

EASTERN PANHANDLE TRANSIT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Monday, August 17, 2015

The Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority (EPTA) met on Monday, August 17, 2015 at 446 Novak Drive, Martinsburg, WV. The following were present at the meeting: President, Nic Diehl; Vice President Greg Reed; Treasurer, Charlie Hall; Sherry Bartgis; and Jim McGowan. Secretary Gene Pearson and Brenda Orndorff attended via conference call. Absent Board members included Mike Ferrari, Jennifer Brockman, and Brent Wolfingbarger. EPTA staff members present included: Executive Director Cheryl Keyrouze, Doug Pixler, Elaine Bartoldson, Kim Smith, Laura Funkhouser, and Amanda Malcolm. Also present was Jim Barnhart from the Berkeley County representing Dan Dulyea.

The Board Members monthly packet included the following: Monthly Meeting Agenda; the July 20, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes; Financial Reports for FY15; the Director's Report; Department Reports from Operations, HR, and Marketing; the Board designated tactical initiatives from the Strategic Plan; and a comprehensive financial report covering actual numbers from FY13-15 and budgeted amounts for FY 16-18.

The President called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

There were no appointments.

The President asked if there were any changes or comments on the minutes from the last meeting. Greg Reed offered a motion to approve the EPTA Board Meeting Minutes for Monday, July 20, 2015. Sherry Bartgis seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Financial Report

Kim Smith noted that the Finance Report covered FY15 and included accurate depreciation. From the Budget Variance Report she noted that the Insurance cost showed a 2-month premium prepaid to begin service. Charlie Hall commented that he and Gene Pearson has met with Kim and the Executive Director for a Finance Meeting where they discussed the calculator created by Josh Diamond of Four Square to formulate actual operating costs of a route/run. Kim has not had time to put it into use. Kim will need to learn the calculator's use in depth. The President explained to Jim Barnhart that EPTA has been going through a reorganization over the last several years and has had consultants help by creating a Business Plan and the Transit Development Plan. Gene Pearson offered a motion to accept the Financial Report. Charlie Hall seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director reported that the MPO has tasked the consultants at Baker to complete a study for a new transfer site in Martinsburg to replace Caperton Station. The study will provide 6 possible locations for consideration. The narrow parking lot, cobbled streets, business owner complaints, traffic congestion, etc., were all reasons that City Manager Mark Baldwin along with the City Council was in favor of moving the transfer site elsewhere. Jim Barnhart noted that a

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large parking lot in town was a possible option. Doug Pixler noted that the MPO is modeling the idea after the transfer station in Hagerstown. The Executive Director stated that the location could also provide an option for additional administrative office space. The President suggested having the MPO contact the Martinsburg City Council to take their ideas into consideration as well.

The Executive Director together with Bill Clark of Region IX, made a presentation to the Berkeley County Council on the Coordinated Public Transit Human Service Transportation Plan. This group plans to meet quarterly to coordinate and implement the Plan.

In response to a request from Berkeley County, the Controller prepared a report detailing income and expenses for FY 2013-2015 and the budget expectations for FY 2016-2018. The report will be emailed out to those members not present.

The Executive Director commended Laura Funkhouser, HR Specialist, on an excellent company picnic. Everyone present agreed it was a great success!

The TDP public hearings were held in Jefferson County with zero attendees and Berkeley County with 13 attendees providing comments on the proposed changes to the existing routes and addition of routes. The Executive Director summarized the comments and concerns which will all be presented to the Board for final consideration at the September meeting. Elaine Bartoldson has already addressed one concern by ordering a portion of the new schedules in large print and Spanish.

Sherry Bartgis asked if the Executive Director had contacted Blue Ridge CTC about adding a stop on campus. The President said that at present Blue Ridge is not supportive of a bus stop or of EPTA seeking funding for the added stop, even after the study done by Rahall Institute. The President believes the stop is off the table without Blue Ridge's support. The President will continue to attempt to contact the Blue Ridge President, Dr. Checkovich, to reiterate how EPTA would like to assist the students.

The President had suggested that Blue Ridge have a hiking path installed through the field connecting the campus to the Commons. As an alternative the State could build sidewalks along Route 45 to make it safer for walkers. The President will contact DOH to find out what work is planned for that area with the new shopping center planned. The President is open for other suggestions.

Brenda Orndorff suggested getting the Blue Ridge students involved in voicing their desire for transportation. Most students had agreed that it was a good idea. The President explained that the funding for Blue Ridge originated at the State level but it would require an agreement or letter of support from Blue Ridge in order to seek further funding. The President would like to see the Blue Ridge campus stops included on a trial basis to determine ridership and confirm that there is a need. The President hopes to have more information before the next meeting.

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Diana Long of the Rahall Institute did an in-depth study, including a student survey which indicated that approximately 50% of students at that time would consider using public transit to campus if it were available. Diana's study also included Veterans who were receiving scholarships from the VA to attend classes. One of the veterans wrote a letter to Senator Rockefeller asking for his support.

Charlie Hall asked for clarification that students are currently getting off at Target or the Commons and are walking down Route 45 to the Blue Ridge campus. Charlie stated that we should take a firm stand to press for having a stop at Blue Ridge to avoid a future lawsuit, should an accident occur as a result.

(As a historical note, the Executive Director met Brenda Neal of Blue Ridge at the first EPTA Charrette, after which they tried to arrange a roundtable discussion with leaders from the college, the City of Martinsburg, and Berkeley County. The roundtable did not happen.)

The Executive Director stated that to include the Blue Ridge campus in our route with four trips per day would cost EPTA approximately \$9,000 per year (\$18,000 if match money were included). Although the Blue Ridge stop was included in the TDP, is EPTA willing to pay for it?

Old Business

The Executive Director provided the Board's portion of the Strategic Business Plan Scorecard. The President asked the members to look over the tasks involved and consider which task each of them would like to participate in. At the September meeting he will assign tasks.

The President asked for ideas related to the building expansion. The Administrative staff created a list for 5-year and 10-year requests. Charlie Hall suggested planning for 20 years and indicate which items were immediate needs versus wants or luxury items. The approximate cost of each item should be included.

The Executive Director noted that the same person who created the drawings and plans for the NorthPort Station was willing to give a free estimate and rendering of what could be done for our expansion. Charlie Hall noted that the Ambulance Authority was conducting a Request for Qualifications for A&E work. Perhaps EPTA could piggy-back on their efforts, if they will share the results.

The Executive Director shared that she has been researching additional funding methods being used by other transit systems through TEAM. Presently the majority of all federal transit funding goes to the State. The State then determines how the funds will be divided up among the agencies. The Governor can authorize DOH to transfer funds to DOT if there is a major project to fund. Doug Pixler reported that he talked to Dave Bruffy from Mountain Line about funding ideas.

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The Executive Director signed the MTM Letter of Agreement. Staff is to be trained this week on Tuesday with the portal opening for requests on Wednesday. Laura Funkhouser will be the new HIPPA Officer and has conducted driver training over the past week.

The next Board meeting is September 21, 2015. Both the President and Brenda Orndorff will be attending by conference call as they will be out of town for work. The Vice President Greg Reed was asked to chair the meeting.

Charlie Hall offered a motion to adjourn the meeting. Greg Reed seconded the motion and the motion was approved. The Board meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.