

To: Board of Directors

Date: October 9, 2015

From: Bill Churchill, Director of Transportation

Reviewed by:

SUBJECT: Passenger Suspension/Exclusion Policy

Summary of Issues:

There is a growing trend across our nation where passengers riding public transit systems behave inappropriately causing significant disruptions and even create unsafe conditions for operators and other passengers. Unfortunately, County Connection has been experiencing this very same phenomenon and has been working to mitigate these disruptive behaviors in order to ensure the safety of our operators and passengers as well as ensure the system continues to be a reliable form of transportation for our community.

When passengers become violent the Authority relies upon the local police jurisdiction the incident occurs in for support. In these cases the response is generally quick and effective with a police officer removing and arresting the offending individual. Passengers who engage in violent behavior generally have been prosecuted and usually end up incarcerated for some time. Unlike systems in more urban environments, County Connection rarely experiences repeat offenses from an individual after their incarceration is over.

Although staff has worked effectively with the local jurisdictions to mitigate passengers disruptive behavior when it becomes violent, staff has been far less effective when the behavior is just short of being violent. One of the most challenging areas to manage and certainly where the bulk of negative occurrences seem to exist is where passengers are seriously disruptive but not violent. These behaviors vary widely from the disgruntled individual who stands in front of a bus to prevent its moving to vulgar racially charged language directed toward operators or other passengers. There is a relatively small group of repeat offenders causing significant delays to the system resulting in missed transfer connections to other buses or trains.

In order to more effectively deal with these non-violent disruptive passengers, staff has been working with Hanson & Bridgett and consulted with FTA's office of Civil Rights to develop a passenger suspension/exclusion policy that would provide the ability to suspend repeat offenders from using the County Connection fixed route system for short periods of time. Staff believes such a policy would be effective in reducing disruptive behavior on County

Connection buses resulting in better on-time performance, improved employee morale and enhanced customer service (please refer to attached policy).

As a companion to a passenger suspension/exclusion policy it is important to have a passenger code of conduct posted on buses to inform riders of their responsibilities while using the system. Fortunately, a number of years ago staff posted a passenger code of conduct on buses that included a statement that disruptive behavior may result in removal from the bus (please see attached Code of conduct).

Recommendation:

The O&S Committee recommends the full Board adopt the attached Passenger Suspension/Exclusion policy.

Financial Implications:

Staff does not expect this policy to have a significant financial impact.

Options:

- 1) Approve recommendation
- 2) Decline recommendation
- 3) Request staff to modify the attached policy

Attachments:

Passenger Suspension/Exclusion policy

Passenger Code of Conduct

** Resolution 2016-010 (provided under separate cover)