

Sitting Bull College News

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Bus service to begin between Bismarck and Rapid City

FORT YATES – Agreements between four transportation organizations in the Dakotas have resulted in the start of bi-weekly bus service between Bismarck, North Dakota and Rapid City, South Dakota.

Service began Monday, February 26 on what is known as the “North-South Shuttle.” The route goes through Pierre, SD.

Busses run two days per week: Monday and Thursday. Passengers are able to ride from Bismarck to Rapid City or from Rapid City to Bismarck each day. The cost for a one-way ticket will be \$75.48.

The four bus companies participating in the new service: Bis-Man Transit, a public transportation system in Bismarck, ND; Standing Rock Public Transportation, a non-profit rural transportation service in Fort Yates, ND; River Cities Transit, a non-profit rural transportation service in Pierre, SD; and Jefferson Lines, a charter bus service in Rapid City, SD.

“The goal is to provide cost effective transit service for rural people in the central Dakotas,” said Pam Ternes, director of Standing Rock Public Transportation, who arranged the schedule and helped facilitate agreements between the companies.

According to Ternes, a group of transit planners in North and South Dakota saw the need for better coordination of bus services in the region.

Until recently the only service between Bismarck and Rapid City required an arduous 31 hour trip that included swings into Montana and Wyoming. Travel time on the new route will be less than eight hours.

Those who begin a journey in Bismarck will be able to purchase tickets and board at the Bis-Man Transit Center, a bus station hub at 3750 East Rosser Avenue. Passengers will also be able to board at stops along the route by

purchasing a ticket from the driver in Fort Yates, ND and McLaughlin, Mobridge, Onida, and Pierre, SD.

Passengers originating in Rapid City will purchase tickets and board a Jefferson Lines bus at Rapid Transit – Jefferson Lines in Rapid City, SD. Service will connect in Vivian, SD with River Cities Transit on its return to Pierre. Other northbound passengers may purchase tickets at stops in Vivian, Pierre, Onida, Mobridge, McLaughlin and Fort Yates, ND.

Fares are based on the cost of service between stops along the route. Passengers may purchase tickets for the shorter rides.

Forming the new service was made possible with the help of a federal Department of Transportation grant for non-urban transportation services.

"The North Dakota DOT is thrilled that we were able to work cooperatively with the South Dakota DOT, Bis-Man Transit, River Cities Transit, and Standing Rock Transportation to help put the Bismarck to Pierre bus route in place," said Dave Leftwich, division engineer. "There are close ties between these two areas, and this new route will make bus travel between the two cities much simpler and easier for local travelers."

"Likewise, we are very excited to be a part of this project," said Bruce Lindholm, program manager for the South Dakota DOT Office of Local Transportation Programs. "For the first time ever, people living in the north central region of South Dakota will have access to Jefferson Lines intercity bus service and will be able to travel anywhere in the United States served by bus."

"The whole idea was to better coordinate existing transit programs in the region to provide a new service," said Ternes. "We think we will be able to deliver on that."

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(((Attachment: Bus Schedule)))