

EASTERN PANHANDLE TRANSIT AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Monday, September 14, 2015

The Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority (EPTA) met on Monday, September 14, 2015 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; Sherry Bartgis; Brenda Orndorff; Jennifer Brockman; and Jim McGowan. Absent Board members included Mike Ferrari and Brent Wolfingbarger. EPTA staff members present included: Executive Director Cheryl Keyrouze, Doug Pixler, Elaine Bartoldson, Laura Funkhouser, and Amanda Malcolm.

The Board Members monthly packet included the following: Monthly Meeting Agenda; the August 17, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes; Financial Reports for FY15; the Director's Report; Department Reports from Operations, HR, and Marketing; an outline of Building Expansion needs for 5/10 years; the revised By-Laws with comments from Norwood Bentley; an Open House flyer; the proposed new EPTA routes; and a Personnel Committee report.

The President called the meeting to order at 4:01 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, August 17, 2015. Jim McGowan seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Financial Report

Kim Smith was absent from the meeting but provided the P&L Reports for August and year to date. The Executive Director provided notes highlighting the report. There were no questions. Sherry Bartgis offered a motion to accept the Financial Report. Brenda Orndorff seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director reported that she attended the AMTRAK "Roll on/Roll off" event at the Harpers Ferry station. The local news from WHAG was in attendance conducting interviews and took footage of the bikes on the EPTA bike racks.

The Executive Director also attended a Quad State Legislative Conference which provided opportunities to discuss the need for fluid transportation. Delegate John Overington suggested this group have transportation be the main topic for a future conference.

The Executive Director reported on the recent MPO Council meeting. She will be sitting on the MPO By-Laws Committee for the Council. The MPO will also begin discussions on the Martinsburg transfer site at the October 6, 2015 meeting.

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The Executive Director and staff have been conducting research on AMTRAK feeders looking for possible opportunities for new contracts. The Director will speak with professional contacts from transportation departments in New York who have connections to AMTRAK which may be beneficial.

The Executive Director has met with officials from Shepherd University Martinsburg to arrange commuter services between their campus and the main Shepherd campus. She has been working with fellow Rotarian Charles Nieman.

The Executive Director continues to work with the C&O Canal Towns and will be meeting with a contact who works with the Maryland government to get funding.

EPTA will be hosting an Open House on October 3, 2015 from 10 am to 2 pm. The Executive Director drafted a proclamation for the Berkeley County Council name October Public Transit Month in the County. The public will be able to ride free on October 14th.

Old Business

Building Expansion: Board members were provided with a list of projected needs/wants for expanding the current facility within the next 5 to 10 years. Doug Pixler has contacted Alpha Architectural firm, who originally designed the facility, for ideas for what can be done with the existing property. Charlie would like to see a longer range plan, perhaps for the next 20 years. The Executive Director stated that long range planning was usually the role of the MPO who considered the needs of the region. Doug asked if Charlie would be willing to meet with him to revise the list and consider longer range goals. They will meet before the next Board meeting. Charlie has spoken a contact from the Ambulance Authority about qualifying architects prior to bidding. The rules vary based on the cost and scale of a project. EPTA would want to wait until we are closer to completing our recommended plan for before approaching an A&E firm.

The President suggested that staffing additions should be on a separate list from building additions. He asked what from the 5/10 year plan could be done now. Priorities included the bus lifts, expanding employee parking, road front signage, and more sheltered parking for buses. Doug added that we are limited on what can be done without adding on to the existing facility. Charlie asked how many buses can the garage currently house. Doug stated only 12 of the current 25 vehicles are able to be housed inside. Gene asked if there was any device that could be used to warm diesels housed outside. Although the garage has block heaters, they require long extension cords to power or electrical outlets in the parking lot. Sherry asked if there were a way to extend the building by adding solar covers to warm the buses. The members discussed the possibility of expanding the parking lot into the grass area while still meeting requirements of the EPA for drainage. Within the facility, offices may be reorganized with the Executive Director exchanging her office for a smaller one and moving three desks for Operations into her larger office.

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EPTA By-Laws: The members saw no problems with any of the comments made to the By-Laws by Norwood Bentley. Doug asked why Morgan County was included in the geographic description of EPTA's service area. Charlie explained that the committee felt it was part of the original intent and chose to keep it for the opportunity to add service in the future. One typo was noted on page 3. Gene motioned to accept the modified By-Laws. Greg seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

New Business

All members were invited to attend the Open House on October 3, 2015.

The members discussed the new routes. The President spoke with Blue Ridge and received approval for a 6 month trial of transportation to their campus. They will sign a letter of support endorsing the need for local transit to the campus and EPTA's efforts to obtain state funding for the route. The Executive Director noted that she partnered with Blue Ridge culinary classes in conjunction with John Under and the summer garden to feed children. The President stated that he hopes that after the 6 month trial, Dr. Chekovich may rethink providing funding support for the route. Although Blue Ridge raised tuition by 7.7% in 2015 with a line item for transportation, it is believed those funds are used to fund student aid.

Doug stated that the changes to the routes constitute a "route realignment" rather than new routes. Charlie asked why we are still doing Demand now that we are doing MTM. Doug explained that it takes time to transition more riders to MTM which will minimize the used of Demand but not eliminate it. The Executive Director added that Demand service increased this year to keep the line buses from going off route and losing time. We must provide off-route service according to FTA law, but at least we can minimize the impact. Charlie asked for clarification on the new schedule's stop listing Bakerton rather than Baker Road. Doug will verify the correct location and have any changes made as needed.

Doug and Elaine highlighted changes to the current routes including the Silver Line which is conducted by both the Red Line and Blue Line at different times of the day; the addition of stops at Hedgesville Food Lion; the Orange Circulator for downtown Charles Town; and shuttles from Charles Town to the VA at shift change. Gene motioned to approve the changes to the routes. Brenda seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Personnel Committee Report: The Personnel Committee met to make revisions to the Employee Handbook. Detailed changes were noted in the Board package. Sherry suggested that members should take it home to read for the next meeting.

Sherry offered a motion to adjourn the meeting. Brenda Orndorff seconded the motion and the motion was approved. The Board meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.