, Martin Karol

Staff Present: Bob Goebel, P.E., Public Works Director; Dan Sailer, P.E., Assistant Public Works Director; Bob Watts, P.E., Transportation Planning & Traffic Engineering Manager; Linda Angus, Administrative Supervisor

Absent: Joe Procopio (Council Rep); Robert Wells

Guests: Matthew Helfant, Douglas County Mobility Manager; Kris Bruxjooft, Travis Sanchez, and Alec Dockery – Students from Douglas County High School

ITEM/SUBJECT	ACTION/BY	DISCUSSION/REPORT
Call to Order		Chair Jo Beth McFadden welcomed the guests and called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.
Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda		None
Minutes	Motion made by Commissioner Richard Morton; seconded by Commissioner Mike Riedmuller	It was motioned, seconded and approved by the Public Works Commission to accept the action minutes of March 18, 2013. Motion carries unanimously.
Combining of the Town and County Taxi Voucher Programs – Bob Watts		<p>Bob Watts gave a presentation to the Commission regarding the possibility of combining the Town’s Taxi Voucher Program with Douglas County’s Taxi Voucher Program with Douglas County having the responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the combined program. This item will be presented to Council on April 16 where we will ask Council direction on whether we should proceed with an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to accomplish this task. We are asking the Commission to provide staff with a recommendation to take to Council as to whether you believe that by merging the programs we would end up with a more efficient program that would better serve our population.</p> <p>Bob gave the Commission a brief overview of the Town’s Taxi Voucher Program. The Taxi</p>

		<p>Voucher Program is now in its second year of operation and we have had very good response to this program. The Town provides rides within Town limits for work, shopping and medical trips to residents who are transit dependent who are registered with our program. We currently have a contract with South Suburban/Metro Taxi to provide this service and we pay up to \$10 per trip. Any trip over that amount has to be paid by the rider. Our average fares have been around \$8.50 so most people do not have to pay for their ride.</p> <p>This is a very time consuming program for our staff. Even though it's probably only 2-3 hours per day, it happens in little blocks of time so staff will get started on something and be pulled away to answer a call and perform the necessary paperwork. So when the County started their program this year, we had talked to them about the possibility of merging the two programs. By combining these programs, the Town's funding would go further due to the efficiency this would provide. We now are noticing that with both programs, people are getting confused. We deal with people that sometimes have cognitive issues and forgot who they made their ride with; if they made it with the County or with the Town and so they miss rides and we end up having to put them on probation. It would be a lot simpler for the ridership if they had only one point of contact rather than two. Staff is hoping to take the funding that we have in the Town's program and transfer it into the Douglas County's program. This merge will not change the operational characteristics of our program; we will still provide the trips to work, shopping and medical appointments within the Town limits for residents of Castle Rock registered for the program. Douglas County has a wider range for their program but only offers work trips.</p> <p>Matthew Helfant, Douglas County Mobility Manager, coordinates all the different types of transportation services that Douglas County provides. Douglas County has actually contracted with CATCO to be the point of contact for people calling in wanting some type of transportation service. They will either schedule for the Douglas County's Taxi</p>
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		<p>Voucher Program, or some of the other programs offered by Douglas County.</p> <p>Matthew gave an overview to the Commission regarding the County's programs. The County has three different Federal grants; one is for mobility management which is to coordinate transportation services and this mostly funds Matt's services as well as office supplies, travel, etc. Then they have two operating grants; one is called the Job Access Reverse Commute Program. This is the program under which we have the Taxi Voucher Program that is administered by CATCO. They also have a "for profit" transportation provider that provides more group trips as the taxi is more for one person going from one place to another. They also have a program call "New Freedom". This provides transportation for persons with disabilities. Within the next few months this program will transition into something a little bit broader because Congress has changed the program. It will be transportation for persons with disabilities and seniors. This program works with many different transportation providers including volunteer driver programs and "for profit" transportation providers. Both of these programs share funding for the call center which provides a seamless way for transportation clients to access transportation as they provide the scheduling and dispatching by working with all the different providers that the County works with which makes for a nice smooth way to provide transportation to those in need in our community.</p> <p>If Council approves this, we hope to have the IGA completed and brought back to Council sometime in May/June so the programs could be merged as of July 1st. Part of the proposal would be to take the remaining funds in the Taxi Voucher Program budget and pay Douglas County quarterly. They would give us an accounting each month but at the end of the quarter we would find out if we are running in accordance with our funding. There will be a term to this agreement and it will have to be renewed next year so it will probably just run for the last six months of this year and then at the time of renewal we would have an opportunity to make any changes to reporting,</p>
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		<p>surveying, etc. to ensure that we are still getting our monies worth out of the program.</p> <p><u>QUESTIONS</u></p> <p><i>If this program was combined, why would the Town still provide work trips?</i> The Town's contribution would help expand the amount of funding that would be available. We still had 150 rides last month for work trips so we know the need is still there.</p> <p><i>How does the Senior Center fit into this?</i> It doesn't! The Town budgets money for the Senior Center but it's not earmarked for a particular part of their service. While we want to help supplement them for their transportation services, all contributions go into their operating revenues. But for the accounting they give us, we know that those funds are being used to increase their ability to provide more rides to seniors. They were providing approximately 450 rides/month and we hoped to see that increase to 600 rides/month; they are providing 800-900 rides/month.</p> <p><i>How will the IGA be written to include the costs for admin fees?</i> We would suspect that we would be looking at the cost of the program with an understanding that up to \$___ could be used for administrative expenses. When we get our quarterly bill, there would be a line item for these expenses. We estimate about 10% maximum of our funding to cover the admin cost. Currently our staff time is not reflected in the overall budget for the Taxi Voucher Program.</p> <p><i>Can you explain how the level of service for our residents will be tracked?</i> Since the entire County's funds come through Federal grants, the County has all sorts of reporting responsibilities associated with the funding. We report on trips per hour, costs per trip, etc. CATCO is already responsible for submitting monthly requests that have invoices and supporting documentation due to the Federal funding requirements. So whatever kind of reporting the Town desires, we are sure we could provide it.</p>
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		<p><i>Reporting numbers is good but are the people happy with the service they are getting?</i> The Town has sent out letters to our riders requesting input from them as to how to make the program better or changes they would like to see made to the program. The ridership changes constantly so it's hard to track satisfaction. Douglas County will be required to do a customer satisfaction survey. Also, because they have their local coordinating council that oversees all the different transit services that are provided through the County, they have a vehicle to do that for all the services.</p> <p><i>Is it true that the Douglas County program only provides trips to work for only a few months until the participant is able to provide their own?</i> As I understood the program, the way the Job Access Reverse Commute Program worked was that it was not a program like the Town's where we provide the service to someone for as long as they needed it; they are really there as a stop gap measure to try to provide services to people long enough for them to get on their feet and find other means of transportation. Matthew commented that Douglas County had limited funding so they made the decision to work with each individual. We have some individuals that we work with that have cognitive disabilities so they don't have the ability to move on to something else so we're happy to continue the transportation to them.</p> <p><i>You will have two sets of books; one for what the Town provides a rider and one for what the County provides a rider. There is obviously going to be problems with trying to administer it. We will have to come up with a basic flow chart that will show us what needs to be done.</i></p> <p><i>Was there thought given to just contributing to Douglas County and not trying to separate the funding and just use the reporting aspect that comes with the Federal funding requirements?</i> Council has approved the program we operate under so without them giving us permission to change the existing program, we can't. If the merger with Douglas County is approved, this would be an opportunity to see how the rest of this year plays out and we might want to go</p>
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		<p>back to Council and tell them that it would be better if we just contributed. The main thing right now is to stay within the guidelines of the approved program.</p> <p><i>Is there a reason why you have to pay upfront; why can't the program be paid in the rears?</i> We thought that it would be better to be able to basically provide them some money upfront so they have something to operate with when the bills come in.</p> <p><i>Why does the County want to do this?</i> The County wants to maximize efficiencies through coordination and transportation services so that we are able to get our "best bang for our buck". It makes sense to work with our partners in the Town to maximize those efficiencies just like we work with our partners across the County and our partners that are transportation providers.</p> <p><i>Are there any other cities that do what you are proposing here?</i> There are many Taxi Voucher Programs around the country funded and ran in many different ways but we don't know of any examples that are quite like this where we are combining two separate programs.</p> <p>Commissioner Reidmuller wanted to point out that the staff recommendations are based on five reasons and we accomplish those five things by eliminating the program. We talk about decreasing confusion but the Senior Center is not a part of this program so the people still don't know who to call! 30% of Douglas County's population lives in Highlands Ranch so I'm not sure that Douglas County's interest and our interest as a Town are aligned. It seems like we are putting a lot of time into something that is not necessarily going to benefit the Town. Even in terms of confusion you have a one point call center to call, I don't think it's too much to ask that you do some research to figure out what your best option is if you're using a government program and I think that's a reasonable expectation on our part. I have a feeling that we are about to go down a road that we just don't need to go down and we are not gaining that much value. The real problem is that we are not reflecting the actual cost of the program in the budget.</p>
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	<p>Motion made by Commissioner Ken Brink; seconded by Commissioner Martin Karol</p>	<p>We are saying that we are putting \$25,000 on taxi rides but we are not counting the administrative cost to it – so there’s tens of thousands of dollars in administrative costs that as Public Works we need to go back to Council and say “this program actually costs _____ per year”. That’s accounting issue when we are not reflecting its actual value.</p> <p>It was motioned, seconded and approved by the Public Works Commission to recommend to Town Council to direct Town staff to work with Douglas County on the preparation of an IGA between the Town of Castle Rock and Douglas County to merge the Town’s and County’s taxi programs, with Douglas County being responsible for the day-to-day operation of the combined programs. Motion carries with a vote of four (4) in favor and one (1) opposed.</p>
Council Comments – Joe Procopio		Mr. Procopio was absent.
Commission/Staff Comments/ Concerns		Chair Jo Beth McFadden reminded the Commission that there will be meeting with the Town Council tomorrow night, April 2, to discuss the “State of the Commission” with Town Council. Your attendance would be appreciated! Jo Beth shared the PowerPoint presentation with the Commission members.
Adjournment		There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. Next meeting May 6 th .