

Minutes

Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority

April 27, 2009

Place: Room 204, County Administration Building
Time: 5:30 p.m. – 6:43 p.m.
Others Present: Peter Battani, Lisa Bradshaw, Dale Hein, Bill Schomisch, and Lori Pyatt

Chairperson Teeter called the meeting to order.

1. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Paul Ecklund, Diane Kempen, Terry Kuseske, Jack Mekemson, Greg Rosine, Char Sumney, Linda Teeter, Jan VanStratt and David Worthams.

Members Absent: None

A quorum was present.

2. REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Mr. Kuseske, supported by Mr. Mekemson, and approved.

3. REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF MARCH 9th MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Mr. Rosine, supported by Mr. Ecklund, and approved.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Hein listed the area organizations that had passed resolutions of support or that had voted to support the passage of the millage. There had also been communication from KVCC that they supported the millage.

5. QUARTERLY BUDGET UPDATE

Ms. Bradshaw reported on the quarterly budget ending March 30, 2009. She said that the KCTA was below target for expenditures at 45%. The source of funding for operations was the carry-over balance, which would see the KCTA through the end of the current fiscal year.

Ms. Bradshaw said the only thing that stood out was the auditing fee which was above the 50% target, but it was a one time fee for the year. Mr. Hein added that legal expenses, which were once a concern, were below the 50% mark, and they were expected to stay under budget.

Vice-Chairperson Rosine asked how the end of the C-A-V contract on June 30 would affect the budget. Ms. Bradshaw stated that, since MetroVan was a new item that would need a budget adjustment. Mr. Schomisch stated the Service Agreement with the KCTA covered services through the end of the calendar year, and the KCTA budget would cover those expenditures. Ms. Bradshaw agreed that, as long as expenditures were monitored closely, the first quarter of Budget year 2010 would be covered by carry-over funds, should the millage not pass. (The provider re-bidding was a separate issue to be handled by the city.) It had been Ms. Bradshaw's advice that the public hearing to adopt the budget would wait until after the millage.

6. SPECIAL REPORT FROM TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR

(A copy of the report will be filed with the official copy of the minutes.)

Mr. Schomisch highlighted the following:

RIDERSHIP:

- 2008 system-wide ridership was almost 3.1 million rides, the highest since 1982.
- Fixed Route ridership had increased in January and February of '09.
- Care-A-Van saw a 2.3% decrease in '08, because some riders had switched to MetroVan, yet C-A-V increased 5.7% in Feb '09 (vs. Feb '08). Portage scheduled 19% of the total '08 C-A-V rides.
- Metro Van had seen a 23% increase in '08 (vs. '07), and it experienced three consecutive record breaking months starting Jan '09.

PRODUCTIVITY:

- Metro Transit's productivity was #4 statewide, and ranked #1 when compared to all ten systems in the same class as Kalamazoo.
- Even though there were empty buses sometimes, the average for the first months of '09 showed that 32.02 riders were on every bus each hour—the highest in Metro's history.

SYSTEM REVENUES AND EXPENSES:

- Overall the budget was on track. (Operating revenues were slightly higher than projected, and operating expenses were just 1.6% higher than projections.)
- While diesel fuel was expected to increase in the following months, it was currently at ½ of the budgeted amount.

FLEET REPLACEMENT:

- Based on a 15-year replacement schedule, Metro replaced seven older buses with 35' buses from Gillig, a manufacturer with the best quality at the best price. The fixed route fleet was currently made up of buses which used ultra-low sulfur bio-diesel fuel. The average bus age was 5.4 years (in the past this had averaged 22 years).
- Future fixed route bus purchases would occur in 2013 with hybrid electric vehicles.
- The demand/response fleet had been analyzed for need and efficiency, and would be supplemented and expanded to bring the city-owned vehicles to:
 - Care-A-Van: 21
 - Metro Van: 23
 - Community Service Vehicles: 6
- These purchases were made from Federal grants that could only be used for capital, not operating, purposes.

DEMAND/RESPONSE PROGRAM CONTRACT: The C-A-V and MetroVan programs would be combined for efficiency, and the contract would be awarded in early June.

COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS (COA): The bidding process for a 6-month operational efficiency study would begin the following week. The analysis would look at fixed route and demand/response services and would be the basis for development over the following 10 years. This would be covered by federal monies funded through KATS. The KCTA Board could sit down with the analysts to make suggestions.

PLANNED FACILITY EXPANSION: Congressman Upton helped secure Federal capital funds for office expansion in preparation for the KCTA to take over the system, but there would be no ground breaking without a local funding source. Forty architectural companies showed interest; such a large amount of interest would help Metro receive the best work for the lowest cost.

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA): These stimulus funds could *only* be used for capital projects, not for operating expenses. Metro's 'wish-list' included items such as:

- up to 70 bus stop shelter replacements--these could have solar lighting.

-AVL Intelligent Transit System--this would help toward much more efficient operations, could diagnose engine problems, and could minimize the amount of demand/response vehicles serving the same area at the same time.

-Freon Recovery System

Discussion turned to how the shelters would be more accessible and useful to the riders, the Board attending upcoming AVL demos, and letting the voters know that their local tax dollars weren't going toward these capital projects—that these would be funded through Federal Stimulus dollars. (The Gazette had recently printed a clarification on the difference between Federal Capital dollars vs. other monies that *could* be used for operations.)

FAREBOX REPLACEMENT: The current farebox equipment had been in place since 1994 and was in need of replacement; going with the same vendor would allow parts of the existing system to be reused. The new equipment would halt the misuse of transfer slips and could allow for different forms of payment (debit/credit/prepaid cards); both features could lead to increased revenue. It was discussed that the public should be made aware of these upgrades. The Federal Government was allowing Metro to 'piggy-back' on a bid award completed by the authority in Cleveland. This, too, would be funded by Federal and State sources.

PROPOSED FARE INCREASE: He stated, following the success of the millage on May 5, that a 10% increase was being considered across the board. Other changes would lead to a simpler fare structure.

SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THE TRANSPORTATION CENTER: Fights involving school children and pan-handling had both decreased with the installation of another officer. Metro worked with Amtrak to secure other officer support for the hours when Metro was no longer open and Amtrak remained open. Cost would be born by the tenants.

TRANSIT RIDER SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY: The FTA required a survey every five years. Metro conducted the first part of the survey on April 14 when 24% of the riders responded. KATS would complete the survey around May 1. For the most part, the responders were happy to fill out the surveys.

In answering a question from Vice-Chair Rosine, Mr. Schomisch stated that, in 2008, CAV dropped about 2000 rides and MetroVan rides increased more than 2000. Mr. Rosine suggested that vehicles supported by the KCTA millage somehow notate that fact.

Discussion turned to areas of high demand/response ridership, such as Cooper Twp, and the Village of Vicksburg. Ms. Van Stratt stated that the Vicksburg high ridership was due to a weekly social program that South County Services ran; they were hoping to expand the program.

In addressing a question from Mr. Mekemson, Mr. Schomisch said he would look into the fuel prices at the last fare increase; he was sure that they had been higher than they currently were. He listed a few area systems that were increasing fares.

Chairperson Teeter thanked Mr. Schomisch for his report.

7. REPORT FROM PROJECT MANAGER

(A copy of this report will be on file with the minutes.) Mr. Hein thanked the board for their support during his recent illness. He stated the public awareness presentations listed on his report and PTHS work had taken up the bulk of his time.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Executive – Chairperson Teeter anticipated more Executive Committee meetings after the election, but had nothing recent to report.

- B. Budget and Finance – Chairperson Kuseske stated that since the KCTA had been working with the City and County finance staff, the B&F Committee had not met since January.
- C. Public Transit/Human Services – Secretary Mekemson stated that the PT/HS Plan had been drafted in the first quarter and had been sent to involved organizations. The committee would meet after the organizations had turned in their comments. Mr. Hein stated that Joel Cooper, Judy Sivak, and Jeff Brown were also members of the Committee which was in the process of updating the survey results regarding the transportation needs and services of these organizations. Some past needs had been successfully met over the year, and other priorities would be analyzed. (Ms. Sivak had suggested that the Curb-To-Curb service be upgraded to Door-To-Door service. Ms. VanStratt said that some in her area would be able to use the system if this upgrade were to take place.)

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS

There was nothing to report.

10. CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

Chairperson Teeter state the budget hearing would be held after the millage passed and the contract numbers were calculated. There would be a stakeholder’s meeting held on May 6th. She asked the Board to make special note to be at the May 11th meeting to address important issue. (The second May meeting would be addressed at the May 11th meeting.)

Mr. Hein had been asked to work with Mr. Schomisch to begin thinking of recommendations for a countywide public transportation system.

11. CITIZENS’ TIME

There were no comments made.

12. MEMBERS’ TIME

-Mr. Worthams stated that he had spoken on the importance of keeping transit well funded at two press conferences. Without adequate State funding, Michigan would lose 120 million in federal transit capital funds in 2010, and 576 million in 2011. He would be testifying at the House Transportation Appropriations Committee, would meet with representatives the following week and would go to Washing, D.C., on these matters as well. More information could be found at getmichiganmoving.com and drivemi.com.

-Ms. Sumney encouraged the Board to vote.

-Mr. Kuseske stated that the Kalamazoo Planning Commission had taken bids for an 18-month comprehensive plan review, and transit would be addressed in the review. Public transit would also be considered during street design.

-Vice-Chair Rosine thanked Mr. Worthams for his work on transit. He also announced that the Grand Rapids System millage would be held on May 5th as well.

-Chairperson Teeter thanked the Board Members for their work in getting the word out through presentations and brochure distribution. She reported on a verbal exchange that showed how important it was to make the public aware of ridership facts, even in one-on-one conversations.

13. ADJOURNMENT The meeting was adjourned at 6:43.

KCTA Chairperson

KCTA Secretary