

**KALAMAZOO TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Minutes of September 22, 2006**

**Members Present:** Chairperson Carol Fricke, Vice Chairperson Donna Treloar, Elizabeth Forest, Garrylee McCormick, and Rueben Richardson

**Members Absent:** Andy Havice

**City Commission Liaison:** Bobby Hopewell, Vice Mayor (Absent)

**Technical Committee Member Present:** William Schomisch, Transportation Director

**City Administration Member Present:** Beth A. Sowles, Administrative Office Specialist

**Guests:** Richard Atwell, Chairperson – KCTA

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Fricke called the regular meeting of the Transit Authority Board of Directors to order at 8:15 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Fricke requested a motion to excuse the absence of Mr. Andy Havice.

*Mr. Richardson made a motion to excuse the absence of Mr. Havice and was supported by Mr. McCormick. Motion carried unanimously.*

**INTRODUCTIONS**

Chairperson Fricke decided to forego introductions, as no guests were present.

**CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

Added an announcement on upcoming APTA event to the Discussion Items.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

There were none.

**CITY COMMISSION/CITY MANAGER ITEMS**

There were none.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2006**

There were no changes or corrections.

Chairperson Fricke requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 25, 2006.

*Ms. Treloar made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2006, and was supported by Mr. McCormick. Motion carried unanimously.*

## **Income and Expense Statement for August 2006**

Mr. Schomisch explained that operating expenses came in approximately \$11,000 less than the previous year, due to WMU starting on September 5<sup>th</sup> instead of in late August. There was a 2.58% increase in revenue partially due to the fare increase in March and parking lot revenue for the short-term lot at KTC. Long-term parking lot revenues from KTC will not continue in the future. Mr. Schomisch stated that there might be some revenue coming in from meters.

Mr. Schomisch stated that the budget is pretty much on track. Diesel fuel costs should not be a problem; primarily due to not spending the \$260,000 capital match that was thought would have to be spent. Diesel fuel was purchased on September 12, 2006, at a price of \$1.91 per gallon.

*Ms. Forest made a motion to approve the August 2006 Income and Expense Statement and was supported by Mr. Richardson. Motion carried unanimously.*

## **Ridership Analysis Report, August 2006**

Mr. Schomisch explained that in August there were 176,000 trips compared to 180,717 last year, which is a slight decline. Overall 9,000 more passengers have been carried year-to-date from last year. Productivity has also increased from last year.

During August, Metro Van ridership increased slightly. Mr. Schomisch stated that Care-A-Van ridership is steady. There was one less day of service in August that could account for a slight decrease. Care-A-Van expenses have decreased slightly. An issue has arisen with the current Care-A-Van provider regarding difficulty with fuel prices and the fact that the contract was bid on a flat fee. No matter how many passengers are carried, the provider is paid the same. Options will be discussed with provider.

Chairperson Fricke asked about the Specialized Services that are listed on the Care-A-Van report. Mr. Schomisch responded that these are the Community Service vans that are used for services when and where normal demand/response service is not provided. Chairperson Fricke also asked about ensuring that the Community Service vans are properly marked with Metro Transit logos.

*Mr. McCormick made a motion to approve the August 2006 Ridership Analysis Report and was supported by Ms. Forest. Motion carried unanimously.*

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **2006 Budget Update**

Mr. Schomisch stated that by the end of the year, diesel fuel should end up at exactly as we originally proposed it (i.e. \$2.25 per gallon). In 2007, Metro Transit may very likely move to ultra low sulfur fuel that could cost 5¢ to 10¢ more per gallon. This fuel is made for certain engines and the impact on the environment is best when used in engines with particulate traps.

There is a proposal from a group at WMU to start up a biodiesel plant under a grant that is available. When biodiesel is reported at "Bio", it means that only 10% of the fuel is from alternatives sources (i.e. soy, beans, corn, vegetable oil) and that 90% of it is diesel fuel.

### **Care-A-Van System Update**

Mr. Schomisch stated that Metro Transit has received several requests for background information in terms of the cost of Care-A-Van and how it is funded. Most requests are coming from the mental health community. These individuals are looking at what alternatives are available for Care-A-Van users in case the millage fails. Mr. Schomisch stated that they are supportive of the millage passing, but looking at alternatives in case it doesn't pass. Transportation is a large part of the services provided to clients.

## **Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA) Update**

Chairperson Fricke announced that the family of Mr. Phil Reid requested donations to the millage campaign in his memory.

Mr. Atwell reported discussions are underway among key staff and board with individuals in both the City and the County to identify key elements that will have to be addressed in a transition to one transit authority. Talks are under way to address all the issues. Mr. Atwell also let the Board know that the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) had questions if the millage is successful. What will happen to the LAC, which reports to TAB? Also what happens to the jurisdictional contracts and their representation? Mr. Atwell stated that he is working very closely with TAB Chairperson Fricke in ensuring that everyone has the same information.

Chairperson Fricke stated that if the millage passes that contracts with jurisdictions, "go away". But representation for the jurisdictions can be looked at.

Mr. Schomisch stated he would like to maintain some sort of geographic representation, but that it may not be in the same manner as the current LAC.

## **KTC Project Update**

Mr. Schomisch reported that the lease contracts have not been finalized as yet. Depot Concessions contract has been agreed to and the Indian Trails contract has basically been agreed to. The Amtrak contract is moving ahead and should be finalized next week. Mr. Schomisch stated that the Greyhound is still being considered. Because federal funds are tied to the facility construction and federal funds paying the staff, third-party contracts have to include federal clauses in all contracts. Lawyers for Greyhound agree, but a Government Affairs person in Tennessee who handles contractual agreements has one standard contract and is refusing to change the document. Greyhound cannot sign the contract until this is completed. The contract with the airport is only with Indian Trails, so that when Indian Trails gives notice to the airport, Greyhound will not have a home.

## **KTC Facility Operations**

Mr. Schomisch reported that the facility is operating very smoothly. A problem continues of people driving their personal vehicles in the area that is for buses only. A possible gating system is being investigated. Pedestrians are also continuing to walk in areas they are not supposed to. Currently the Department is making use of "gatekeepers" to change people's habits.

Service changes on September 5<sup>th</sup> went very well. Three buses going downtown and turning left onto Michigan has not created any congestion and we have not received any complaints. Mr. McCormick stated that the buses are, at times, holding up traffic.

Ms. Forest inquired whether an announcement could be played, in both English and Spanish, stating where people should or should not be. She further asked if Coach Operators could also make an announcement letting people know where to walk.

Mr. Richardson asked if anything has been done to protect the facility after hours against any type of graffiti, etc.

## **APTA Conference in San Jose**

Mr. Schomisch has been requested by FTA to represent small urban transit systems that experienced substantial ridership growth between 1999 and 2003. Metro Transit has been singled out for this huge growth experienced due to WMU campus service. Metro Transit was written up in various publications and FTA invited Mr. Schomisch to be a presenter at the APTA Annual Meeting in San Jose. Mr. Schomisch was chosen as one of only four systems in the country to be invited and it is an honor.

Mr. Atwell asked how the others were selected. Mr. Schomisch explained that a conference call is to take place where he will find out more information.

### **Downtown Business - Impact**

Ms. Treloar stated that McNally's is not experiencing as many customers due to the fact that the transfer center moved people off the downtown streets. Ms. Treloar is working with people who are doing self-image work with people from Ministry with Community. They asked if bus passes could be donated to them. Mr. Schomisch stated that the Board has an established policy stating that the System will not grant requests for free passes to any group or organization.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **Wheelchair Lift/Ramp Incident Report, August 2006**

Mr. Schomisch reported that mechanics are working on the wheelchair lifts and ramps on a regular basis. One of the things found with new facility is that a coach with a ramp, passengers in a wheelchair are experiencing some difficulty because when the ramp is extended, the angle is steeper because there is no curb.

Mr. Richardson stated some problems in boarding buses because you have to back onto the ramp. Mr. Schomisch will talk to Operations about having drivers assist wheelchair passengers as necessary.

### **Bicycle Rack Usage Report, August 2006**

Mr. Schomisch reported that he is amazed that 3,476 bikes were carried by the system in August.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

Mr. Richardson stated that people are asking about a possible fare increase. Mr. Schomisch stated that the new budget will have a proposed fare increase. Mr. Richardson stated that he has heard rumors that a fare increase will happen yet this year. Mr. Schomisch clarified that there is no new fare increase this year.

Ms. Forest suggested outreach possibilities of appearing on WMU campus radio.

Ms. Treloar asked that if the 0.45 millage passes, will the City of Kalamazoo continue to pay that new millage plus the current 1 mil levy. Chairperson Fricke responded affirmatively.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were none

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business presented before the Transit Authority Board of Directors at their formal meeting dated September 22, 2006, Chairperson Fricke requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.

*Mr. McCormick a motion to adjourn the meeting, and was supported by Ms. Treloar.  
Motion carried unanimously.*

The meeting adjourned the meeting at 9:25 a.m.

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Beth A. Sowles, Recording Secretary

Date: September 22, 2006