

KALAMAZOO TRANSIT AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING

Minutes of June 27, 2014

Members Present:	Chair Garrylee McCormick Vice Chair Jeremy Orr JJ Meddaugh Andy Havice E. Allen Hayes Lynn North Zach Lassiter
Excused Members:	None
Unexcused Members:	None
City Commission Liaison Present:	None
Staff Members Present:	Sean McBride, Transportation Director Joan Melekian, Admin Office Specialist Laura Smith, Programs and Financial Services Manager Cheryl Pesti, Financial Analyst
Others Present:	Leona Carter, Travel Trainer Disability Network Steve Stepak, KATS Derek Nugent, KPS

Chair Garrylee McCormick called the meeting of the Transit Authority Board of Directors to order at 8:18 a.m.

Introductions

Introductions made by the Board as well as Sean McBride, Joan Melekian, Laura Smith, Cheryl Pesti, Leona Carter, Steve Stepek and Derek Nugent.

Changes and Additions to the Agenda

Sean McBride offered to have KPS Officer Derek Nugent present his safety report first for scheduling purposes.

Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

None

Issues / Items for City Manager / City Commission

Sean McBride noted there had been several issues before the City Commission lately one of which being the contract for replacement parts for the Gillig Hybrid buses. Also of note is that we recently had our final purchase of six (6) Community Service Vans / Metro County Connect Vans bringing our fleet up to ten (10).

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At this time Sean McBride moved up in the agenda Discussion Item VIII-D; Public Safety Update by Officer Derek Nugent. The Board was also updated on the two officers currently working at the KTC as Officer Derek Nugent and Officer John Deming and that they have now begun providing us with a report on monthly safety issues and activities. The current arrangement with Public Safety is that they send us an invoice every quarter for both officers time at the KTC and have we have budgeted this expense between \$150,000 and \$200,000.

At this time Officer Derek Nugent introduced himself and briefly described the hours of coverage at the KTC between himself and Officer John Deming. They currently work twelve (12) hour shifts working opposite days and at this time, there are only two (2) Mondays per month the KTC is not manned with officers equally noting there are two (2) Mondays per month where the station is manned with both officers. Shifts are typically 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. with the ability to flex schedules and times as needed. A typical day for these officers is patrolling the KTC for the safety and comfort of all travelers.

Sean McBride called attention to the monthly DAR (daily activity report) supplied by Officer Nugent which recaps the activities at the KTC in reference to banned passengers, arrests, outside investigations, community interaction, etc. It was also noted that although their main focus is the KTC they are still required to answer calls for the surrounding area in downtown Kalamazoo just as other officers also supply back up to the KTC when needed by the 2 officers or calls put out by dispatch at KPS.

A brief discussion took place regarding a contract going forward between KDPS and Metro Transit outlining the specifics of manpower and hours of coverage at the KTC as to better meet both parties' expectations. Sean also pointed out that the City Commission will soon be approving an agreement between Bronson Hospital and Kalamazoo Public Safety to have an officer stationed at their location and would like to possibly mirror that agreement between the KTC and Metro Transit in the future. The timeline for implementation of this written agreement would be January 2015.

Action Items:

a. Meeting minutes of May 9, 2014 – Steve Stepak from KATS noted a correction to made to the minutes from May 9, 2014; Page 7 under Public Comments he noted that the first sentence should have read as “.....Cambridge Systematics who will be working on the *travel* (not Apple) demand model for 2045 Transportation Plan.” Motion made by JJ Meddaugh to accept the minutes as presented, supported by Zach Lassiter. Motion carried.

b. Income and Expense Statement for April and May 2014 – Sean McBride pointed out that under the revenues heading there is an FTA Operating Revenue line item with no revenues entered thus far. Sean explained that although we are into the sixth month of our calendar year, FTA is operating on their eighth month in the fiscal year and contracts and approvals are not finalized until after the fact. There will probably not be any funding under this FTA Operating Revenue heading until August or September reports have come out. Motion made by JJ Meddaugh to accept the I & E Statement for April / May 2014, supported by E. Allen Hayes. Motion carried.

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c. Ridership Report for April and May 2014 – Sean recapped that year to date ridership was up 2%, demand response is up 1%, Community Service Program continues to grow with over 150% growth over last year – and continued growth is expected with additional vans (10 Community Service Vans available shortly). Eight stationed here at Metro Transit, one at Portage Senior Center and one at South County Community Center in Vicksburg. Future plans would include 1 – 2 vans to be placed out in the community for access by the eastern part of the county to include Galesburg, Augusta and eastern Comstock area. Overall, ridership is up 3% with 1.38 million rides so far this year. Although ridership appears to have decreased for route #27 – this is due to recent route changes and varying transfer points for Pavilion Estates and the north and east sides of Portage. Other routes have increased substantially to compensate for the changes.

Motion made by Jeremy Orr to accept the April and May 2014 Ridership Report as presented, supported by E. Allen Hayes. Motion carried.

d. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program (DBE) – Sean stated this report was a Federal requirement that we have on record for FTA’s site visit in September and once approved by this board, would be submitted FTA’s Legal Compliance office for their review. Cheryl Pesti, Financial Planner at Metro Transit recapped that the program is a requirement of the FTA based on the fact that we receive over \$250,000 per year in grant money. The program follows FTA’s guidelines and it is based on purchases made throughout the year. Based on our \$14 million dollar a year operation, it is FTA’s goal for us to spend 2.4% of our purchases with Disadvantaged Business Enterprises – which is broken down into six different categories. The City of Kalamazoo’s process for purchasing is to accept bids from various vendors and then award the contract to the lowest bidder. Reports for the current year shows we are currently at 5% of this goal – more than double our requirement from FTA.

Board member E. Allen Hayes requested a report for the next TAB meeting which reflects the last three years of purchases by category and date which would better reflect the DBE program and goals set by the FTA. Cheryl Pesti will gather this information and provide for the board at the August meeting.

At this point in time Sean McBride explained to the board that we have always operated under this DBE Policy and have reported our organizational goals as well as achievements to the FTA on an annual basis.

To help ensure meeting our goals as set forth in the DBE policy, the City of Kalamazoo – Metro Transit participates in procurement fairs with a variety of businesses; this enables us to get the word out and to encourage businesses to register with the City or the State of Michigan so they can receive bid opportunity notices. These are the requirements for us to receive \$2.3 million dollars of operating funds and 80% of our FTA capital funds.

Motion to approve the Disadvantaged Business Enterprises Report as presented made by JJ Meddaugh, supported by Zach Lassiter. Motion carried.

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Discussion Items:

a. *State / Federal Funding Update* – Sean commented that at our last meeting he discussed the condition of State Funding and the Comprehensive Transportation Fund and that there was legislative going through the State House to fund road repairs (i.e. potholes) and our concern at that time was that this funding bypassed the Comprehensive Transportation Fund. In general, anything that is gas tax or licensing fees, about 8% goes to public transit and the House proposal was to bypass that formula and put it towards road funding thereby cutting 8% of new funding out of public transit funding. Over the past two months as that discussion evolved it went to the Michigan Senate and after weeks of debates they went on to their next task of road funding and with no resolution thus far. At this time, we have no new transportation funding but on the positive side, the final votes in the senate were to put all funding through the comprehensive transportation fund so a percentage of any new funding would go to public transit. So there are positive legislative developments where the discussion left off in Lansing. There is no indication at this time when this funding will be coming back for consideration.

We recently received notification from the State of Michigan that our anticipated allocation for funding next year is projected to be at least 2% less than this year. About 1/3 of our funding currently comes from the State of Michigan with about 30% of funds reimbursed for urban charges and it is anticipated that next year's reimbursement rate will be at 29%. Although this is a preliminary statement, if that 29% does hold – we will need to make some decisions on service levels for the transportation system moving forward this fall. Whether that's going into the fund balance more or making adjustments to service levels to offset the revenue shortage. One issue of impact in the state's finalizing their projected funding levels is that it is based on how much all the public transit systems in the state spends. The 2 biggest systems; the Department of Transportation in Detroit and S.M.A.R.T. – Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation – which is having a millage election in August and if that passes will increase their services significantly and thereby take a higher dollar volume of the state allocation. DDOT is going through their bankruptcy issues and with no idea of what their service levels are going to be and/or what the impact of the bankruptcy will be, any minor fluctuation can result in major fluctuations to the overall funding system in the state.

Federal funding has had some discussion in newspapers recently via editorials, etc. wherein the Federal Trust Fund for Transportation (Federal gas tax) is nearly bankrupt. It has been suggested that perhaps they will do a short term six or nine month “shift” to fix the federal fund, we should remain stable with Federal funding. A long-term solution is currently being sought.

b. *Diesel Fuel Update* – detailed report provided in the information packet.

c. *KTC Retail Space* – Firstly, we needed to get approval from the FTA on how we would charge for services in that space and we are recently in receipt of a letter outlining our new funding mechanism. Previously, we were being reimbursed on a per capita cost basis which was prohibitive to concessionaires making a profitable living off that space. The approval which we sought and was granted last week was to change the funding mechanism to a market based rate which means it will be in alignment with what other commercial real estate costs are in the area. Our next step is to hire a commercial realtor that specializes in downtown real estate to help market the space.

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d. **Public Safety** – Report was moved up in the agenda and information is provided on page 2.

e. **Outreach** – Dump the Pump day was last Thursday, June 19th – actual numbers of ridership increase or decrease are not yet reported. Chairperson Garrylee McCormick attended the City Commission meeting earlier this month and a resolution was presented to him in acknowledgement of Dump the Pump Day. Sean noted the increase in social media efforts highlighting Metro Transit not only through radio ads, radio interviews and also a newly established Facebook presence – which he encourages people to visit and “LIKE” our Metro Transit pages both on Facebook and Twitter as well.

f. **Regionalization** – Report provided in the packet; “Update on the Regionalization of Public Transportation”. Sean McBride stated that there will be a recommendation put before the County Commission Board at next Tuesdays meeting on the creation of the new transit authority outlining the boundaries and governance structure. It is explained in this report that this new authority will be beyond the boundaries of the City of Kalamazoo and will include Comstock, Portage, Parchment, parts or all of Oshtemo, potentially Texas Township, all of the City of Kalamazoo and all of Kalamazoo Township. The meeting next Tuesday will be the initial discussion and looking to take final action on approving the articles of incorporation by their August 6, 2014 meeting. The next action will be to appoint their new Board of Directors at which time they will start meeting shortly thereafter. Garrylee McCormick wanted to commend Sean McBride and Linda Teeter, KCTA Board Chairperson, for their hard work and continued efforts on the Transitional Leadership Team in getting a unanimous approval from the board regarding the proposed boundaries.

Motion made by board member Zach Lassiter to have a letter drafted on behalf of the Transit Authority Board endorsing the Articles of Incorporation set forth from the Leadership Team to the County Commission. Supported by JJ Meddaugh. Motion carried.

g. **ATU Update** – Sean gave an update on our largest collective bargaining agreement group of employees (approximately 100 employees) including drivers and mechanics primarily. Their contract expired in March of this year and has been extended a few times but they currently are working without a contract. The negotiations are at an impasse at this time with the next step continuing on to mediation – limited to wages only – the other portions of the contract need to either be settled or implemented upon the union.

h. **Complete Streets** – Sean McBride referenced Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study which is considering a regional policy that would make a condition of all new roads funding that the design of streets incorporates a “complete streets component” which means consideration for roadways not only for cars but for public transit, pedestrians, bicyclists, individuals with disabilities, etc. Steve Stepak from KATS emphasized that this current board has 2 votes on KATS Policy Committee and stressed the importance of designating alternates to represent Metro Transit when the voting for this issue comes up – which could be this September.

Sean also updated the Board in regard to our interactive website and the implementation of an app for iPhone/Android to better utilize the “Track My Ride” feature. Zach Lassiter suggested Google Maps which currently has an app for public transit resources and Sean replied that we were currently working with Google Transit and are in the “quality assurance” phase of the process and should be live soon.

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Information Items:

Wheelchair Lift/Ramp Incident Report – Report attached for your review.

WMU Student Ridership – Sean stated that he had met with WMU last week and that a review of the current contract shows there is one more year on that contract. All indications show that WMU is happy with the service they are being provided and there has already been discussion about being proactive in getting the next contract into place in the upcoming months.

Demand/Response Monthly Summary Report – Sean commented that the numbers for both April and May in regards to Metro County Connect are extremely high. ADA ridership has surpassed previous records. Based on a question posed by Zach Lassiter, Sean answered that the denial rate, due to increased ridership on ADA trips, has not increased or been a problem but would like more rider feedback as a secondary quality check.

Miscellaneous Comments made by the Board:

Board members all welcomed again the newest Board Members Lynn North and Zach Lassiter. Zach also stressed his concerns in regards to the drivers and mechanics working without a contract at the present time and would like to see a speedy resolution to this issue. Board Chairperson Garrylee McCormick shared that he had received a letter from State Representative Sean McCann thanking the TAB Board for their concerns regarding building better Michigan roads and fully appreciates the boards concerns. Although democratic amendments were offered on the floor to include transit and rail programs, these amendments were defeated and the bills that were passed by the House of Representatives have been referred to the senate committee. McCann also went on to encourage the board to contact our State Senator Tonya Schuitmaker as well as our Federal Representatives.

Public Comments:

Leona Carter, Travel Trainer with Disability Network stated that since April she has signed up 55 riders for Metro County Connect and anticipates its continued increase over the coming months. She trains quite a bit with riders in wheelchairs on how to maneuver the fixed route buses and commented that once the Complete Streets policy is in practice, the number of ADA riders through MCC should decrease due in part to the newly manageable bus stops and loading areas. She is also very enthusiastic about the new “Track My Ride” app being implemented and further training of this feature to her already established riders. Leona also shared with the board that she would be making Travel Training presentations at Bronson and Borgess Hospitals with their Case Manager Teams in the hopes of using MCC in conjunction with their discharge planners and getting newly released patients adequate travel arrangements.

Garrylee McCormick also suggested to Leona Carter that she contact the Sisters of St. Joseph at Nazareth who are in need of drivers and gave her contact name and phone number.

Zach Lassiter questioned Leona in regards to accessibility this past winter in being able to travel train with clients and how clear sidewalks, bus shelters or intersections were during this time. Leona stated that many appoints would need to be cancelled for various reasons and pointed out that the more serious snowstorms were due mainly to shelters and stops not being cleared in a timely manner if at all.

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Zach then posed the question to Sean and the Board as to any action they could take to have the sidewalk / bus shelter clearing ordinances enforced? Sean answered that this has been and will continue to be an ongoing issue and noted that the City of Portage also noted this as being one of their top concerns. Sean offered to brainstorm more ideas at upcoming meetings to help alleviate this problem. Garrylee McCormick asked to have a member of the city department responsible for the clearing of sidewalks and bus shelters present at an upcoming meeting to discuss possible solutions.

JJ Meddaugh asked Sean about the results of the bus stop location survey and what that has revealed so far. Sean stated that the report with these results should be forthcoming and that he has seen some preliminary findings but not the final report and will follow up with the board in the following months.

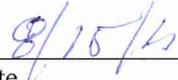
Adjournment - TAB meeting was adjourned by Chair Garrylee McCormick at 10:00 a.m.

Minutes transcribed and presented by Joan M. Melekian

Reviewed and approved by:



Sean McBride
Transportation Director
Metro Transit



Date