



SENIOR COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE September 8, 2015

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: Bus Reservation

DATE: September 8, 2015

FROM: Parks and Community Services/Senior Division

PRESENTATION BY: Yvette Aguilar, Senior Center Program Administrator

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RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Senior Commission approve the newly proposed bus reservation system for the Senior Mobility Program.

BACKGROUND

In May 2015, staff was directed to conduct a study of the current Senior Mobility Program (SMP). Staff provided the Senior Commission with an overview of the study at the July 2015 meeting. At that meeting, staff was asked to continue to review the current reservation system and report back to the commission with a recommendation at the following meeting.

ANALYSIS

Currently, the Western Transit bus driver takes all reservations each morning between 7:30-7:50 a.m. for same day service. The bus currently has riders who utilize this transportation on a daily basis to enjoy the activities at the Senior Center, specifically for the Nutrition Program. These riders are listed on the driver's log sheet each day. The driver currently manages all reservations, schedules appointments, and creates the route.

There is some concern that the current system is not meeting the needs of new seniors that are trying to get to the Senior Center. As a result, the Senior Commission has directed staff to do an analysis of the Senior Mobility Program reservation system.

A proposal that would allow staff to be involved in the transportation process, determine how to assist each individual is for staff to actually take the reservations. In order to provide a high level of efficiency and good customer service, it's imperative that the current driver be involved in the routing process for the following reasons:

- The driver has both experience and knowledge regarding the route and obstacles that may not be taken into account such as: traffic, shortcuts, narrow streets, etc.
- Due to the experience and knowledge, the driver is able to provide more accurate pick-up times for seniors.
- The driver has knowledge of the City of Costa Mesa and this will provide efficiency with the development of the route, as well as shorten the amount of time it will take to map out the route versus staff.
- The driver would be able to fill in vacancies with riders who fail to make reservations, and would know how to place their pick-up on the route.

The process for the proposed reservation system will be as follows:

- Staff will accept calls for next-day reservations for the Senior Mobility Program (SMP) between the hours of 7:30-8:15 a.m. the day before service is needed.
- Staff will schedule pick-up times for the bus leaving at approximately 8:15 a.m. and 9:30 a.m., from the senior center and return drop off times at 12:30 and 2 p.m. from the senior center to home, with the assistance of the driver to ensure a route is established.
- The driver will set the route based on the reservations made and document the information on the reservation log (Attachment 1). The reservation log will allow staff to keep record of calls received, ridership numbers, and the number of customers turned away for services for various reasons.

In addition, the driver will be able to schedule other reservations during the day if time and space permit. This new system will prioritize ridership to and from the senior center; other items such as grocery shopping and personal errands would be scheduled, time and space permitting, but on a limited basis.

In order to provide notification of the changes, staff have proposed to do the following:

1. Publishing the new reservation process in the October Chronicle.
2. Provide notice to all Costa Mesa residents in the Recreation Guide with the new transportation reservation guidelines.
3. Set up a hotline for seniors to call with their questions and/or concerns specifically about the Senior Mobility Program. Staff would maintain record of the calls that were received to document and help in streamlining the process, as well as collect data.

Making this change will allow staff to be able to collect data and conclusively decide the best system for accepting reservations after the evaluation period. This new system will also allow new seniors to have a fair opportunity to ride the bus during the prime times.

If this change is approved, staff will evaluate the success and efficiency of this process over a period of three (3) months and prepare a report to the Senior Commission in January 2016 regarding the effectiveness of the program.

FISCAL REVIEW

No fiscal review is required for this item.

LEGAL REVIEW

No legal review is required for this item.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

1. The Commission could decide that the current reservation system is sufficient and that nothing should be changed.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommend that the Senior Commission approve the newly proposed bus reservation system for the Senior Mobility Program and direct staff to report back to the Senior Commission at the January 2016 meeting.

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