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From the Director, Department of Transportation, and the Managing Director, Milwaukee County Transit System, requesting authorization to implement changes in the eligibility requirements for the Growing Opportunities Pass Program, by recommending adoption of the following:

AN AMENDED RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the 2017 Adopted Budget directed changes to the Growing Opportunities Pass (GO Pass) Program that were intended to make the program sustainable and focus the eligibility to individuals who demonstrated the greatest financial need and had disabilities or were elderly; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 Adopted Budget also directed the formation of a workgroup to make recommendations to finalize a plan that implements the changes in eligibility requirements while minimizing impacts on GO Pass holders; and

WHEREAS, the above workgroup should consist of representatives from the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS), the Department of Transportation, Department of Health and Human Services, the Department on Aging, the Department of Administrative Services, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors, GO Pass users, and representatives of advocacy groups for persons with disabilities and seniors; and

WHEREAS, the administration of the eligibility screening process will be done by the Milwaukee County Aging Resource Center and the Disability Resource Center; and

WHEREAS, shifting administration of the GO Pass Program from MCTS to the Aging and Disability Resource Centers will allow those programs to better provide access to publicly funded programs that support elders and individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the GO Pass workgroup met twice in February 2017 to discuss such matters as determining future eligibility for current GO Pass holders, communication with current GO Pass holders, communication to the community at large, and a timeline for implementation of changes; and

WHEREAS, the GO Pass workgroup plan including communication strategies and timeline are outlined in the report accompanying this resolution; and

WHEREAS, the Committee on Transportation, Public Works, and Transit, at its meeting of March 8, 2017, recommended adoption of File No. 17-231 (vote 3-1); now, therefore,

46 BE IT RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors hereby approves
47 the following proposed changes to the Growing Opportunities Pass (GO Pass) Program,
48 which was recommended and endorsed by the GO Pass workgroup.:

- 49
- 50 • Determine eligibility of current GO Pass participants
 - 51 ○ All existing GO Pass holders will be reviewed for ability to participate in the
52 GO Pass program based on the eligibility guidelines as adopted in the
53 County budget
 - 54
- 55 • Communicate with current passholders
 - 56 ○ Individuals who are determined to be no longer eligible will be informed by
57 mail that there are new eligibility guidelines for the program, and that they
58 will no longer be able to use the bus for free. The letter will also explain that
59 reduced-fares are available to them, and that if they think they might be
60 eligible for Medicaid, Foodshare, SSI, SSDI, etc., they should contact Aging
61 Resource Center (ARC) or Disability Resource Center (DRC) to discuss
62
 - 63 ○ Individuals who are determined to remain eligible under the new GO Pass
64 criteria will receive a letter explaining they are eligible for a significantly
65 reduced fare of \$1 for a 1-day pass. The letter will also include information
66 about how to locate M-CARD Recharge Units (MRUs) where money can be
67 loaded onto their GO Pass and used to purchase a 1-day pass at the
68 farebox. An easy to read one-page infographic document showing how to
69 use the GO Pass ID to request a 1-day pass for \$1 from the bus operator
70 will also be included in the letter
71
 - 72 ○ Outreach efforts to individuals who may have relocated/changed addresses
73 can be done through other contact information (e.g. phone number)
74
- 75 • Communication to the community – Information will be spread throughout the
76 community using many tools, including
 - 77 ○ Media – television, radio, newspapers, social media
 - 78 ○ Speaking engagements – County staff speaking on the program’s changes
79 and promoting how to use the GO Pass. The workgroup members identified
80 targeted audiences (ex: agencies like Grand Avenue Club and Disability
81 Rights Wisconsin as well as gathering sites like senior centers).
 - 82 ○ One-on-one trainings – MCTS staff will host training sessions for service
83 agencies’ staff on how to use GO Pass to purchase a 1-day pass so the
84 agencies’ staff can practice with their clients.
 - 85 ○ Electronic communication – newsletters and announcements through the
86 Networks of the workgroup members (ex: Mental Health Task Force’s email
87 list)
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- Update to the eligibility requirements
 - The workgroup recommends that participation in Foodshares be included as a qualifying program of the financial eligibility guideline for people with disabilities. This change means that the guidelines for people with disabilities matches those for seniors.

- Timeline
 - The implementation process is currently scheduled for June 1, 2017. The fare collection system vendor is revising the farebox software to enable the sale of the GO Pass (1-day pass) at the farebox. This programming is scheduled to be completed and tested by May 1, 2017.
 - There will be a minimum of one month between when letters are received by current passholders and the go-live date. This is to allow time for (1) current users who are not eligible under the new guidelines but feel they ought to be to communicate with ARC or DRC and begin the process of enrolling in qualifying programs, and (2) current users who remain eligible to practice and become comfortable with the new process for using the GO Pass.

srb
03/23/17
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