

Minutes

Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority

November 9, 2009

Place: Room 204, County Administration Building
Time: 5:30 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.
Others Present: Rachel Foster, Dale Hein, Blaine Lam, 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

Members Absent: David Worthams

A quorum was present. A motion to excuse Mr. Worthams was made, supported and approved.

Commissioner Elect Kuseske was given the floor for comments before having to leave to be sworn in as City Commissioner. He thanked each member for their support and their work with him on the KCTA Board. He then formally resigned from the Board.

Motion to accept Mr. Kuseske's resignation was made by Mr. Rosine, supported by Mr. Ecklund and approved by a voice vote. Various comments were given to Mr. Kuseske by the Board, and after the comments were given, Mr. Kuseske left for the City Commission.

2. REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made, supported and approved.

3. REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Kempen asked that her comment (at the bottom of the third page) be changed to read "Ms. Kempen indicated that many in the community felt it was time for a fare increase".

A motion to approve the October 12th Minutes as amended was made, supported and approved.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Hein stated that several emails had been received to set up Transit Talks at Kalamazoo Public Schools, Advocacy Services for Kids, and AARP. Other general communications had been received: Sign Art, Inc., asked for a bus shelter to be placed near their facility and was interested in the Adopt-A-Shelter project. Community Advocates for People with Disabilities communicated that they would send a Letter to the Editor in support of public transportation. The Michigan Municipal League had sent a letter thanking Mr. Hein and Mr. Schomisch for their presentation.

Chairperson Teeter had received several emails celebrating the passage of the City's millage, including an email from Epic-MRA.

5. MILLAGE REVIEW

Chairperson Teeter gave the rough numbers on the millage vote's passage. She thanked the volunteers, voters, and Mr. Lam for their very solid support of public transit in Kalamazoo. Jenn Houghton, who coordinated the campaign and volunteers, was praised. Ms. Teeter reminded the Board that the Battani/Collard Proposal said that after the November millage passed, the steps toward merging the system would resume.

Mr. Schomisch complimented the campaign committee and those on this Board for their support. Ms. Teeter stated that Kalamazoo County stood out in the state as a community which has come together to embrace public transportation.

6. P.A. 196 UPDATE

Mr. Hein reported that a meeting would be held in Lansing involving KCTA Attorneys, representatives from the MI Department of Treasury, a former employee of the State Attorney General's office (now with the Michigan

Municipal League) and other state 196 Authorities. The reason to invite other authorities was to confirm their interest and support. Ms. Teeter asked Mr. Hein to invite Senator Gilbert, Senate Transportation Chairperson.

Chairperson Teeter expected concerns to be voiced, which usually followed the prospect of opening large Acts, but the broadness of the amendment to P.A. 196 could be managed by the legislators. Scott Schragger from the Department of Treasury would be at the meeting and had a long history with these issues.

If the meeting went well and no objections were raised, the timeline would include finding a local sponsor for the amendment. It was feasible to do this within a year. The next step, however, was the meeting on November 19, of which Mr. Ammon would facilitate. In response to a question from Ms. Kempen, Ms. Teeter stated that Mr. Schragger from the Dept of Treasury would be attending in order to address the constitutional issue of uniformity of taxation. Mr. Hein stated that urban systems from Flint, Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, and Jackson would also be in attendance.

7. TRANSIT TALK UPDATE

Mr. Lam reported that the comments from Transit Talks were being uploaded to the website, and the meetings were continuing. He thanked the KCTA staff and Board Members for their involvement. Transportation advocates were generally pleased with the system, but had higher sights for the system. Now that the millage had passed, the transit talks would be taken to the organizations who wanted to get past the election. Capacity building would continue with conversations being held with Metro staff and KCTA Board Members. He asked for no hesitation to tell him to stay up to speed on issues the KCTA is involved in.

The schedule of Transit Talks was addressed, and welcomed the Board's further involvement. Mr. Lam added that talks with organizations "on the ground" affirmed that the KCTA was not running in a direction that the public couldn't support. Transportation was beginning to be seen as a quality of life element in the community.

8. SERVICE CONTRACT WITH THE CITY OF KALAMAZOO AND THE TRANSIT AUTHORITY BOARD

The following contract provisions were pointed out:

- Section 3) d) on page 3, listed the payment schedule as a quarterly, pre-payment structure.
- Section 3) d) vi) stated there would be a per diem reimbursement for any services not rendered.
- The dollar amount in Section D had been looked at by both Metro and County Finance Departments.
- Section 3) e) referenced that the KCTA would still move toward the transition.

A motion to approve the service contract was made by Mr. Mekemson and supported by Mr. Rosine. The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: All Present Nays: None Absent: Worthams

The motion carried.

Mr. Schomisch thanked the Board, and said the contract would go directly to the City Commission during the next couple weeks, since the TAB had already approved it.

9. ADOPT RESOLUTION APPOINTING NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Chairperson Teeter reported that Mr. Kuseske's term would have expired the following January, so only his vacancy would need to be filled; new officers would need to be nominated as well. She asked Ms. Kempen, Mr. Worthams, and Mr. Ecklund – with Mr. Ecklund serving as Chair – if they would serve on the Nominating Committee and present a slate of officers at the annual meeting. Since their terms were up Jan. 1, 2010, Ms. Teeter and Mr. Rosine had informed the County Commission that they would like to serve another term.

Mr. Hein read the resolution into record (a copy of which will be on file with the minutes). A motion to adopt the resolution appointing the nominating committee was made by Mr. Rosine and supported by Ms. Sumney. Ms. Teeter reiterated that the slate of officers would not be needed until January.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes: All Present Nays: None Absent: Worthams

The motion carried.

The remaining terms were as follows:

Ending 1/1/2011 – Ecklund, Mekemson, Sumney

Ending 1/1/2012 – Kempen, VanStratt, Worthams

10. REPORT FROM TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR

Mr. Schomisch highlighted the following from his report (a copy of the report will be on file with the minutes):

-Fare Proposal – The TAB had unanimously adopted the revised fare proposal. Mr. Schomisch stated that many issues and options would be looked at over time for improvement (including expanding the half fares payments to include a Smart Pass type of arrangement instead of cash only), but that the proposed fare structure was going forward. A public hearing would be held on Monday, Nov. 16th, after which the City Commission was expected to take action on it. Chairperson Teeter reported that she and Mr. Schomisch discussed at length the partnership between the TAB and the KCTA, and it was discussed that the KCTA hoped to be on the front end of any future fare increases for Metro County Connect services.

-Metro County Connect – Discussion turned to glitches during the transfer of services from Pride Care and Apple Bus. There had been several late arrivals because of manual scheduling changing to electronic scheduling. The problem was being addressd, and that day the issues had been reduced to two late trips. Mr. Schomisch was confident that the problems would be worked out completely by the weekend.

Mr. Schomisch told Ms. VanStratt that Apple Bus would like to meet with area agency leaders. Vice-Chair Rosine later addressed the re-occurrence of problems that had existed at the last transition, and why they reoccurred. Mr. Schomisch said the problems were ones they hadn't seen before due to the new electronic scheduling system.

He added that Apple Bus hired 35 Pride Care employee; six people were not hired due to their driving record, criminal convictions, etc. While the City Commission had a policy about eliminating people in the application process because of criminal backgrounds, etc., Apple Bus, as a contractor, had liability insurance through a Missouri company which automatically excluded applicants who have reached a certain threshold regarding DWI, DUI, and/or drug convictions. Apple Bus had agreed to work with the City, and Mr. Schomisch was sure the issues would be worked out. He stated the pay scale and benefit schedule was better than with Pride Care; due to the strike in 2006, it was a point of contention with the City to not ask what the wages and benefits were.

-Facility Expansion – Plans for a board room and offices were being drafted, and would be brought to the KCTA Board in the future.

-Holly Jolly Trolley – A downtown trolley had been scheduled for the Holiday Season and would appear in the Holiday Parade the following weekend. Chairperson Teeter stated that a communication with Mayor Strazdas had stated that Portage would look into a Holiday Trolley partnership between the City of Portage and area businesses for the 2010 season; this would happen earlier in the year for planning purposes. (Mr. Rosine left at 6:33).

Ms. VanStratt mentioned that she and Mr. Schomisch had discussed the possibility of utilizing Metro Transit to shuttle Schoolcraft and Vicksburg residents for the Christmas Festivals the weekend of December 5th. Mr. Schomisch stated that staff person this had been turned over to was also in charge of the transition over to Apple Bus. He hoped it would be looked into after the transition issues were resolved.

11. REPORT FROM PROJECT MANAGER

Mr. Hein said that initial discussions had been held with the Disability Network, Friends of Transit, and other stakeholders in the community about running an Adopt-A-Shelter pilot project. He thought it would bring good publicity to the KCTA.

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Executive – Chairperson Teeter said that she and Mr. Mekemson had met to review the agenda with Mr. Hein. A December meeting was being set.
- B. Budget Review – Mr. Rosine had been asked to serve as the Chair of this committee until a new member was approved, then it would be reviewed.
- C. Public Transit/Human Services – Mr. Mekemson stated that the Coordinated Plan had been approved by KATS and had been sent to the State Department of Transportation. A tentative list of names had been identified for a steering committee which would be tasked with meeting at least twice a year to keep the Plan moving toward realization. He thought the first meeting would be in January. Mr. Hein stated the list would be brought for approval at the December meeting. In response to a question from Ms. VanStratt, Mr. Mekemson stated that, although nothing formal had gone out, the initial committee that had drafted the Plan was essentially disbanded; the initial members, however, could attend the meeting in January if they were interested.

13. OLD BUSINESS

There was nothing to report.

14. NEW BUSINESS

There was nothing to report.

15. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairperson Teeter thanked the Board for their service on the KCTA Board and thanked Ms. Sumney for attending meetings with Partee; it would be the task of the consultants to pull together the ideas and visions that had been presented to them. The consultants would be back in December to hold further meetings. Ms. Teeter would be attending the November 16th City Commission, to attend the fare increase public hearing and to thank the voters. The Board was encouraged to submit names of people who were interested in serving on the KCTA Board. She also mentioned that the November millage that had just passed would be seen on the city July tax bill.

16. CITIZENS' TIME

There were no comments made.

17. MEMBERS' TIME

-Mr. Sumney stated the COA meetings were very helpful and recognized Mr. Schomisch for his recent work with the transition to Apple Bus.

-Mr. Hein reminded the Board that the KCTA millage would be levied on the townships' December tax, and that the appropriate paperwork had been submitted to each assessing official in the townships.

18. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45pm.

KCTA Chairperson

KCTA Secretary