

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE BARTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

February 25, 2013

The monthly meeting of the Berks Area Regional Transportation Authority was held at BARTA headquarters located at 1700 N. 11th Street, Reading, Pennsylvania.

The regular monthly meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM by Ronald Seaman, Chairman. The following Board members were present: Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt, Vice Chair, Alice Kutz, Treasurer, Gregg Bogia, Jayne L. Dieruff, Lawrence A. Greene, Jr., and Timothy Snyder.

Others attending the meeting were: Dennis D. Louwarse, Executive Director/CEO, Robert Fletcher, Assistant Executive Director, Ryan Furgerson, Deputy Executive Director, Kevin Hessler, Director of Finance, Laura Hopko, Director of Administration and Human Resources, Robert Rimby, Director of Projects and Systems, Vicki Weidner, Director of Special Services and Janet Weiss, Manager of Programs & Marketing. Also present were William Frees and John Doerrman of the Amalgamated Transit Union #1345 and Liam Migdail-Smith, Reading Eagle.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Seaman entertained a motion to approve the Board minutes of January 28, 2013, as distributed by mail. Mr. Bogia made a motion to accept the minutes which was seconded by Commissioner Barnhardt. There were no opposing votes and therefore the motion was carried unanimously by the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO

In Washington, the clock continues to run down concerning the resolution of the fiscal crisis. As you may be aware, Congress once again moved a final decision concerning agreement on spending and deficit reduction to March. At this point in time, we are awaiting action whether Congress will in fact reach a compromise or if the mandatory cuts in funding will take place. I'm sure this matter will receive a lot of attention in the media and I will keep you advised as it relates to transportation.

In Harrisburg, as part of his budget message, the Governor presented his proposed transportation plan. We are very concerned regarding a number of items in this proposal as relates to public transportation. The dollar amount recommended for public transportation funding; the lack of operating assistance; and the impact of the increased local match are just a number of our concerns. I would point out that we are early in this process, the legislature has already made a number of comments and the legislative process must continue. We are in fact back into the "sausage making business". The saying is there are two things you do not want to see made – Legislation and Sausage. I will keep you advised as to this important matter.

Mr. Louwarse mentioned that he has been working with Kevin Hessler on preliminary runs for an increase in local match and what it would mean in terms of dollars from the County. There are three parts to this match proposal: 1. Local match would rise from its current level to 20% for a number of years; 2. Capital Funds Match for the Fiscal Year 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, the local match requirement is 3.33% of the non-federal share of the project cost, this will rise over the years to higher limits as well; and 3. If transit agencies would consolidate, the match would be 15% but only for 5 years and then increase to 20%. Mr. Louwarse will email the potential County match amounts to Commissioner Barnhardt. Mr. Louwarse will provide a brief summary of the Governors proposal for Board of Directors.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mrs. Kutz presented the Treasurer's Report as follows:

The previous report balance as of January 18, 2013 was **\$5,277,433.99**. The current cash receipts are **\$305,044.25**. ACH/Transfers into Checking Account were **\$917,075.34**. Interest earned was **\$1,440.16**. Total receipts: **\$1,223,559.75**. Total Funds available were **\$6,500,993.74**. Current checks issued were **\$1,723,576.89**. Checks outstanding were: **(\$72,941.42)**. EFT/Transfers from checking account total **\$484,983.76** for a disbursement of **\$2,135,619.23**. Balance reported as of February 15, 2013 was **\$4,365,374.51**.

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt to accept the Treasurer's Report as written and was seconded by Mrs. Dieruff. A vote was taken and with no opposing votes, the motion was passed unanimously.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE REPORT

Mr. Hessler presented his report.

The operating revenue for year-to-date ending January 31, 2013 was **\$3,799,335** versus the budget amount of **\$3,671,640** which is **\$127,695** or **3.36%** over budget. Our total operating expenses for the same period was **\$9,266,933** versus the budgeted amount of **\$10,100,033** which is **\$833,100** or **8.99%** under budget. The operating deficit for the year-to-date was **\$5,467,598** which is **\$960,795** or **17.57%** under budget.

COMMITTEE & STAFF REPORTS

Operations Report

Mr. Louwse presented Mr. Fletcher's report.

The operating data for January 2013 indicates that the total system ridership increased by **4.4%** when compared to January 2012. There was a **4.2%** increase in the fixed route passengers and a **6.3%** increase in special service passengers. For the month of January on the fixed route service, we experienced a **4.5%** increase in the revenue passengers, and a **3.5%** increase in senior citizen rides.

In the fixed route division there were 22 weekdays and 4 Saturdays operated in January 2013 as compared to 21 weekdays and 4 Saturdays in January 2012. In the special services division there were 22 weekdays operated in January 2013 as compared to 21 weekdays operated in January 2012.

The average weekday ridership for January 2013 was 10,272 as compared to 10,307 in January 2012. For the fiscal year, the total system ridership increased **1.6%**. The fixed route ridership has increased **1.4%**. This is composed of a **1.3%** increase in revenue passengers and a **2.6%** increase in senior citizen passengers. The special service passengers increased **3.0%**.

Special Services Report

Ms. Weidner presented her report.

The total Special Services Division ridership for January was **22,556** a **6.3%** increase compared to the same month of 2012. Year-to-date figures show a **3.0%** increase when compared to the last fiscal year. With 22 operating days an average of **1,025** passengers were transported per day.

Commissioner Barnhardt mentioned that the Office of Aging still wants to have a meeting to work out some concerns they have.

Public Information

Public Information included in board packet compiled by Mrs. Weiss. Mr. Louwarse mentioned the BARTA Bulletin is in the Board packet and it is all about the Franklin Street Station.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Franklin Street Station Project Update

Mr. Louwarse mentioned the following construction close-out plan for the Franklin Street Station Project:

Franklin Street Station Construction Close-out Activity Summary

- Occupancy Inspection Comments:
 1. Install five (5) additional sprinkler heads as requested by Fire Marshal at recent inspection.
 2. Install fire extinguisher and knox box.
 3. Paint gas lines.
 4. Add audible fire alarms in two locations based on sound test performed.
 5. Perform fire pump and sprinkler system start-up.
 6. Perform final inspection with all City inspectors (scheduled for 3/4/13).

- Punch List Items:
 1. Install IT racks and equipment – start-up CCTV system.
 2. Install back plates on interior directional signage.
 3. Install one toilet paper dispenser.
 4. Install concrete low flow channels in storm water inlets.
 5. Paint stop bar at exit driveway.
 6. Miscellaneous caulking, touch-up and cleaning.

Mr. Louwarse mentioned that on February 19, 2013, the Board of Directors had an opportunity to tour the Franklin Street Station. Anyone who was unable to attend the tour, please contact Ms. Heffner with a few dates and times you would be available to take a tour. Thanks to Liam from the Reading Eagle who wrote-up a wonderful article on the Franklin Street Station. In the Board packet, you will find photos of the Franklin Street Station that were on Reading Eagle's website. Michael Baker Jr. is working on doing a slide show presentation that will run down at the Franklin Street Station during the grand opening that shows photos of the past, pre-construction, construction and final stages.

Franklin Street Station ACEC/PA Award

Mr. Louwarse mentioned that on February 7, 2013, Michael Baker Jr. / BARTA received the 2013 Diamond Award for Engineering Excellence from the American Council of Engineering Companies of Pennsylvania (ACEC/PA) for the rehabilitation project of the Franklin Street Station project. Mr. Robert Rimby attended the event and accepted the award on behalf of BARTA.

Wireless Electric Vehicle Project Update

Mr. Louwarse mentioned in the Board packet is a photo of the vehicle that was delivered to AMP in Ohio on February 8, 2013. Currently we are working on the schedule and the engineering of the vehicle. The first vehicle should be delivered to BARTA by mid June 2013.

NEW BUSINESS

Service Improvement Projects

Mr. Louwarse mentioned the Franklin Street Station Rehabilitation Project is not only about the station as a physical structure but about BARTA's opportunity to provide new and approved public transportation services.

We rehabilitated the facility for a number of reasons, but the most important reason was because we are at max at the BTC and in order to have more service we need space to grow. And one of the areas where we are going to grow is the Berks to Lebanon service. BARTA and Lebanon Transit (LT) have been working on the Berks to Lebanon Service Development Plan as part of the Regional Transportation Coordination Study. The Berks to Lebanon was picked to be the test corridor as relates to coordination transit services. Both organizations committees will be working together in the near future. The final draft of the Service Development Plan will be submitted to PennDOT for funding consideration. Mr. Louworse has confidence that we will receive approval. The development plan process will do a number of things. This will be conducted by a consultant to establish baseline conditions and service measures, determine ridership market and demand. The consultant will conduct an analysis to determine the capital requirements and operating service levels for the new service between Berks and Lebanon. The consultant will also develop a service implementation and action plan focused on the coordination of BARTA and LT and the establishment of measureable service goals.

Mr. Louworse also mentioned that we also will be doing service expansion to the Berks Parks 78. Petco and General Dollar will be hiring around 1,000 people and we are working on a marketing implementation plan and on the service plan – route, hours, etc.

Marketing Project

Mr. Louworse mentioned that BARTA received a onetime funding allocation to do a major marketing effort on the three service improvement routes we did the other year which are Womelsdorf, Birdsboro and Temple via 5th Street. In the Board packet are two examples of billboards that are being created. There are others that are currently being worked on. Mr. Furgerson, Mrs. Weiss and Ms. Heffner have been working hard on this project. BARTA will be on BCTV, radio, traffic sponsorship on WEEU, billboards, etc. Our target audience are the non-riding general public.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

None

ADJOURNMENT - There being no further business a motion was made by Mr. Bogia to adjourn at 3:58pm and was seconded by Mrs. Deiruff. A vote was taken and with no opposing votes, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie A. Heffner

Melanie A. Heffner, Executive Assistant for
James Schlegel, Secretary, Berks Area Regional Transportation Authority