

**KALAMAZOO TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Minutes of September 24, 2007**

**Members Present:** Chairperson Carol Fricke, Vice Chair Donna Treloar, Garrylee McCormick, Michael Gregor, and Andy Havice

**Members Absent:** Reuben Richardson  
Elizabeth Forest (Unexcused)

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

**Technical Support Members Present:** William Schomisch, Transportation Director

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

**Guests:** Richard Atwell, KCTA Chair, Paul Ecklund, Jack Mekemson, Linda Teeter, Diane Kempen, Terry Kuseske, Greg Rosine, and Char Sumney, KCTA Board  
Tim Onderlinde and Dan Robbert, Pride Care  
Stacy Readdle, DRC

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Fricke called the regular meeting of the Transit Authority Board of Directors to order at 5:31 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Chairperson Fricke requested a motion to excuse the absences of Mr. Reuben Richardson.

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

**INTRODUCTIONS**

The Board members introduced themselves to the guests in attendance.

**CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

Add Action Item: D. Resolution – APTA Emergency Preparedness and Response

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGNEDA ITEMS**

None

**ISSUES/ITEMS FOR CITY MANAGER/CITY COMMISSION**

Mr. Schomisch stated that two reports regarding Care-A-Van were provided to the City Manager.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Meeting Minutes of August 27, 2007**

The minutes were accepted with no changes.

*Mr. Gregor made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of August 27, 2007, as presented and was supported by Mr. McCormick. Motion carried unanimously.*

**Income and Expense Statement – August 2007**

Mr. Schomisch presented the August Income and Expense Report. Operating expenses went down a slight amount while revenues increased for the period.

*Mr. McCormick made a motion to approve the August 2007 Income and Expense Statement and was supported by Ms. Treloar. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Ridership Analysis Report – August 2007**

Mr. Schomisch presented the ridership report. Metro Transit has experienced ridership increases for four consecutive months. Year-to-date ridership has increased by 1.55%. Productivity also continues to increase throughout the system. Mr. Schomisch will check with other systems to see where Metro Transit stands. Care-A-Van ridership is slightly down due to drop in rural rides. Overall, the System is carrying more passengers.

Mr. Havice asked if Route #2 – Portage is experiencing capacity issues. Mr. Havice stated that this bus has standing room only at times. Mr. Schomisch stated that if capacity becomes a problem, a kicker bus could be used if needed. Mr. Havice also asked if there was a reason for a jump in ridership on the Route #16 – Lovell route. Mr. Schomisch responded that DKI ran several promotions.

*Mr. McCormick made a motion to approve the Revised July Ridership Analysis Report and was supported by Mr. Gregor. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Resolution for APTA's Emergency Preparedness and Response Program**

Mr. Schomisch presented APTA's Emergency Preparedness and Response Program. This is a voluntary program for participating transit systems. This program allows transit systems to call upon other transit systems for assistance in restoring public transit service to those areas that have been hard hit due to any type of disaster. This program also has 'governing principles' and check and balances that would protect Metro Transit if any equipment, personnel or services were used by another transit agency.

Mr. Havice asked what Metro Transit would be required to supply for a system that is in need. Mr. Schomisch responded that this program isn't directly for New Orleans, but is a result from New Orleans need. This program formalizes a program to coordinate transit systems working together. Mr. Havice stated that he is worried about the requirements and the transit systems needing this type of assistance. Mr. Schomisch responded that Metro Transit's public transit service would not be affected by providing this assistance. The costs would be covered by the agency requesting the service and not the agency providing the service. Mr. Havice asked what the advantage to this commitment is as opposed to volunteering. Mr. Schomisch stated that the protections laid out in the program would benefit both or all systems. Mr. Gregor asked what the decision-making process is for determining whether to offer or accept services. Mr. Schomisch responded that there is no mandate to do participate, but it would be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

*Mr. Havice made a motion to accept the Resolution for Kalamazoo Metro Transit System Participation in the APTA Emergency Response & Preparedness Program and was supported by Ms. Treloar. Motion carried unanimously.*

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

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

Pride Care is providing 100% service delivery and has been since August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Pride Care had experienced only one (1) service failure. Inspections began Monday, September 17, 2007, and two vehicles are being inspected each night. Metro Transit staff has begun riding a few trips to monitor the service. Metro Transit will be billing Pride Care for the service that Metro Transit helped to provide on August 1<sup>st</sup>. The new coaches are expected to be delivered the end of October. The City Commission mandated the City Manager and the City Attorney to look at why the information being presented is differing. The City Manager has asked the Fleet Manager and the Purchasing Director to become involved. Metro Transit will provide information, but not be a part of the investigation. A final report will determine if a breach of contract actually took place. Metro Transit conducted a Customer Service Survey in 2005. This same survey was again sent to Care-A-Van riders so that current satisfaction can be determined. That report will be provided to the City Commission, KCTA and TAB.

Chair Fricke stated that the Care-A-Van officials are in attendance and asked Mr. Onderlinde and Mr. Robbert to step to the podium.

Mr. Onderlinde thanked the Transit Authority Board for the opportunity to speak to them.

Mr. Havice inquired whether replacement drivers would be out of work if previous drivers returned to work. Mr. Onderlinde explained that new hires are part of the Union. There are no current plans for worker displacement. Pride Care has hired 23 people. Mr. Havice asked how the new hires became members of the Union. Mr. Onderlinde stated that the new employees have filed a petition to decertify the Union.

Mr. Gregor inquired about Pride Care's maintenance procedures and what were the procedures like before the work stoppage. Mr. Onderlinde responded that when Pride Care started the contract and with the vehicles that were supplied to Pride Care, they were not allowed to inspect the vehicles before receiving the vehicles. The day that Pride Care received the vehicles, Pride Care inspected the vehicles and provided a listing of items that needed to be addressed with the vehicles. Pride Care put forth a significant amount of work and money to bringing the vehicles up to standard. The previous contractor was not held to any type of inspections and Pride Care is held to the standards of keeping the buses working. After quarterly inspections, a report is provided to Pride Care on items that need to be fixed. If a vehicle is "red-tagged", that vehicle must be fixed before it can be put back into service. Pride Care has three licensed mechanics that work on the vehicles.

Mr. McCormick inquired on the process of new hires becoming members of the Union. Mr. Onderlinde stated that once the new hires began working at Pride Care they automatically became members of that Union.

Mr. Havice asked if the drivers pay Union dues. Mr. Onderlinde stated that they do not because a contract was never finalized.

Mr. Onderlinde stated that the employees who walked out and began the work stoppage filed unfair labor charges. He stated that the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has now ruled in favor of Pride Care stating that Pride Care bargained in good faith and the striking employees are not eligible for unemployment.

Mr. Onderlinde stated that the Pride Care name has been dragged through the mud and they appreciate the time to be heard. Pride Care has hired an outside agency to evaluate the fleet. When this evaluation is complete a written statement will be provided to the City Commission. Pride Care officials hold their relationship with Metro Transit in high esteem.

There has been some concern regarding the Care-A-Van vehicles. Some of these vehicles are unreliable. Pride Care has been supplying eight of their own vehicles to provide this service. The high amount of rides is because of that usage. The ball was dropped (by the County) in replacing the vehicles. Only one vehicle has less than 200,000 miles.

Mr. Schomisch stated that he would repeat what he stated to the members of the Local Advisory Committee (LAC). Metro Transit has been very successful in securing discretionary capital grants. When Metro Transit took over the contract, Metro Transit immediately began to put funding in place for the replacement of the Care-A-Van vehicles. The County did not have a bus replacement program. Given the problems, the mandated 7-year lifespan is being questioned. Mr. Schomisch stated that he is looking forward to the inspection report as well as the audit report.

Mr. Havice asked if Transit Authority Board members could show support for Pride Care. Mr. Havice stated that he believes that Pride Care has done everything right. Mr. Schomisch stated that he believes the company is not in default. Mr. Schomisch stated that public support could be stated at a City Commission meeting.

### **Federal/State Funding Update**

Mr. Schomisch stated that the U.S. Senate approved an Appropriations bill for 2008; this is slightly lower than approved by the House. President Bush has threatened to veto bills that do not match original requests.

The Governor is concerned about the Senate approval to a package of cuts of \$1 billion. On top of original \$500 million already taken from transportation funding, in capital, and \$250 million in operating assistance, this may not be final standing for funding and budget.

### **Diesel Fuel Update**

Mr. Schomisch stated that there is a positive budget variance in diesel fuel purchases. Metro Transit is currently purchasing a B-5 blend. No problems have been experienced with this fuel.

Four new Gillig buses in February will have the new engines that require ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel. In October, Metro Transit will start running ultra-low sulfur to change over the tanks and have 100% ultra low sulfur by February.

### **Change Date and Time of Meetings**

Members discussed the current time and date of the TAB meetings. Chair Fricke asked for TAB member's preferences on meeting times and dates.

Mr. McCormick prefers to return to meeting on Friday mornings at 8:15.

Mr. Gregor prefers Monday evening and believes it would be more accessible to the public

Mr. Havice stated that he had no preference.

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

#### **Wheelchair/Lift Ramp Incident Report – August 2007**

Mr. Schomisch noted that there were no wheelchair lift failures for August.

#### **Bronco Bash**

Mr. Schomisch presented each TAB member with an umbrella that had been distributed to WMU students as part of Bronco Bash.

### **MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS**

Mr. Gregor stated that he appreciates all the effort that has gone into information, reports, meetings, and comments regarding the Care-A-Van issue. Also stated that he would like to see both Metro Van and Care-A-Van become in-house services of Metro Transit.

Mr. McCormick supported Mr. Gregor's statement.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business presented before the Transit Authority Board of Directors at their formal meeting dated Monday, September 24, 2007, Chairperson Fricke adjourned the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

*Mr. McCormick made a motion to approve the proposed route modifications and was supported by Mr. Gregor.*

---

Beth A. Sowles, Recording Secretary

Date: September 24, 2007