

County considers transit system changes

Written by Deb Egenberger
Thursday, 17 May 2012 14:32 -

LEXINGTON—Residents who use the Dawson County Public Transit bus for rides to doctor appointments, shopping or meetings may want to prepare for changes that lie ahead.

During their regular bimonthly meeting Monday, county commissioners discussed the transit system, what it offers and who it serves.

Being a county-wide entity, commissioners are concerned that residents in rural Dawson County can't catch a bus at their mailbox.

Transit policy requires the busses to remain within city limits, not loading or unloading passengers in rural areas.

"The commissioners are thinking it is not actually servicing the county," said clerk Karla Zlatkovsky.

At the same time, changing the policy to allow rural bus stops would not be cost effective for the transit system.

"Fuel is expensive," Zlatkovsky said. "It could cost a lot to send the bus out in the country to pick up one passenger."

The transit bus currently serves Lexington on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays with Tuesday trips to Farnam and Gothenburg. The bus travels to Eddyville, Sumner and Overton in the afternoons on Wednesdays and covers Cozad on Thursdays.

Commissioners want to open the doors for discussion.

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Zlatkovsky said in her dealings with other county clerks, she has learned there are only a handful of counties that run a transit system.

“Most of them are through the cities,” she said. “No one here is quite sure how the county got involved in the first place.”

It’s possible, she said, that since the majority of passengers are from Lexington, the City of Lexington may want to take over the bus system.

“Nothing is going to happen overnight,” Zlatkovsky said. “We just want to get some discussion going so we can work to make this more efficient for everyone.”

No action was taken on the matter.

In other business, commissioners:

authorized emergency manager Brian Woldt to submit the annual Emergency Management Performance Grant application for \$45,755 to cover operating costs.

received a request from the planning and zoning commission to consider a special use permit application from Paul Treffer of rural Lexington to operate a machine repair and welding shop. A public hearing was set for June 1.

approved special designated liquor licenses for Mac’s Creek Winery and 3 Brothers Winery to sell alcohol at the Johnson Lake Art and Wine Show on June 9.

adopted an interlocal agreement with Buffalo County for a road project that includes area in both counties.

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took under advisement four bids for employee health insurance received from Health Care Solutions, Krull Agency, RCI and Cobecon.

discussed, in closed session, the performance evaluation of Dawson County Transit program director Barb Hollenbeck. No action was taken.

voted, following another closed session, to authorize commissioner Bill Stewart of Lexington to pursue current real estate purchase options. No explanation was given as to the reason for land purchase.