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## MEMO

**To:** Transit Commission Members  
**From:** Greg Seubert, Transit Director   
**Subject:** Transit Service Pilot Project  
**Date:** November 19, 2015

The following are issues that I would like the Transit Commission to consider before we move forward with the pilot project. If this project is to determine the future of an area-wide transit service, the last thing I want to do is carry it out poorly.

1. We do not currently have enough vehicles to expand service and I am uncomfortable moving forward without some certainty that vehicles will be acquired. I am hopeful that Duluth will help us out, but we have been disappointed several times in the past year in our pursuit of used buses.
2. If we delay the project until March 1<sup>st</sup> to give us time to acquire buses, the evaluation period will be shorter and we may not produce meaningful data – certainly not favorable data. I would expect ridership to be modest in the beginning and then build. When municipalities begin to assess their options midyear as they begin the budget process, low initial ridership may doom their continued participation in 2017.
3. Rothschild and Schofield have indicated that they cannot afford their entire share for 2016. Without a commitment from each of the parties for 2017, we may be stuck paying unemployment expenses in 2017.
4. The more we move away from a formulaic calculation to determine the cost for each of the municipalities, the greater the risk for City of Wausau taxpayers. If state/federal funds come in less than predicted or fuel or parts expenses spike, Rothschild, Schofield and Rib Mountain will pay their fixed amount and Wausau will have to make up the difference. WisDOT informed me last week that they have lowered their funding projection for 2016 (below mine). Ultimately, we won't know the actual funding totals until the end of first quarter next year.
5. We are seeking funds to reduce the cost of services for three surrounding municipalities. I fear that critics may assert that the City of Wausau has no business seeking funds on their behalf.
6. State statutes prohibit us from providing service across local boundaries without a cost sharing agreement in place and I have to demonstrate to WisDOT that we have commitments for the local share contribution. While I can point to budget documents for the municipalities, written commitments will have to be secured with the Rib Mountain businesses. I'm not sure how firm those commitments are at this point.

**RESOLUTION # \_\_-15**

**SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING  
REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES  
IN THE WAUSAU AREA**

- WHEREAS,** the availability of public transportation is essential for people to participate in everyday activities, access vital services, contribute to the local economy, and promote quality of life; and
- WHEREAS,** public transportation is a fundamental link for workers to access jobs and for businesses to access workers; and
- WHEREAS,** public transportation is central to the Wausau urban area's livability and a primary factor in maintaining population, tax base and economic competitiveness; and
- WHEREAS,** an increasing population of older adults will be retiring from the workforce, driving less, and seeking transportation alternatives; and
- WHEREAS,** the City of Wausau is the only municipality in the Wausau urban area to offer public transportation services and many important destinations in the urban area are out of reach for those who are transit-dependent; and
- WHEREAS,** ongoing dependence on family and friends for subsistence transportation places people at risk of becoming immobile, homebound and socially isolated;
- WHEREAS,** the American Public Transportation Association estimates that for every \$1 invested in public transportation \$4 in economic returns are generated in the community; and
- WHEREAS,** the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Organization has developed the Wausau Area Transit Development Plan which identifies strategies and service options to enhance, supports and operate the public transportation services in the Wausau urban area;
- WHEREAS,** the Marathon County Transportation Coordinating Committee conducted the Marathon County Transportation Program Needs Assessment to assist in making decisions on meeting the transportation needs of the County's elderly or disabled vulnerable residents.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Marathon does hereby ordain as follows that it supports the provision of

public transportation services throughout the Wausau urban area and it encourages all Wausau urban area municipalities to consider participating in the City of Wausau's Metro Ride transit program.

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_\_ 2015.

**TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

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**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

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Fiscal Impact: None

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