

**KALAMAZOO TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Minutes of January 18, 2008**

**Draft**

**Members Present:**

Chair Carol Fricke, Elizabeth Forest, Michael Gregor Andy Havice, Garrylee McCormick, and Vice Chair Donna Treloar *(arrived at 8:19 a.m.)*

**Members Absent:**

Reuben Richardson

**City Commission Liaison:**

Stephanie L. Moore *(arrived at 8:29 a.m.)*

**Technical Support Members Present:**

William J. Schomisch, Executive Director

**City Administration Member Present:**

Melissa Coulson, Administrative Office Specialist

**Guests:**

Dale Hein, KCTA

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**ROLL CALL**

Chair Fricke requested a motion to excuse the absence of Ruben Richardson.

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

**INTRODUCTIONS**

The Board members introduced themselves to the guests in attendance.

**CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

There are six (6) changes/addition to the agenda, they are as follows:

1. VII: Action Item B (2007 December Income and Expense Statement is not complete and will be omitted from this meeting. It will be addressed at the next scheduled meeting, February 29, 2008.
2. VII: Action Item H. Reappointment of Mary Howard to the Local Advisory Committee
3. VII: Action Item I. Reappointment of Phyllis Brown to the Local Advisory Committee
4. VII: Action Item J. Extension of Metro Van Reservation Policy
5. VII: Action Item K. Extension of Care-A-Van Reservation Policy
6. IX: Information Item. Oakwood Neighborhood Association Letter

*Ms. Forest made a motion to approve the Changes/Additions to the Agenda, and was supported by Mr. Gregor. Motion carried unanimously.*

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

None

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

Mr. Schomisch stated that the City Commission Committee of the Whole met Friday, January 18, 2008. The City Commission would take action Tuesday, January 22, 2008 to add 18 new cameras and 12 upgrades to the current surveillance equipment.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **Meeting Minutes of December 21, 2007**

The minutes of the Kalamazoo Transit Authority Board Meeting dated December 21, 2007, were presented to the Board for their consideration.

There were no corrections and/or changes conveyed.

*Mr. Gregor made a motion to approve the Meeting Minutes of December 21, 2007, and was supported by Mr. McCormick. Motion carried unanimously. Ms. Treloar abstained.*

### **Income and Expense Statement – December 2007**

Chair Fricke asked for a motion to omit the December 2007 Income and Expense Statement, as it is not completed at this time. It will be presented at the February 29, 2008 meeting.

*Mr. McCormick made a motion to omit the December 2007 Income and Expense Statement and was supported by Mr. Havice. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Ridership Report – December 2007**

Mr. Schomisch briefly outlined the December 2007 Ridership Report. Ridership fell approximately 4.02%. Mr. Schomisch explained that this decrease was primarily due to the change of the WMU service. The Year-to-Date Fixed-Route Productivity is 24.73, which is an increase of 2.48% from 2006. Metro Van is up 733 passengers or an increase of 28.67%. Total ridership in December was 3,290. This increase is partly due to agency's changing from Care-A-Van to Metro Van to reduce their cost. Care-A-Van ridership for our urban passengers decreased by 18.6%; where as our rural passengers increased 3.86%.

Chair Fricke asked if Metro Van has service boundaries. Mr. Schomisch stated that the extension of service area would need to be addressed. Chair Fricke asked how the fare issue between Metro Van and Care-A-Van will be resolved when merging the services. Mr. Schomisch indicated his desire that fares become the same after merging the services.

Mr. Hein stated that the public needs to see the service as a whole. They need consistency with the service and the cost of the service.

Ms. Forest stated she was amazed at the number of passengers she witnessed riding on the Care-A-Van. She also commented on the look of the new Care-A-Van vehicle.

Mr. Havice asked for a status on the Portage routes and inquired how long we will monitor rides per hour. Mr. Schomisch stated that the Shaver Road route had an increase of ½ rides per hour and overall usage had increased 39%. Mr. Schomisch stated that all new routes are monitored twelve (12) months before making any changes.

Mr. Schomisch also informed the board that Metro Transit is launching a campaign to promote ridership on the Portage routes. This campaign, "Ride to Win", will begin February 1, 2008. Whenever a person boards the #26-Centre West, the #27-Centre East, or the #28-Shaver bus, they will be given a scratch-off card. By scratching off the card, the passenger will reveal whether or not the card is a winner. Prizes include a \$500 gift certificate to Wal-Mart, \$100 gift certificates to Meijer, or monthly SMART Passes for the Metro Transit buses.

*Mr. McCormick made a motion to approve the Ridership Analysis Report for December 2007 and was supported by Ms. Treloar. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **FY2009 MDOT Grant Application**

Mr. Schomisch explained the FY2009 MDOT Operating and Capital Grant Application. This year's budget document did not include a five projection due to the new accounting software (Eden

Software). The Eden Software does not allow 5 year projections. In order to get a 5 year projection, we went back to the 2007 budget. Mr. Schomisch stated that the 2009 budget numbers are subject to change due to State's budgetary problems. He further explained that the 5-year capital plan, part of the KATS TIP planning process, was used to develop the grant application.

This Grant application totals \$5,476,282 for Metro Transit operations. Of that amount, \$3,659,663 is for urban and \$884,943 is for rural. An additional \$75,000 is being requested to subsidize the CAV Specialized Service Program.

The 2009 capital program is requesting \$465,000, which is a 20% match for expenditures. The capital program includes the replacement of Metro Transit vehicles, Freon Recovery System, replacement of staff car #9-9, replacement of ¼ ton pick up truck, miscellaneous small tool replacement, replacing approximately 75 bus shelters, and adding new shelters as funding permits. The MDOT deadline for this grant is January 31, 2008.

Chairperson Fricke asked when Kalamazoo Metro Transit is changed to the KCTA, would the grant paperwork need to be changed. Mr. Schomisch stated that Mr. Hein was hired to work on items such as this. Mr. Hein stated that he is working to accelerate the grant application process.

Chairperson Fricke inquired if there is a possibility of the MDOT grant not being available. Mr. Schomisch stated that the capital programs consist of 80% federal funding and 20% state funding. When the state can not meet the 20%, they offer a paper match of 20%. This 20% match offer may not be available in the future and the system may have to fund capital purchases.

Mr. Gregor asked if we anticipated any problems with the federal money. Mr. Schomisch announced that the money is approved and there would be no problems.

*Ms. Forest made a motion to approve the 2009 Operating and Capital Budget and was supported by Mr. Gregor. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Resolution to Levy 1.0 Mil for 2008**

Mr. Schomisch explained the annual collection of the special transit tax levied under the General Property Tax Act will generate \$1,673,682 in revenue for the operation of the Kalamazoo Metro Transit. This is the last year taxes are to be levied pursuant to said special millage.

*Ms. Forest made a motion to accept the Resolution to Levy 1.0 Mil for 2008, and was supported by Mr. McCormick. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Election of Officers for 2008**

Chairperson Fricke opened the floor for nomination of officers. No one indicated interest in becoming an officer. Mr. Schomisch recommended that the current officers remain in their positions. Chairperson Fricke is concerned about Mr. Richardson as the Secretary/Treasurer. Mr. Schomisch stated Mr. Richardson has had health issues; however he was not able to attend this meeting due to the weather. The position of Secretary/ Treasurer was tabled by the Chairperson for discussion at the February meeting.

Ms. Treloar nominated Chairperson Fricke to continue in her current position as Chairperson. Ms. Forest supported the nomination.

Chairperson Fricke nominated Ms. Treloar to continue in her current position as Vice Chair. Mr. McCormick supported the nomination.

*Mr. Gregor made a motion to accept the nominations of Chairperson and Vice Chair and was supported by Ms. Forest. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Change of Date for February Meeting**

Mr. Schomisch is recommending that the February TAB meeting be moved to Friday, February 29, 2008. This date change is due to the MPTA's Annual Legislative Meeting in Lansing on February 22, 2008. Chairperson Fricke extended an invitation to the board to attend this annual meeting.

*Mr. Gregor made a motion to change the date of the February 2008 meeting and was supported by Mr. Havice. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

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

Ms. Vander Kley, Metro Transit Marketing Coordinator presented the Care-A-Van Update for the absent ADA Coordinator, Mr. Congdon.

#### **Reappointment of Mary Howard to the LAC**

A recommendation to reappoint Ms. Mary Howard to the Local Advisory Committee was presented. Ms. Howard's three-year term would expire on January 31, 2010, and she will not be eligible for reappointment due to term limits.

*Mr. Havice made a motion to approve Ms. Mary Howard's reappointment to serve on the LAC, and was supported by Ms. Treloar. Motion carried unanimously.*

#### **Reappointment of Phyllis Brown to the LAC**

A recommendation to reappoint Ms. Phyllis Brown to the Local Advisory Committee was presented. Ms. Brown's three-year term would expire on January 31, 2010, and she will not be eligible for reappointment due to term limits.

*Mr. Gregor made a motion to approve Ms. Phyllis Brown's reappointment to serve on the LAC, and was supported by Mr. McCormick. Motion carried unanimously.*

#### **Extension of Metro Van Reservation Policy**

A recommendation to extend the Metro Van Reservation Policy from four (4) days to seven (7) days was presented. A seven (7) day reservation period would allow passengers to call in once per week to schedule all their rides. It would make it easier for the passengers to schedule their rides, reduce the number of calls taken in the scheduling office and make it easier for the schedulers to enter the rides. Pride Care staff supports this recommendation.

*Mr. Havice made a motion for the Extension of Metro Van Reservation Policy, and was supported by Ms. Treloar. Motion carried unanimously.*

#### **Extension of Care-A Van Reservation Policy**

A recommendation to extend the Care-A-Van Reservation Policy from four (4) days for medical appointments and one (1) day for all other trips to seven (7) days for all trips was presented for approval. A seven (7) day reservation period would allow passengers to call in once per week to schedule all their rides. This would allow passengers to better plan their trips and receive confirmation of their trips in a timelier manner. Care-A-Van schedulers would also be able to plan routes and accommodate passengers in a more efficient manner. All ride requests will continue to be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Pride Care staff supports this recommendation.

Chairperson Fricke asked how the public will be informed of this new policy. Ms. Vander Kley stated posters will be put in each Care-A-Van and Metro Van, it will be posted on the Metro Transit website, and all certified riders (currently 1,675) will receive our quarterly news letter announcing this change. Mr. Hein suggested we post this new reservation policy on the KCTA website and also consider placing a public notice in the Kalamazoo Gazette.

*Mr. Havice made a motion for the Extension of Care-A-Van Reservation Policy, and was supported by Mr. McCormick. Motion carried unanimously.*

Mr. Schomisch provided an update on the No Show Status. Care-A-Van was down 46% in 2007; where as, Metro Van increased 27%. Trip denials in 2006 were at 80; in 2007 we decreased that number to 8; that is an 90% drop. Pride Care had done much better in 2007 verse 2006.

Mr. Schomisch stated that there has been no change in the ongoing labor dispute between Care-A-Van drivers and Pride Care. Teamsters out of Detroit are working with the parties to get them back to the table. The teamster's representative from Detroit will be coming in next week to speak to the union representative.

Mr. Havice asked who is speaking for the labor. Mr. Schomisch stated that one of the employees that left is acting as their union representative. Mr. Schomisch also stated that the new Care-A-Van drivers are part of the same union. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Vehicle Inspections of both the Care-A-Van leased vehicles and the Pride Care owned vehicles used in Care-A-Van services are completed. Improvement in repairs and the condition of the buses have improved. Daily monitoring of vehicle repairs will continue for 30 days. Pride Care agreed to provide these daily reports.

It was agreed that Pride Care could strip the old Care-A-Van vehicles for parts. This must be completed by February 28, 2008. At that time, the vehicles will go to salvage.

By the end of 2008, there will be six (6) more Care-A-Van vehicles replaced. The additional fleet that is not scheduled for replacement will be sent out for decaling. The decaling will be uniformed over the fleet.

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

Kalamazoo Metro Transit will receive a FTA 5309 Discretionary Earmark award of approximately \$245,000 for FY2008. This is less than the amount requested (we requested \$3 million). Mr. Schomisch stated that the process is different this year. Mr. Schomisch also stated that we can apply for FY2009 and that we should request another \$3 million for the expansion of the administrative office area.

There has been little change in the state funding. The Governor will appoint a panel to review alternatives to funding transportation infrastructure improvements in the state through the current gas tax. The Governor has indicated that she will not support an increase in the gas tax.

#### **Diesel Fuel Update**

Metro Transit's first diesel purchase for 2008 of 12,000 gallons of fuel occurred on January 8<sup>th</sup>, at \$2.6858 per gallon for an ultra low sulfur B5 blend. Currently the average price per gallon is \$2.68. That compares with the budget for diesel fuel at \$2.74 per gallon.

#### **Trolley Services**

Mr. Schomisch stated that the Holly Jolly Trolley had carried a total of 10,384. The South Westnedge Holiday Express in Portage carried 1,100 passengers with service beginning on December 10<sup>th</sup> and running until December 24, 2007.

Ms. Moore had the opportunity to ride both trolleys and had great experiences on both. Ms. Moore commended the drivers for their courtesy and assistance.

Ms. Forest asked if we keep the trolleys on site at Metro Transit. Mr. Schomisch informed the board that we lease the trolleys from Grand Haven. The March 7, 2008 Art Hop has requested a trolley and we recognize the need for a shuttle between downtown and WMU Friday through Sunday. Mr. Schomisch stated that purchasing one or two trolleys would be nice, but it would need to work with the fleet budget.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **Letter from Oakwood Neighborhood Association**

Mr. Schomisch presented a letter from the Oakwood Neighborhood Association requesting Oakland #4 bus route be returned to its previous route, or change the current route to more adequately service the Oakwood neighborhood and Oakland Drive into the Portage area. Mr. Schomisch reported that the route change has increased ridership, even though in the Oakwood neighborhood ridership decreased.

Chairperson Fricke asked if this neighborhood could use Metro Van. Mr. Schomisch stated that Metro Van could not be of service, but Care-A-Van would be better suitable.

Ms. Moore asked if a route could be added or a route be split to reduce cost. Mr. Schomisch stated that adding a route is approximately 80% driver cost.

Mr. Havice asked, would a direct route help the issues on Oakwood if adding a 3<sup>rd</sup> bus on Westnedge? Mr. Schomisch stated it would.

Mr. Havice believes a 3<sup>rd</sup> bus on Westnedge for the evening hours is needed.

Ms. Moore asked if there would be a huge cost increase if adding another bus at peak hours only. Mr. Schomisch stated that the budget is already in place for this year and state money allocated for transportation has decreased.

Mr. Schomisch appreciates the points being made and all suggestions will be taken in consideration. KCTA will need to address this in the future.

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

Mr. Schomisch reported that 565 passengers in mobility devices rode the bus service and there was only one (1) lift/ramp failure.

As of December 2007, 33 incidents of lift/ramp failures occurred out of the 7,629 passengers in mobility devices that were provided service, a failure rate of only 0.4%.

### **WMU Ridership Report – December 2007**

Mr. Schomisch stated that for the month of December there were 32,925 student riders.

### **Metro Van Monthly Reports – December 2007**

Mr. Schomisch was pleased to announce that the Metro Van program had its highest annual total since the program was implemented in 1994. 3,290 passengers rode in December. Year to date totals reached 39,613.

### **Care-A-Van Monthly Reports – December 2007**

Mr. Schomisch reported Care-A-Van transported 4,432 passengers in December. 68,955 riders utilized Care-A-Van in 2007.

## **MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS**

Mr. Gregor requested a status report regarding the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) contract. Mr. Schomisch stated that progress is being made, but moving slow. There are some major issues that are trying to get resolved. This has been a long negotiating process.

Mr. McCormick asked about the problems the Kalamazoo Transportation Center (KTC) is having when students come in. He recalled an incident that occurred before Christmas involving one (1) student who was singled out. This student rode a bus into the KTC and when he arrived there were 60-75 people waiting to watch an attack. Public Safety was not able to get there on time, and the student was beaten. The student refused to press charges.

Ms. Forest asked if we, the TAB, could press charges. Mr. Schomisch stated that the only way we could press charges is if we could identify the attackers.

Mr. Schomisch reported an incident that occurred yesterday (Thursday, February 17, 2008). Students from Loy Norrix High School broke into a fight on a bus near Vine and Oak Streets. The driver was assaulted and the students fled from the vehicle. Public Safety responded and at 4:10 p.m. arrests were made.

Mr. Schomisch stated that Public Safety Officers are now at the KTC daily at 2:45 p.m. to monitor the students and move people out of the station as buses depart. Mr. Schomisch also stated that on Tuesday, January 22, 2008 Metro Transit staff (Mr. Schomisch, Mr. Givhan, and Ms. Stivers) and Public Safety Officer Breese would be going to Grand Rapids to speak with the Rapid staff as to how they handle similar situations at their transportation center.

Mr. McCormick asked if the number Phoenix Students are creating problems. To avoid some of these issues, can't a Metro Transit bus pick them up at school and take them home? Mr. Schomisch stated Metro Transit is a public transportation service and picking students up at school and taking them directly home is not an option.

Mr. McCormick asked how we could send a bus with no camera on it. Also, could we send a different bus to Loy Norrix, one that was equipped with cameras? Mr. Schomisch will check into this.

Mr. Schomisch stated that within the next ninety (90) days cameras will be installed on all buses. However, even with cameras, it will not completely resolve these issues.

Mr. Gregor requests an update on security during next months meeting.

Ms. Forest is disappointed, as a rider and a parent, with this incident and is concerned for the students. Kalamazoo Public Schools (KPS) may need to address this and take it on.

Ms. Forest asked if Phoenix is part of the KPS and if so, why are these students not on school buses? Schools should have rules for riding the bus.

Chairperson Fricke asked if we have rules of conduct posted on our buses. Mr. Schomisch assured the board that there are rules of conduct posted.

Ms. Moore stated that riding is a privilege and we need to obey the rules and regulations. Can't we discourage students riding?

Ms. Forest stated that there needs to be a discussion of revoking privileges to students.

Mr. Schomisch stated that in the past four (4) years, he had to remove two (2) individuals and ban them from riding.

Ms. Moore stated she is aware of the issues at KTC and there is a group that will work with Public Safety to assist in maintaining order. This may be an option to look into.

Mr. Schomisch reported that this is a growing problem that needs to be addressed.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business presented before the Transit Authority Board of Directors at their formal meeting dated Friday, January 18, 2008, Chair Fricke adjourned the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:44 a.m.

*Mr. Gregor made a motion to adjourn the meeting and was supported by Ms. Forest. Motion carried unanimously.*

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Melissa Coulson, Recording Secretary

Date: January 18, 2008