

# Johnson County Paratransit Advisory Committee

## Minutes

February 27, 2024

### Present:

**Members:** Marc Rahe, Doug Thompson, Vicky Robrock,

### Ex-Officio:

**Others:** Tom Brase, SEATS Director, Angie Conard, Brock Grenis, Kelly Schneider, Hannah Neel, Susan Bethle, Josh Moe

### Absent:

**Members:** Jerri MacConnell, Eleanor McCleeland, Johnson County Supervisor

**Ex-Officio:** Roger Goedken,

**Others:** Darian Nagle-Gamm

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1. Call to order: 1:00
2. Open Discussion: None.
3. Chairperson's Report:
  - a. Introductions:
4. Director's Report:
  - a. ARPA update – Will be ending the service at the end of 2024 due to funding and resource issues. The electric bus should be done by April 15 and delivered to SEATS by the end of April. Funding for payroll will be ending in November with December 6 being the end date. There were nine times in the last two months where ARPA was canceled due to no driver, no vehicle or bad weather. ARPA is a beneficial service, but SEATS can't keep up.
  - b. SEATS ridership is around 450-500 trips each weekday and a little over 80 each Saturday:
  - c. Rural trips have steadily increased: Have had to cancel service a few times due to staffing shortages. A flyer was handed out with the number of trips and the need for buses.
  - d. Fare free for Iowa City to Iowa City trips, all other have a two-dollar fare. Or any trips that come from outside Iowa City or go to destination outside Iowa City have two dollar fare: SEATS ridership is up for 20 % since this time last year. A one way trip is around \$75 for paratransit vs an average of \$5 per trip for fixed route. Looking into cross jurisdiction now that Iowa City is fare free.
  - e. Johnson County SEATS continues to struggle with having enough drivers and vehicles for the demand for services: Employee injuries have hurt SEATS.
  - f. We are working to switch scheduling software to TripSpark, the company that purchased RouteMatch: Really excited for this, Riverbend is using Novus and loves it. Benefits of Novus: Credit card payment availability, notification system and better automation. The notification system will send a text telling riders their bus is five minutes away. The software will go live on May 1 and the rider portal will be this summer.
  - g. We are taking applications for Advisory Committee members. If you know of anyone, please have them contact the Johnson County Board of Supervisors office for an application: The last survey showed that a couple of people were interested but they fell through. Surveys will need to go out this year so the question will be asked again.
  - h. I will be retiring in June: Tom's last day with SEATS will be June 4, 2024.

- i. Any questions? How many drivers does SEATS need? Hard to say, usually a casual driver will move into any new full time position that opens up, taking away casual shifts. There were more injuries during bad weather. It was asked if training included getting a CDL – yes.
5. Updates from those in attendance at the Advisory Committee meeting: Kelly Schneider worked with 65 Kirkwood students on transportation options. Cambus brought a bus out but they found that Cambus stops service at 7:30 and classes end at 8:30. Kelly applied for grants to help with evening transportation and is looking for private funding for evening transportation. The goal is to start service on August 1. They are still looking for vendors. SEATS would like to include the rider survey with eligibility forms that are being sent out by Coralville and Iowa City.
6. Approval of last meeting's: This was done by Tom via email
7. Next meeting: May 28 at 1:00 p.m. SEATS office.  
Adjourn Move by Josh, Second by Doug