

Transportation Services Advisory Committee

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

MINUTES OF MEETING

March 24, 2009

ATTENDEES: Beth McNeill
Dr. Howard Kaplan
Hunter Bollman
David Bierling
Leah Flores
Cheryl Hanks
Rosie Schoenfeld
Rod Weis
Nicole Franzetti
Logan Nichols
Flora Reeves
Robert Pottberg

ABSENT: Dr. Dave Parrott
Mike Caruso
Dr. Howard Kaplan
Dr. Alan Love
Dr. Joe Newton
Dr. Angie Hill Price
Lallah Howard
Dr. Howard Kaplan

Bicycle Sub Committee:

Dr. Clint Magill
John Fisher
John Wagaman

GUESTS: Vimal Patel, The Bryan-College Station Eagle
June Broughton
Doug Williams
Rose Berryhill
Kenny Kimball
Peter Lange
Debbie Hoffmann

1.1 Welcome

- Mr. Weis called the meeting to order
- Mr. Weis requested for the members to review the handouts and minutes from February 26, 2009
- Mr. Weis requested a motion to approve the February 26th minutes
 - Asked the committee members for corrections; None noted
 - Rosie Schonefeld made a motion to approve the minutes
 - Flora Reeves 2nd the motion; all voted in favor to accept the February 26th minutes

2.0 Business

2.1 Review of the Bicycle Rules and Regulations Draft

- Rod Weis asked the committee how we should proceed. Many have been opposed to the word “operated” in the draft.
- Logan Nichols stated that he has received 50-60 emails and none have supported the fee – we do not have any student support. Students feel like they are just being nicked and dimed. Students don’t want any regulations at all; they don’t care that bikes are all over campus. Most students are opposed to the fee but the second reason is because they are opposed to any regulations at all.
- Rod stated that he was opposed to continuing to spend energy and efforts to develop a plan if no one really wants it
- Rosie Schonefeld felt that the safety issues are very important and somehow we need to communicate the safety issue in the plan
- Rod asked the committee members for a recommendation to do something and not to do it halfway, or should we do nothing at all.
- David Bierling stated that he had not gotten much feedback. He asked Logan of the feedback or emails he has received is it from a very vocal minority or is the feedback really representative of the campus population.
- Logan stated that it is hard to know where the emails are coming from – some are the Texas A&M cycling club, but it’s hard to say about the rest. Either way, Logan felt that getting 50-60 emails on any topic is a significant response.
- Hunter’s perception is the fee is the issue. Funding should come from President Murano’s discretionary funding; such as funds used to make Academic Plaza wireless. Then, after two years if faculty, staff and students feel the program is successful, then they can share in the costs.
- Hunter recommended that the best way to fund it after the initial program is with a student fee of \$1 or \$1.50 – then it is reliable and ongoing giving a sustainable source of revenue.
- Logan was afraid if the plan goes forward as is now, there will be a significant backlash. He did not know what they would do or what it would be, but there would be a fall out.
 - David asked Logan what he thought was the biggest objection from the undergraduate students, is it the amount of the fee or the principle of the matter?
2.1...1 Hunter and Logan both felt it is the principle
- Rod stated that the reality is that even \$100,000 per year is not enough to run a significant bike program.
- Hunter asked if the moving violations would fall to UPD for enforcement.

- John Fisher stated yes, that moving violations would fall under the traffic code and we (University Police Department) would enforce. We don't have university regulations that are beyond the traffic code. Right now, it would take the Chief of Police and the President to establish the violations and fines then determine that "we" want to begin issuing "university violations". There would have to be a judicial structure and also a mechanism in place for UPD to begin to collect fines. UPD collects no fines now.
 - 2.1...1 Hunter asked if UPD be willing to take on this responsibility.
 - 2.1...2 John Fisher responded that he did not know. That he would need to speak with Chief Schneider. Currently, Brazos County gets almost the entire fine amount for all cites that are written by UPD – UPD gets about \$7 per ticket. One benefit from writing university violations would be that UPD would get some funding.
- Hunter suggested that we identify in the bike plan that the 1st issue is the registration and rules; 2nd issue is safety.
- John Fisher felt that the 3rd issue is the return of property. We catch people all the time who have stolen bikes, but we can't arrest them without a victim. It would help us immensely to stop losing 400-600 bikes per year because we can't contact the student/owner of the bike now.
 - Leah asked if any of the people who are opposed to the plan ever heard what John just told us? If they did they might be more supportive.
 - John stated that the required element of bike registration is the serial number. The serial number will be recorded forever in the state and national systems so it is a big plus for students. It would allow for them to get their property back even after they leave the campus.
- David stated that the Graduate Student Council (GSC) has commented they think registration is a good idea, but they feel that people will not register their bicycles – if it is not required.
- John stated that he did not think it matters where the money comes from, but he feels that the plan should go forward. It always comes down to the money or funding. He had served on six committees over 10 years. This is the last time I will participate. He hates to say this but if there are a handful of students who don't like it, he hates to hear that, but it needs to be done.
- Cheryl felt that the aesthetics issue is an important issue. There is some initial investment to add bike racks where they are really

needed. It is part of a good faith effort from the university to show their feelings of the importance of the issue.

- Rod told the committee that Transportation Services has added 22 new racks. Sometimes, you run out of real estate to put them. Placing additional racks has to be a cooperative effort by the Council for the Built Environment, campus architect and university administration to determine where racks should go. We will never have enough bike parking right outside the doors. There is a direct correlation between parking bikes and cars. Parking bikes on campus is unlike parking at home – do you park your bikes and cars right at your front door or on your lawn, or on the driveway or street because of safety and aesthetics?
- Cheryl stated that this is an important issue. She did not think we should table the plan just because the students don't like it.
- Logan said that the students feel like they haven't heard about this and all of a sudden they see it in the paper. Now that it is more out there in the open, could we get more feedback? This is not Transportation Services fault but they are getting the backlash.
- Rod stated that he would take it through Lallah and Dr. Cross to Dr. Murano. As far as for this next year it's already too late to even ask for a new fee. The idea is to take the plan to the administration only if the committee agrees that there is a problem. The magnitude of the problem depends on your perspective. Define the problem, show draft regulations which need to include moving violations. Show a draft budget for the first three years and then the three years after, we may need to add a fee. But the fee needs to be kept separate and not tacked on to the transportation fee.
 - Logan agreed that bike users aren't the only users of the program – all will benefit by making the campus safer by adding regulations and racks. He thought that it made sense to add it to the transit fee so that you would not have a per user fee.
- Rod asked if any committee member had questions about the draft Bicycle Rules and Regulations. If there were any changes?
 - Robert Pottberg asked about VII, #3b – why did the committee not want bicyclist to dismount on sidewalks. John explained why the subcommittee didn't go that route on campus there is a lot of space, unlike in downtown Dallas. The members did not feel that was necessary on the campus at this time.
 - Hunter did not wish to add things that may cause more student discontent with the regulations.
 - Rod stated that the text was added to give officers the ability to stop someone riding in an unsafe manner

- David asked about the word “operated”
 - 2.1...1 John stated that this was just an oversight. If there is a rider, we have someone to cite for an offense. There is no need to purchase a permit if you are just riding through campus. This was not the intent of the word operate. At this time you do not have to get a parking permit to drive through campus.
- Cheryl recommended that the plan include what the short term goals and long term goals are for the program. This document/cover should sell the benefits of the program instead of just telling people how we plan to regulate.
 - John stated that one of the bike committees did a packet that spells out those goals
 - Rod agreed that these benefits should be included in the report. He then asked if the Student Government Association was distributing both.
 - 2.1...1 Logan answered no because we didn’t know if it was at a stage it was ready for distribution.
 - 2.1...2 Transportation Services will put a Plan/Regulations packet together and will draft a request for submittal for funding. Rose will send it out within a week or two.
 - 2.1...2.1.1 Hunter stated that Mark Gold would likely sign off on the request for support.
 - 2.1...2.1.2 David stated he would ask the Graduate Student Council about their support. It must go through the Executive Committee.
 - 2.1...2.1.3 Rod also asked if we could a memo of support from the faculty senate and the University Staff Council.
- We will discuss the rest of the agenda at the next Transportation Services Advisory Committee meeting on April 30th.

3.0 Other Business

4.0 Meeting adjourned

Other Topic(s):

Tasks to be completed;

1. Transportation Services will make a plan for parking for university vehicles, electric vehicles, gators or golf carts
2. Para Transit Rules
 - a. Guest Anne Reber
3. Recommendations from Committee Members on Construction Permit Parking Fees
4. Standard Policy for visitor/client parking spaces
 - a. Some departments pay for spaces, other do not
 - b. If all pay, what should be the rate
5. Visitor Validation Process

Next Transportation Services Advisory Committee meeting: April 30, 2009 at 11:30 am in the Room 110-111, Koldus Building