

EASTERN PANHANDLE TRANSIT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Monday, November 16, 2015

The Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority (EPTA) met on Monday, November 16th at 446 Novak Drive, Martinsburg, WV. The following were present at the meeting: President, Nic Diehl; Vice President Greg Reed; Treasurer, Charlie Hall; Secretary, Gene Pearson; Jim McGowan; Brenda Orndorff; and Jennifer Brockman. Board members Sherry Bartgis, Mike Ferrari, and Brent Wolfingbarger were absent. EPTA staff members present included: Executive Director Cheryl Keyrouze, Elaine Bartoldson, Kim Smith, Laura Funkhouser, and Amanda Malcolm. Dan Dulyea from the Berkeley County Council was also present.

The Board Members monthly packet included the following: Monthly Meeting Agenda; October 19, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes; Financial Reports for October 2015; Executive Director's Report; and Department Reports from Operations, HR, and Marketing.

The President called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

There were no appointments.

The President asked if there were any changes or comments on the minutes from the Special Board meeting of November 12th or the last monthly meeting. Gene Pearson offered a motion to Table until the next Board Meeting the discussion of and approval of the Thursday, November 12, Special Board Meeting Minutes.

Jennie Brockman offered a motion to approve the EPTA Board Meeting Minutes for Monday, October 19, 2015. Charlie Hall seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Financial Report

Kim Smith addressed the Budget Variances for October 2015. It is significant that we were still using 2015 Operating and Capital Grant money for September expenses. The cost of outside repairs remains high. We are currently in dispute with one vendor over a \$7,000 bill. Although fuel prices remain low, there has definitely been an increase in usage for the expanded routes. Facility maintenance is high as a result of repairs to damaged garage doors. Off-Site Vehicle Maintenance and Towing are over-budget; we shall have to revise that budget line. We have an aging vehicle fleet and not enough spare buses; it is an imperative that we make repairs quickly. We may also need to revise the Printing/Copying budget line. The new routes imply that more people will need more schedules.

Charlie Hall asked how many buses we have and what spare ratio is required. The Executive Director explained we are supposed to keep a 30% spare ratio but are currently at 9%. Even if EPTA purchased used buses to use as spares, the concern is the used buses would wind up on the road and incur more maintenance costs. During the summer one of our "spares" was used daily for the John Brown run. There is also no room to house any additional buses.

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Charlie Hall asked if we are over-extending ourselves or should we prioritize routes. Charlie was concerned that despite our best efforts the federal and local money may not be sufficient to sustain bus operation. The Executive Director shared that the new Congressional legislation is in progress and we will not know the outcome for approximately two months. The FY2015 5307 fund allocation will be stretched over the next 3 years. New funding will be funneled through other grants for which we will be eligible but the new grants cover capitol rather than operating expenses.

The state has agreed to write a state grant for the lift we requested to accommodate the larger buses and will reimburse themselves from our 5339 allocation. In the long run, EPTA will pay 20% of the cost of the lift.

The Audit began today and is proceeding well.

Brenda Orndorff motioned to accept the Financial Report. Charlie Hall seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director continues to work on the budget with Kim Smith. Once they have the document complete, they will call for a Finance Committee Meeting.

The Executive Director met with Chris Overton from Berkeley County's Grants department, Matt Mullenax and Steve Thomas from the MPO to discuss grant opportunities. The group will meet again once the transit legislation is approved.

The Executive Director shared that there will be a public meeting to discuss the new possible new transfer site. The meeting will be held Saturday, December 12, 2015 from 4-7:00 pm at the Caperton Train Station.

EPTA continues to provide non-emergency medical trips as assigned by MTM. To get a better grasp of the value and return on providing this service, we will wait until next quarter to make a determination.

The Executive Director will be writing a new contract with the Berkeley County Council to transport a group to Alexandria, VA. Dan Dulyea stated that the trip is to a model rehabilitation facility such as the Council would like to begin in Berkeley County. The local newspapers, the City Council, and the public have been invited in order to get the word out.

The Director met with congressman Mooney's representative, Stephen Smoot; Stephen was very interested in EPTA's current and future needs.

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Two employees, Kim Smith and Amanda Malcolm, attended Procurement Training I in Washington, DC.

The Director met with Michael Ratliff and discussed new recruiting practices which would entail on-the-job training for drivers and provide a \$2,000 stipend to EPTA. The President was not sure EPTA would qualify for the program but will investigate it further.

Finally, the Director spoke with Matt Mullenax from the MPO and Bill Robinson from the state about funding a feasibility study for the EPTA building expansion. Both were amenable.

Old Business

Future Building Expansion: The President talked about how critical it is to house the diesel buses indoors in the winter. The Director suggested speaking to Doug Pixler and Tracy Cornwell to obtain an accurate account of our current needs. A temporary solution is to provide sufficient receptacles and extension cords to provide block heaters for all the diesel buses that have to be left outdoors in the winter. The President volunteered that he would, as a temporary solution, investigate housing buses at the airport. The problem is that storing our buses off-site incurs additional mileage and driving time expenses.

We have not heard back from Charles Town regarding storing buses at one of their facilities. The facility proposed is not fenced in all the way around; part of the perimeter is hedges. However, the area has adequate lighting. There is not sufficient storage for all the buses (three of the four buses) and the buses are so long that the garage doors cannot be closed. The bus storage facility is not ideal. The Director will speak with Dave Mills to determine if the City Council resolved the questions they held about the lease. The president will approach the Jefferson County School Superintendent regarding housing EPTA buses.

New Bus Schedule Routes: Elaine Bartoldson reported that running the Holiday schedule on the Veterans Day worked out well. The Holiday schedule entails running two buses on an A route and a B route, of which the A route brought in a greater revenue of the two.

We have had new schedules printed in both English and in Spanish. The printer is also providing a small quantity of large print schedules for those riders with sight impairments. Poster-sized schedules will be printed, laminated and placed at major bus stops to eliminate some additional printing. The Director also suggested placing schedules at the local rest areas and hotels.

Dan Dulyea asked if we serve the new location of the Berkeley County Health Department. Currently these offices on Delmar Orchard Road are an off-route. Unfortunately, the Jefferson

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County Health Department offices are too far off Route 9 to qualify as an off-route. The Director will have Raymond Knight research the number of users stopping at the original location as well as the number asking for rides to the new location to determine if we need to make route adjustments.

We have used Demand Response to handle the off-route stops; that has allowed our buses to better maintain their posted schedules. However, our Demand Response passengers has increased 98% over the last fiscal year. Our question now is how many of those Demand Response calls can qualify as valid MTM service calls. Unfortunately, MTM will reimburse for Medicaid clients, but not for Medicare clients.

New Business

EPTA began providing MTM service calls at the end of August. Initially, the scheduling was a nightmare but Raymond Knight is doing well now. He is now scheduling multiple patrons at one time to share the expense of the fuel and vehicle. The President asked if we limit the area we serve. We do serve both Berkeley and Jefferson Counties, but can choose not to take a client if the distance, road conditions, or past behavior of the person are not favorable. The paperwork involved is momentous, because each individual transit, with multiple clients on a bus, has to be accounted for and billed separately. MTM faxes us each client order, sometime duplicating previous orders which wastes a great deal of paper. MTM can supply orders by spreadsheet which is unintelligible. The number of MTM cancellations has decreased (they are an unreimbursed expense). MTM told us informally that: "That is the price of doing business!"

We have not yet evaluated the return for providing the MTM service. The total cost includes many facets: the vehicle, the driver, the trip scheduler, the billing process, and the payment reconciliation process.

Amanda Malcolm explained that the annual NTD report was submitted on time. The NTD (National Transit Database) is a reporting system used by FTA to determine the amount of grant money received by each reporting transit agency. The database includes bus inventories and how each is used, revenue miles, revenue hours, passenger trips, community population, and many other metrics to determine the grant money allocated to each agency. Since EPTA operates in an area with a population under 200,000, we are classified as a reduced reported supplying annual data rather than monthly. By the next census, we may reach that mark and fall under greater requirements.

The vice-president, Greg Reed, has been promoted; it involves moving to another community. The president acknowledged Greg's contribution to the operation of the Board and to the operation of the agency. Each of the Board members wished Greg success in his new job.

Gene Pearson offered a motion to adjourn the meeting. Greg Reed seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

The meeting ended at 4:50 p.m.