



**Commission for Persons with Disabilities
March 13, 2023**

The Commission for Persons with Disabilities convened virtually on Monday, March 13, 2023. Members and attendees joined the virtual meeting with video conference and conference call options (computer or telephone). A quorum was not reached.

Commissioners Present:

Allison Caudill, *Commissioner*
Barbara Leigh, *Commissioner*
Deb Falk-Palec *Chair*
Marcia Perkins, *Secretary*
Margaret Steimle, *Commissioner*

Anne Kearney
Denise Koss

Milwaukee County Staff:

Mike Bonk, *DHHS*
Vincenza Doyne, *DHHS*
Matt Fortman, *DHHS*
Christopher Fox, *MCTS*
Marietta Luster, *DHHS*

Commissioners Excused:

Damian Buchman
John Haupt
Willie Johnson Jr., *County Supervisor*

Attendees from the Public

Leon Todd

MINUTES

- I. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL-Director Mike Bonk**
- II. **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE February 13, 2023, COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**
Held over due to no quorum present.
- III. **Special Report- Transit Plus- Christopher Fox MCTS**
Christopher Fox from MCTS gave the following report:
Transit Plus ridership is currently at 26,683.00 which is down slightly due to weather events that have occurred. Mr. Fox stated that ridership for March is trending upward.

Paratransit Van Service provider RFP

Meetings have begun with First Transit to work on transitional activities. Meetings held weekly for the transition of computer software. Bi-weekly meetings are held on other items. Mr. Fox stated they are continuing to monitor Transit Express to watch for any issues that may develop. They are working to monitor both lead and lag indicators and working to hire more drivers to meet the demands as the weather gets warmer.

Milwaukee County Taxi Program Alternative:

MCDOT is working on a path forward with the Department of Health and Human Services regarding this so far, there have been a few meetings and they will be meeting again next week to identify the next steps. MCDOT to request an extension of the existing contract for 120 days which would end it at September 28th, per the continuation clause and to allow time to set parameters and to issue the RFP for the same day rides program. Mr. Fox noted that the taxi task force has their first meeting, and it is a hybrid meeting held at Independence First and virtually. Mr. Fox also stated that Fran Musci, of MCTS had to submit a report to the County Board with updates on the progress.

WisGo/UMO Fare Collection:

Mr. Fox reported that so far there are no issues now that validators are in, and this is still in test mode. He said if riders are TP, (Transit Plus) reduced Fare or Go Pass, he explained that riders with reduced fare and Go Pass with a photo, these riders will receive a new reduced fare card by early to mid- April. Transit Plus riders will continue to use their existing cards for Van and Taxi use. The new cards will come with instructions on how to register the card and Fox highly recommended that riders get their new card registered as soon as possible in case the card is lost or stolen. Fox stated that those without a photo will need to come in and get a new card after April 1st. They can use the UMO app or come in but cannot use both. Current cards will work on the busses until September 30th.

Fare Capping

Rides will be \$1 with a 90-minute transfer. Fare will cap at \$2.00 per day, which is the same as the current reduced fare day pass. Weekly fares capped at \$11 and monthly capped at \$32.

If riders have any questions they may call: 414-937-3218. Virtual meetings will be held March 16th, 25th, April 6th. Anyone can sign up online at:

RideMCTS.com/Community. Commissioner Leigh asked if this info was online and Mr. Fox said people can go to <https://www.ridemcts.com/fares-passes/wisgo-fare-collection-system-updates> Director Bonk stated the website has a YouTube video that explains this. Commissioner Falk-Palec asked if the new system will be able to figure this out to the advantage of the rider and Mr. Fox said yes it will and that everyone will get the same.

IV. WIL-O-WAY COMMITTEE UPDATE: Deb Falk-Palec, Michael Bonk

Chairwoman Falk-Palec asked Director Bonk to give the update. Director Bonk gave an overview of what took place when he and Chairwoman Falk-Palec attended the ARPA Task Force meeting. Chairwoman Falk-Palec commended Director Bonk on an excellent job. Director Bonk presented to the Task Force the need for camp accreditation and the importance of ADA compliance and safety of the items needing to be repaired and replaced. Chairwoman Falk-Palec stated that the Parks Deputy Director was present, and the Deputy Director had

reiterated and offered Parks full support of the submitted projects. Director Bonk was saying in his presentation to the ARPA Task Force. Director Bonk stated that this proposal has been referred to the Recovery Loss Subcommittee for further review. The splash pad did not get approved by ARPA but is now being considered through the Revenue Loss Fund. Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr. has also submitted part of the proposal to the Finance Committee and requested emergency contingency funds to be used to address the safety concerns which include the park benches, ADA ramp and asphalt repair. Milwaukee County Parks has several recommendations for park benches. The Office for Persons with Disabilities prefers the park benches that have a full back that meets up to the bench bottom and does not have handrails which allows individuals to transfer out of their wheelchairs. Director Bonk reached out to the Department of Administrative Services regarding the splash pad versus a wading pool. The Office for Persons with Disabilities believes it will save water, reduce staff and chemical usage, in addition it provides a better experience to wheelchair users, who can better interact with their peers. Director Bonk then spoke about the fence which Parks and DOT have committed to replace by May 1st. Commissioner Steimle thanked Director Bonk and Chairwoman Falk-Palec. Director Bonk then thanked the Commission, Easter Seals, Goodwill, and others for their letters of support and advocacy. Chairwoman Falk-Palec mentioned Commissioners can also sharing advocacy comments through E-Comments that will be shared with the committees at public meetings. She added that Supervisor Vincent attended the ARPA Task Force meeting as well and offered her support to funding the projects.

V. Budget Discussion, DHHS, Fiscal Administrator, Matt Fortman

Chairwoman Falk-Palec introduced Matt Fortman:

Mr. Fortman announced that there will be a Finance Committee meeting on Friday March 16th at 9am. The Wil-O-Way items for consideration are listed in this meeting as item 18. Mr. Fortman then asked Director Bonk how people could reach out in support. Director Bonk stated again that this is item #18, and that people can go online and post e-comments in support of this request for Wil-O-Way. Commissioner Falk-Palec also stated that Shelly Reynolds of Easter Seals was called on to give her feedback. Chairwoman Falk-Palec requested that Director Bonk send out this information to this commission. Mr. Fortman spoke about the planning for the 2023 budget and showed a presentation to this commission. He explained with a brief overview of the process. He stated that in April they receive their April tax levy targets. In May and June, the Departments prepare their individual budgets. Next in July, each department submits their budget to the County Executive and by October the County executive will recommend the budget for approval. Mr. Fortman then talked about the requests of the Wil-O-Way Committee that were brought forward. They are the accessibility enhancements, splash pad, the new benches. He also mentioned siding and IT enhancements. Mr. Fortman then forewarned that there is limited funding and that there will need to be advocacy for these requests. Mr. Fortman

asked what this commission would like to see happen Chairwomanr Falk-Palec asked if there are items on the Capitol Budget from Wil-O-Way. Director Bonk then mentioned a report for a siding project that was on the list and at Grant Park and that it is projected to need replacement. The siding is currently in decent condition but could be upgraded in the future to a cement fiberboard that would have longer longevity. He explained that things that deteriorate quickly are looked at more closely. He mentioned things such as the internet capabilities at each park, and the need at Underwood for a future upgrade. Chairwoman Falk-Palec asked about shade at the park, commenting the Gazebo was taken down and asked if temporary shades would be considered. Director Bonk stated that they would need to work with Parks to get something in place for shade and ned portable units have been purchased for the summer camps. Charwoman Falk-Palec stressed the fact that many children and adults take medications and cannot be in the sun for long. Chairwoman Falk-Palec asked Mr. Fortman about the on-demand rides for people and if the funding for that is on the list. Commissioner Falk-Palec also stated that she would like Mr. Fortman to come back again in the future and provide what the final budget updates will look like. Mr. Fortman will be invited back in September.

VI. Discussion Items: (2 p.m.)

Commissioner Steimle's retirement was discussed, and Charwoman Falk-Palec thanked her for her years of service and her leadership, her connections and her advocacy. Chairwoman Falk-Palec went on to briefly explain how she and Commissioner Steimle met and wished Commissioner Steimle all the best. Commissioner Steimle stated it has been a privilege to serve. Director Bonk also thanked Commissioner Steimle and stated it was a pleasure working with her.

a) Other Commission Business-Director Mike Bonk

Director Bonk stated that Leon Todd and Sherry Mickelson's names have been forwarded to the County Executive's Office. Director Bonk also will forward Felicia Claybourn's submission as well to the Commission for consideration. Chairwoman Falk-Palec suggested that Leon Todd reach out to Director Bonk for connecting with the County Executive's Office.

b) Other Matters by the Public

MCTS offering is offering free bus rides on St. Patty's Day.

VII. VII. Adjournment: (2:09 p.m.) Next Meeting April 10, 2023 at 1:00p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Vincenza Doyne
Office Support Assistant II
Aging and Disability Services