

GoDurham Public Meeting Summary

6/5/2019, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Overview:

Meeting Open: 5:31

Meeting Summary:

- Doug Middleton gave GoDurham updates (5:38)
 - Two new buses arrived, currently they are in our yard until they are ready to go into service
 - GoDurham is working on purchasing six new buses to replace older vehicles
 - We've been struggling with operator shortages and missed some trips in May.
 - We've gotten some operators into class
 - Changed the structure of our operator assignments
 - Working on getting operators through two customer service classes to help improve experience with operators.
 - 3% increase in ridership last month
- Tara Caldwell gave GoDurham ACCESS updates
 - Released five new operators into service
 - Fifty vehicles running

Meeting Conclusion: 6:40

Category	Comment
Admin	C: Are the new buses going to be hybrid buses or like GoRaleigh's buses? R: The new buses will be diesel Gilligs, similar to our 17 and 18 series buses.
Admin	C: New buses need new fareboxes. R: We will look into that.
Admin	C: Will seniors be able to ride to the airport for free. R: GoTriangle fare changes are scheduled for January and seniors free-fare is among the approved changes.
Admin	C: Can the light rail funds be used to improve bus services. R: Some funds from the County Transit Plans are already being used to improve the system. That funding is governed by County Transit Plans which must be updated through a process of public input. The MPO currently is advertising FY20 work plan for the funding and will be a part of the next update this year. http://www.dchcmpto.org/
Admin	C: Can the people who manage the budget come to a meeting?

R: We can arrange public meeting for that.

Admin **C:** Durham One Call is a great resource, especially for taking care of accessibility issues in Durham. 919.560.1200

C: I understand that things take time. Can you do something to speed up the process?

Capital Projects **R:** We have actually spent the last three years working with the city to speed up the process. The city has created a development service review center that has shortened the process by months. The capital projects team has also changed the way we contract with engineers to design shelters. Now we have developed a pipeline that includes 31 stops being constructed this year and 50 stops under review.

Capital Projects **C:** Is there an emergency fund to take care of safety issues. The stops along Cornwallis road are unsafe and I am concerned for the kids using those stops in the dark

Capital Projects **R:** Safety is a top consideration for transit stops. Our basic design for acceptable stops has been updated in recent years and our staff are reviewing transit amenities to make an inventory of stops that need to be upgraded. We can arrange for a member of our capital projects team to come and give an update on the stops that are currently in design.

Capital Projects/ Transit Amenities **C:** Unsafe Stop: Triangle Park on South Alston Avenue. Safe/accessible for wheelchairs is an issue.

R: We have identified the stop as 5011 S. Alston Avenue. Our team will review that site to see if anything can be done.

Capital Projects/ Transit Amenities **C:** Unsafe Stop: Meriweather Apartments and Pride Steele Apartments. Cars fly down that street and bus can obscure view of passengers.

Commendation **C:** Compliments to the new supervisor Edal Fontaine.

Commendation **C:** Unruly Behavior on Route 4. I was on the bus at 4:08 (6/5/19) and two separate passenger cursed out the operators. I reported this to an operator at Durham Station.

R: Thank you, being an operator can be a tough job.

Customer Service **C:** Will you add more customer service representatives?

R: We are looking to hire more CSRs.

Customer Service **C:** Ticket Booth:

- Someone should always be in the booth.
- I have experienced a CSR taking a restroom break for 30 minutes making me late for my bus, because I was unable to buy a ticket.

- When this happens, can the passengers be allowed on the bus without a ticket.

R: We don't have enough staff to have two CSRs in the booth at all times. Staff has to be able to take a restroom break and they are trained to only do so immediately after pulse (all the buses departing). We cannot enforce operators allowing passengers on board without a ticket

Customer Service

C: It is unacceptable to miss your bus because you are unable to buy a ticket.

R: We agree, the management staff should cover these gaps. We will go back and look at potential solutions.

Customer Service

C: Can you modify the budget to allow for more CSRs?

R: That will require a conversation with all the parties involved in the budget. We can look at this in greater detail.

Customer Service

C: Phone System: I have to go through the cycles two or three times to get to the people I need to speak to.

R: That shouldn't happen. We will let the call center know and see if they can fix it.

Marketing/Communications

C: I applied for the ambassador program and haven't heard back from staff.

R: The ambassador program is on a brief hold while new management takes over. We should be contacting existing ambassadors and all those who have applied to let them know our new rollout plan. The program should resume in September.

Operations

C: Windows have been open while the A/C is running which prevents the bus from cooling down.

Operations

C: Do operators undergo customer service training

R: Yes, in fact we have a class of operators in customer service training today.

Operations

C: We've seen the signs advertising employment for GoDurham. Are operators leaving or are you adding additional Operators

R: It's become increasingly harder to recruit operators. Transit systems experience consistent turnover. Our attrition rate has not changed, we are just seeing less applicants.

Operations

C: What are the qualifications for operators?

R: We did not have the information at hand, but it is online at GoDurhamTransit.org/careers

Operations

C: Some operators appear to have a lack of urgency and do not run on-time/keep the schedule.

R: We have a time schedule operators have to abide by. Operator may be pacing to stay on schedule, but this shouldn't be making you late.

It is unusual to see an operator running too slowly. Please submit feedback to help identify operators who are moving too quickly or slowly.

C: Operator Rudeness

Operations

R: When you encounter rudeness, please submit feedback, so that we can investigate and correct it quickly.

C: I catch the Route 5 at the Southpoint Park and Ride. On Friday (5/31/2019) and on several occasions before that the bus has not shown up at 5:35 at the Southpoint Mall stop.

Operations

R: We will look into what is happening. When this happens submit this feedback to us so that our attention is on it as soon as possible.

C: The Route 12 did not arrive at Durham for 45 minutes; passengers were waiting starting at 6 p.m. until 6:45 p.m. for the bus. The operator did not explain the situation.

Operations

C: What do you do in a situation when the bus is running late? Why don't the other buses wait?

Operations

R: Buses will wait if the route is a couple of minutes late outside of peak hours. If it's longer than that, the buses cannot wait because they have to keep their schedule.

C: Construction delays should not be an excuse. Operators should know about construction.

Operations

C: Route 5 has been late frequently. I don't know if it's construction or some other problem, but if it's construction it should be able to be easily resolved.

Operations/Planning

R: When problems are chronic we do our best to make changes, including construction impacts.

C: Under the current proposal for the Route 12, the first trip will make those of us who depend on the first trip (about 7 of us) late for work.

Planning

R: We don't have a service planning team member present, so we cannot answer very detailed questions, but we can arrange a full presentation at the next meeting.

C: Are there changes to the Route 6 or 11 to improve the on-time performances?

Planning

R: The short-range transit plan, which is pending council approval, includes changes to Routes 6 and 11 which will improve the on time performance and give you additional time to make connections to other routes.

Planning

C: I heard that there is a proposal for the route 11 to stop running at 9 p.m.

R: No proposals will change the span of service which is currently 5:30 a.m. to midnight.

Transit
Amenities

C: The bench on Carver Street by Carver Rest home was knocked down.
Can it be repaired/replaced?

Staff Present:

- Tara Caldwell, general manager, GoDurham ACCESS
- Brian Fahey, transit administrator, GoDurham (GoTriangle)
- Audra Foree, information services supervisor, GoDurham (GoTriangle)
- Angel Gentry, Durham Station manager, GoDurham (DCTC)
- Doug Middleton, general manager, GoDurham (DCTC)
- Jeffrey Sullivan, marketing specialist, GoDurham (GoTriangle)
- Shaundrelle Todd, transit apprentice, GoDurham (City of Durham)

Attendance: 16