

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE BARTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

June 23, 2014

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, Chair.

The following Board members were present: Commissioner Kevin Barnhardt, Vice Chair, Alice Kutz, Treasurer, James Schlegel, Secretary, Gregg Bogia, Jayne Dieruff, Michael Roeberg and Timothy Snyder.

Others attending the meeting were: David Kilmer, Executive Director, Robert Fletcher, Assistant Executive Director for Operations, Safety and Training, Ryan Furgerson, Director of Planning and Procurement, Melanie Heffner, Executive Assistant, Kevin Hessler, Director of Finance, Laura Hopko, Director of Administration and Human Resources, Robert Rimby, Manager of Special Projects and Systems, Daniel Russell, Director of Maintenance, Vicki Weidner, Director of Special, Janet Weiss, Manager of Programs & Marketing and Richard L. Orwig, Solicitor. Also present were William Frees and John Doerrman of the Amalgamated Transit Union #1345, Ronald Devlin, Reading Eagle Company and Brian Kelly, ReDesign Reading.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Seaman entertained a motion to approve the Board minutes of May 19, 2014, as distributed by mail. Commissioner Barnhardt made a motion to accept the minutes which was seconded by Mr. Bogia. There were no opposing votes and therefore the motion was carried unanimously by the Board.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Kelly came to the Board of Directors meeting with a proposal which is included in the Board handouts to have a short-term, pop-up bike shop located at the BTC located at 720 Cherry Street. The shop would open to the public on August 1, 2014, and plan to be operational through October 31, 2014. Berks County has long been noted for its outdoor recreational opportunities. In the recent few years, there has been an increased interest in cycling in the City of Reading. A pop-up is a temporary event, installation or establishment. Across the country, pop-up retail is becoming a critical tool to engage economic development in struggling commercial corridors/districts. The pop-up concept is an emerging trend because it can simultaneously facilitate entrepreneurial investment and add vitality to a depressed market. The proposal would be to lease the 720 Cherry Street location to ReDesign Reading, a non-profit agency, on a temporary basis (3 months). We do not require any fit-out, and can assume any costs of space preparation (i.e. painting etc.). ReDesign Reading will assemble a team of individuals who will oversee the design, set-up, and operations of the bike shop. The management team would, of course, handle all necessary operating permits, insurance, etc. Within this time period, it will be clear whether the market exists for the bike space project to really take off. Similarly, ReDesign recognizes that BARTA is looking to rent the location out on a more permanent basis, and the operation will be able to pack up within weeks to accommodate a market-rate paying tenant. If they get more foot traffic and business than thought ReDesign would go beyond the three months. They would not be selling bikes at this time, it would be for bike repairs. Mr. Seaman mentioned that the Board will not be taking action at this moment due to real estate.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mrs. Kutz presented the Treasurer's Report:

The previous report balance as of May 9, 2014 was **\$514,982.36**. The current cash receipts are **\$386,702.80** ACH/Transfers into Checking Account were **\$2,087,285.12**. Interest earned was **\$120.21**. Total receipts: **\$2,474,108.13**. Total Funds available were **\$2,989,090.49**. Current checks issued were **\$753,921.68**. Checks outstanding were: **(\$38,107.65)**. EFT/Transfers from checking account total **\$1,890,470.69** for a disbursement of **\$2,606,284.72**. Balance reported as of June 13, 2014, was **\$382,805.77**. Payment history for during this time was included in the Board packet.

A motion was made by Mr. Snyder 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 as follows:

The operating revenue for year-to-date ending May 31, 2014, was **\$6,183,802** versus the budget amount of **\$6,348,406** which is **\$164,604** or **2.66%** under budget. Our total operating expenses for the same period was **\$15,361,614** versus the budgeted amount of **\$15,965,861** which is **\$604,247** or **3.93%** under budget. The operating deficit for the year-to-date was **\$9,177,812** which is **\$439,643** or **4.79%** under budget.

The ending deficit is slightly lower than what it generally has been.

COMMITTEE & STAFF REPORTS

Operations Report

Mr. Fletcher presented his report as follows:

The operating data for May 2014 indicates that the total system ridership increased by **0.2%** when compared to May 2013. There was a **1.0%** increase in the fixed route passengers and a **9.1%** decrease in special service passengers. For the month of May on the fixed route service, we experienced a **3.1%** increase in the revenue passengers, and a **9.8%** decrease in senior citizen rides.

In the fixed route division there were 21 weekdays and 5 Saturdays operated in May 2014 as compared to 22 weekdays and 4 Saturdays in May 2013. In the special services division there were 21 weekdays operated in May 2014 as compared to 22 weekdays operated in May 2013.

The average weekday ridership for May 2014 was 10,979 as compared to 10,801 in May 2013. For the fiscal year, the total system ridership has increased **0.7%**. The fixed route ridership has increased **1.2%**. This is composed of a **1.8%** increase in revenue passengers and a **2.3%** decrease in senior citizen passengers. The special service passengers decreased **4.7%**.

In the fixed route division there were a total of 233 weekdays and 48 Saturdays, operated this Fiscal Year as compared to 234 weekdays and 47 Saturdays operated last Fiscal Year. In the special services division there were a total of 233 weekdays operated this Fiscal Year as compared to 234 weekdays operated last Fiscal Year.

Mr. Roeborg asked why the Crosstown Route has decreased 33.6% year-to-date. Mr. Fletcher stated that route is greatly impacted by school ridership. Majority of the people who use the Crosstown are school riders and it is the only route that doesn't go through the BTC and we only run a few trips a day to get the people from the

northeast to work on the west side of town. Mr. Fletcher also stated that he doesn't know why the numbers have dropped.

Special Services Report

Ms. Weidner presented her report as follows:

The total Special Services Division ridership for May was **20,909** a **9.1%** decrease compared to the same month of 2013. Year-to-date figures show a **4.7%** decrease when compared to the last fiscal year. There were 21 operating days, one less day when compared to last year, an average of **995** passengers were transported per day.

Public Information

Public Information was included in board packet compiled by Mrs. Weiss.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Approval of Marketing Plan

Mr. Kilmer mentioned that last month in the Board packet was a copy of the proposed Marketing Plan. The committee met to review and there were no suggested changes to the plan as presented. A draft commercial was presented to the Board to address the reduction in senior citizens in both fixed route and special services. This commercial would play on Comcast. Comcast gave us some really good rates on doing commercials and we get to pick the channels that we want it to air on. Mr. Kilmer stated that there is money in the budget for marketing items such as the construction in Fleetwood that will take place next year and the bridge closures in Reading. Staff recommends approval of the Marketing Plan.

A motion was made by Mrs. Kutz to approve the Marketing Plan and was seconded by Mrs. Dieruff. A vote was taken and with no opposing votes, the motion was passed unanimously.

Special Services Fare Increase

Mr. Kilmer mentioned the proposed fare increase for Special Services was advertised and distributed to the various agencies and reviewed by the Advisory Committee. The increase is necessary to keep pace with expenses and to reduce the amount of Act 44 needed to balance the budget for shared ride service. No comments were received from the public or agencies and PADOT has already approved the increase. Staff recommends approval.

A motion was made by Mr. Roeberg to approve the Special Services Fare Increase and was seconded by Mr. Snyder. A vote was taken and with no opposing votes, the motion was passed unanimously.

Program of Projects

Mr. Kilmer mentioned the annual Program of Projects was presented as part of the annual budget and details how BARTA will use its annual FTA fund apportionment for the upcoming fiscal year. A public hearing was scheduled to receive comments on Friday, June 13, 2014; however, there was no attendance. Staff recommends approval.

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt to approve the Program of Projects and was seconded by Mrs. Dieruff. A vote was taken and with no opposing votes, the motion was passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Obsolete Parts Bid

Mr. Kilmer mentioned that the second bid to dispose of obsolete bus parts was advertised, but no bids were received. Staff recommends approval to dispose of these parts for scrap value or if a proposal comes in that sounds reasonable to take the offer.

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt to approve the disposal of Obsolete Parts and was seconded by Mr. Bogia. A vote was taken and with no opposing votes, the motion was passed unanimously.

Award Automated Vehicle Location (AVL)

Mr. Kilmer mentioned that we opened bids on May 9, 2014. There were eight (8) proposals received for providing an AVL System that includes automatic voice announcements on the buses. It was narrowed down to four (4) and interviews were conducted with the four firms. The system will provide staff with the locations of all vehicles in service and reports that will daily determine the on-time performance of the system. This project will also include the development of a mobile phone application that customers will be able to see exactly where their bus is and its estimated arrival time at their stop. A review committee rated each of the proposals and interviewed the top four ranked firms. The ratings included price as a major factor in the evaluation. The final rankings by the committee resulted in AVAIL Technologies of State College, PA as the top ranked firm. The price includes hardware necessary to equip all 57 buses and warranty for five years at a price of \$964,907.96. BARTA has an existing federal grant for this purchase. The pricing is within the same range as the other proposals. State College, LANTA, York and Scranton all have this technology already installed on their fleet. This should improve ridership. Staff recommends approval.

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt to award the AVL to AVAIL Technologies and was seconded by Mr. Snyder. A vote was taken and with no opposing votes, the motion was passed unanimously.

Purchase of Three (3) Fixed-Route Buses

Mr. Kilmer mentioned BARTA participated in the statewide bus purchase in 2011 that included a five year contract with Gillig Bus. There are currently three (3) 2003 Opus buses that will reach the 12 year useful life in 2015. It currently takes 12-14 months for delivery of new buses from Gillig. The pricing for the new buses will include the BAE Hybrid System that have shown to improve fuel economy by 30% or more, plus electric fan cooling and air conditioning units to reduce maintenance costs. This hybrid system does not require a transmission and uses a smaller engine that is designed to primarily recharge the batteries. The price for a 40' bus is \$622,854 for a total of \$1,868,562. BARTA has a current federal grant for these vehicles contingent on approval by PADOT for the state share of this purchase. Staff recommends approval.

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt to purchase three fixed-route buses and was seconded by Mrs. Kutz. A vote was taken and with no opposing votes, the motion was passed unanimously.

Award Security Services

Mr. Kilmer mentioned a RFP was advertised for providing Security Services at the BTC for the next five year period. Proposals were due on Thursday, January 19, 2014. BARTA received 4 proposals. Based upon all information received to date and the efforts of the Technical Review Committee to compare, evaluate, and assess ability to execute a project of this scope, it is the recommendation of the staff to award security services to Security Guards, Inc. of Wyomissing, PA who was the highest ranked firm. The quoted hourly rate would be \$16.37, which represents a 12.4% increase for current contracted services, with a majority of the increase

attributable to compliance with the Affordable Health Care Act. The proposal did include the potential of extended hours at the sales counter at the same rate.

A motion was made by Mrs. Dieruff to award security services to Security Guards, Inc. and was seconded by Mr. Roeberg. A vote was taken and with no opposing votes, the motion was passed unanimously.

Replacement Service Vehicle

Mr. Kilmer mentioned that BARTA has been approved by PADOT to replace our 2004 Ford Explorer (Number 77; mileage – 117,160). We are recommending the purchase of a 2014 Ford Escape SE 4WD utilizing the COSTARS Cooperative Purchasing Program (Contract #26). BARTA has secured a price of \$24,090. This firm price is offered through local COSTARS vendor Tom Masano Ford of Reading, PA. Independent verification has identified a Factory Invoice price for this make/model of vehicle of \$25,457. The COSTARS price represents a 5.4% savings over invoice. It is determined that the COSTARS price is fair and reasonable and this purchase is recommended to fulfill the service vehicle replacement.

A motion was made by Commissioner Barnhardt to approve the replacement of service vehicle number 77 with a 2014 Ford Escape SE 4WD and was seconded by Mrs. Dieruff. A vote was taken and with no opposing votes, the motion was passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Award from the City of Reading for the Franklin Street Station

Mr. Kilmer passed around a special recognition from the City of Reading for the rehabilitation of the Franklin Street Station. Laura Hopko accepted this special recognition on behalf of BARTA.

Election of Officers

Mr. Roeberg presented on behalf of the Nominating Committee the nominations of BARTA officers to serve from July 1, 2014 through July 1, 2014.

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|-------------|--------------------|
| Chair: | Kevin S. Barnhardt |
| Vice Chair: | Timothy Snyder |
| Treasurer: | Dennis Rex |
| Secretary: | Jayne Dieruff |

All of the elected officers are eligible to serve and have agreed to serve the Board term. Mr. Seaman called for nominations from the floor.

With no nominations from the floor, Mr. Seaman respectively requested to close the nominations from the floor. A motion was made by Mr. Bogia to close the nominations from the floor and was seconded by Mrs. Kutz. A vote was taken and with no opposing votes, the motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. Seaman respectively requested a motion to elect the officers as recommended by the Nominating Committee. A motion was made by Mrs. Dieruff to elect the officers as recommended by the Nominating Committee and was seconded by Mr. Snyder. A vote was taken and with no opposing votes, the motion was passed unanimously.

Joint Committee (BARTA/RRTA) Potential Merger

Commissioner Barnhardt mentioned that the Joint Committee has met with Red Rose on two occasions. We toured their facility and the main focus of that meeting was to get to know each other and meet with Toby Fauver of PADOT with regards to what benefits if any would be for a consolidation of the agencies. We would be in line for additional funding. Each County for a five year period time would be a dollar for dollar match. For example, Berks contributes \$483,000; Lancaster contributes \$297,000 – so each dollar savings would be split 50 cents to each agency for a five year period of time. At year six both counties would go back to the original number and both Counties continue to go up to the 15% contribution level that was presented a few years ago. That would be the PADOT advantage to the consolidation. On discretionary grant money there would be more of a value to us being third in line to state monies behind, SEPTA and Alleghany County. The Committee met again on June 18, at BARTA and discussed projected savings provided by Mr. Kilmer with both agencies with respect to redundancy, services and staff. Committee will meet again on July 10.

Commissioner Barnhardt requests an Executive Session to discuss personnel with no action following the regular Board Meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

None

ADJOURNMENT - There being no further business a motion was made by Mr. Roeberg to adjourn at 3:43p.m. and was seconded by Mr. Snyder. 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