

**Stark Area Regional Transit Authority**  
**1600 Gateway Blvd SE \* Canton OH 44707**  
**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, March 22, 2006**

**CALL TO ORDER**

SARTA's Board President, Charles DeGraff, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

***Upon roll call a quorum was present:***

Present:     President, Charles DeGraff     Vice-President, Nancy Johnson  
              Phyllis Beyers                   Amanda Fletcher  
              William Rudner                 Chet Warren

Excused:    Randy Bond, Gerald Bixler, Fred Moore

**STAFF**

Present:    Charles Odingbe, Executive Director/CEO  
              Jerry Shilling, Operations Director  
              Carole Winchell, Finance & Administration Director  
              Jack Thompson, Customer Service Manager  
              Jannet Friedman, EEO/Safety Administrator  
              Kelly Zachary, Human Resources Administrator  
              Eppy Zayas, Maintenance Director  
              Glenna Caruso, Project Manager  
              Irene Howell, Executive Assistant  
              Kelly Huston, Procurement Administrator

**LEGAL COUNSEL**

Present:    Atty. Robert Murphy (Black McCuskey)

**OTHERS**

Present:    John Nielsen (OTRP)  
              Karl Lucas (SCATS)

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**February 08, 2006, Board Meeting Minutes**

**Chet Warren moved to approve the February 08, 2006, Board meeting minutes with corrections.**

**Page 5: should read "cast " and not "cased";**

**Amanda Fletcher seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed unanimously as follows:**

**AYES:       DeGraff, President; Johnson, Vice-President; Beyers, Fletcher,  
              Rudner, Warren (6)**

**NAYS: None (0)**  
**ABSTENTIONS: None (0)**  
**EXCUSED: Bond, Bixler, Moore (3)**

**March 08, 2006, Work Session/Board Meeting Minutes**

**William Rudner moved to approve the March 08, 2006, Work Session/Board meeting minutes as submitted.**

**Chet Warren seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed unanimously as follows:**

**AYES: DeGraff, President; Johnson, Vice-President; Beyers, Fletcher, Rudner, Warren (6)**

**NAYS: None (0)**

**ABSTENTIONS: None (0)**

**EXCUSED: Bond, Bixler, Moore (3)**

**CITIZEN'S COMMUNICATION**

**Public Speaks - John Nielsen (OTRP)**

1. Mr. Odingbe introduced Mr. John Nielsen, CEO of the Ohio Transit Risk Pool (OTRP). Mr. Nielsen was invited to provide the Board with latest information regarding OTRP activities and agency coverage.

**OTRP PRESENTATION**

1. Mr. John Nielsen shared the following information with the SARTA Board:
  - a. The Ohio Transit Risk Pool was organized in 1994 following the hard (insurance market of the '80's) and began formal operations in 1995.
  - b. The purpose of the pool is to find ways to provide cost-effective property and liability insurance coverage for public transportation systems in Ohio, and noted that OTRP has approximately 12 members agencies in Ohio.
  - c. Size of member agencies ranges from large systems like Dayton, Akron and Toledo, medium agencies like SARTA, Laketran, and small systems like Delaware, Zanesville, and Mansfield.
  - d. SARTA is a founding and charter member of OTRP meaning the agency has been a member since the inception of OTRP in 1994.
  - e. Mr. Nielsen noted that OTRP currently has a very large self-insured retention. The reason was that prior to 911, the pool was able to secure up to \$25 million in liability insurance coverage per occurrence with a \$250,000 deductible for \$300,000 in premium costs.
  - f. However, in 2005, OTRP was only able to secure a \$7.5 million in liability coverage with OTRP being responsible for the first \$1 million of that coverage.
  - g. In an effort to further spread agency exposure and maximize economies of scale, OTRP has joined with our Michigan counterpart in creating a larger pool and providing us better leverage and buying.

- h. Mr. Nielsen closed by saying that OTRP's Actuarial Report has determined that agency is adequately funded for all exposure dating back to 1995. The group has enjoyed some redundancies in every one of those years. It is our expectation to begin to give back monies to various agencies for all closed Loss Years (LY).
2. Mr. DeGraff inquired about percentage of Ohio transit systems that are represented with OTRP. Mr. Nielsen replied that approximately 30% to 35% of all the public transit systems in the state are members of OTRP. Further comments followed.
3. Mr. Rudner inquired about OTRP reserves. Mr. Nielsen stated that the minimum reserve requirement is \$500,000. Further comments followed.

### ***Certificate of Appreciation***

Mr. DeGraff called on Eppy Zayas, Director of Maintenance to come forward and accept an award on behalf of the entire Maintenance department. The agency will be presenting a plaque of appreciation to the Maintenance department for keeping the agency going despite all the construction distractions.

### **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

***Finance*** (William Rudner, Chairperson) - No report.

***Personnel*** (Phyllis Beyers, Chairperson) - No report.

***Citizens' Advisory Board*** - No report.

***Public Property/Capital Improvements*** (Phyllis Beyers, Chairperson) - No report.

### **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

***Operations*** (Jerry Shilling, Operations Director) - As submitted

1. Ms. Beyers questioned the 3227 "no shows" reported in the Paratransit Ridership report.
2. Mr. Shilling explained that it was a typographical error, the number should be 322, and he promised the Board that we would put the correct number in the report.

***Maintenance*** - As submitted

***Finance*** (Carole Winchell, Finance and Administration Director) - As submitted

Ms. Winchell reported the following:

1. Auditors have completed their onsite testing.
2. Ms. Beyers made inquiries regarding the financial report's figures under Building and Grounds and Natural Gas. Ms. Winchell stated that the finance department is investigating the figure under building and grounds. Further discussion followed. Ms. Winchell stated that the natural gas cost was a contract-amount. Further discussion followed.

**Customer Service** (Jack Thompson, Customer Service Manager) - As submitted

**EEO/Safety** - (Jannet Friedman, EEO/Safety Administrator) - As submitted

**Projects** (Glenna Caruso, Project Manager) - As submitted

1. Ms. Johnson made an inquiry regarding the "GEO-Coding" bus stop. Mr. Odingbe stated that it should be one-word "geocoding" and is a term used to explain determining the longitude and latitude of bus stops, shelter locations, and other transit amenities. This information is part of our CAD-AVL Radio upgrade.
2. Ms. Johnson questioned the installation of strobe light and horn in the paint booth. Staff responded that this is an OSHA requirement. Further discussion followed.
3. Ms. Johnson asked about the sign package, which included work for a wrought iron fence and artist work in the Board Room. Ms. Caruso explained that the signs were referring to room numbers and office markers; the wrought fence is to keep people off the lawn. Furthermore, Mr. Odingbe explained that the artist would provide painting of the Mission Statement and the Five Bold Steps for the Board Room. All these will be paid for by the art portion of the Gateway renovation grant funds as specified by FTA. Further discussion followed.
4. Ms. Beyers commented on the SARTA's Paratransit routes. Further discussion.

**Human Resources** (Kelly Zachary, Human Resources Administrator) - As submitted.

1. Ms. Johnson asked a question in regards to the personnel report. Ms. Zachary stated that she would double check the year-to-date figure because it should have been automatically calculated. Further discussion followed.

**Labor Management** - (Jannet Friedman, Jerry Shilling, Jack Thompson) as submitted.

1. Mr. DeGraff asked about union participation.
2. Ms. Friedman stated that since the reelection, they are on the right path in terms of participation.
3. Ms. Johnson asked if anyone read the Independent article and that it was very bias and one sided. Mr. Odingbe explained that he had read the article and provided the Independent with a rebuttal containing more information on SARTA Health care changes. The follow-up article was published Saturday, March 18, 2006. Further discussion followed.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **President** - Charles DeGraff - **Levy**

1. Mr. DeGraff asked if those who took a "call-list" for the levy campaign made their calls.
2. Ms. Beyers stated that she pulled over one hundred email address of businesses in the Alliance area and if it was agreeable with the Levy Committee she would do a mass email with information about SARTA. Mr. DeGraff asked that it be under her signature. Further discussion followed.
3. Mr. Warren stated that the Golden Lodge requested a letter from the Citizen's Advisory Committee in regards to his levy request.
4. Ms. Johnson stated she called all those on her list. Further comments followed.
5. Mr. Odingbe gave the summary of contributions as \$14,854 to the levy campaign.
6. Mr. DeGraff stated that getting donations was the biggest effort right now and that Nick Navarro, former President of the Chamber of Commerce, volunteered to help with our fund raising efforts.
7. Ms. Johnson stated that absentee balloting would start on March 28, 2006. Further discussion followed.

### **Board** - No communications

### **Executive Director/CEO's Report** (Charles Odingbe)

1. Mr. Odingbe gave the following report:

#### **Ridership**

- a. Ridership for February 2006 continues to be strong;
- b. Year-to-date ridership 61% increase over 2005 with Fixed Routes and Special Events transportation leading these increases.
- c. Paratransit ridership 10.35% increase over 2005;
- d. Mr. Odingbe stated that if the trends continue through the summer months, SARTA would be looking at some form of service expansions to effectively accommodate the continued increases in ridership. Further discussion followed.

#### **Alliance Transit Center Construction Project**

- a. "Alliance Transit Center" project is progressing.
- b. The Architect on record has provided staff with initial designs for the transit center.
- c. The final phases of transferring ownership of alleys from the City of Alliance to SARTA were in progress.
- d. The project is currently running one month behind schedule due to adjustments to design concept.

#### **Wal-Mart Transit Pull-Out**

- a. Wal-Mart has agreed to grant SARTA easement on their property.

- b. Waiting for word from Wal-Mart regarding what restrictions and/or exceptions are required prior to SARTA commencing work on the project.
- c. The Board will be kept updated on the progress.
- d. Ms. Beyers asked if Wal-Mart was contributing financially to the project. Mr. Odingbe stated that not to his knowledge.

#### **RADIO/CAD/AVL Project**

- a. SARTA's CAD/AVL project continues to progress as planned.
- b. Training is going as projected with no major setbacks.
- c. The Board received a monthly status report with their Board Packets, which contained details about the project activities and time line.

#### **Cornerstone Concerns**

- a. SARTA continues to work with the Canton Police Department and the Canton School district on disruptions at the Cornerstone Transit Center.
- b. The increase supervision and police presence has brought activities under control.
- c. Gearing up to deal with potential increased disruptive activities during the spring break.
- d. SARTA's Customer Service staff is developing a new schedule that will potentially double police and/or security presence during spring break.
- e. It was noted that Mr. Thompson and Mr. Warren have been instrumental in dealing with the Cornerstone issue.

#### **Health Care Concerns**

- a. The agency continues to move forward with the proposed changes to the health care plan.
- b. The Union members began their "informational picketing" last week in Massillon and today (03/22/06) in Alliance.
- c. We continue to monitor press coverage on the matter. To date, there have been minimal adverse comments regarding our actions. Further discussion followed.

#### ***Brown Bag Meeting***

- a. All staff members were invited to the March 22, 2006 Brown Bag meeting.
- b. Discussed the health care issue.
- c. Further comments followed.

#### **FTA Triennial Review**

- a. The Federal Transit Administration completed its Triennial Review of SARTA on March 14, 2006. They reviewed the agency in twenty-three (23) review areas.
- b. The Triennial Review found deficiencies in two of the twenty-three review areas namely:

- Preventive Maintenance - the agency failed to change oil in some buses up to 1,000 miles past their preventive maintenance date.
  - Title VI Certification - The agency failed to renew its Title VI certification information with FTA. Further discussion followed.
  - The Board was informed that Ms. Friedman is working on the Title VI renewal. Further discussion followed.
  - Also, staff has corrected the preventive maintenance challenge by reprogramming the FA Suite to flag any bus that misses its oil change schedule.
  - FTA gave SARTA 30 days to make all the corrections. SARTA's goal is to make all the corrections before the 30-day deadline. Further comments followed.
1. Mr. DeGraff congratulated the organization on its good performance.
  2. Mr. Warren stated that he would like to commend the staff for the excellent job they were doing in regards to the Cornerstone issue. Further comments followed. Mr. Odimgbe stated that there might be an article in the Repository regarding the Cornerstone issue. Further discussion followed.

### **EXECUTIVE TEAM MINUTES**

#### ***February 1, 2006***

1. Ms. Johnson had questions regarding the following:
  - a. Item #2, dealing with leaving our Maintenance garage doors open. Ms. Friedman explained that during OSHA's visit to SARTA, some bus operators assumed the doors were left open to distract. Further discussion followed.
  - b. Item #1, second sentence, under Finance & Administration. Ms. Winchell stated it should read "pick up" and not "pick of". Further discussion followed.

#### ***February 7, 2006***

1. Ms. Beyers had questions regarding the following:
  - a. Item #17, under Executive Team Reports and Discussions, some issues were related to EEO/Safety and some to Human Resources/Personnel issues. Ms. Friedman and Ms. Zachary explained that they work together (i.e., example OTRP claims). Further discussion followed.

#### ***February 28, 2006***

1. Ms. Johnson had a question regarding the following:
  - a. Item #26, under Executive Team Reports and Discussions, the "Biggest Loser Contest". Mr. Odimgbe stated Mr. Todd lost 27 pounds. Further discussion followed.

### **MIDDLE MANAGEMENT MINUTES**

No comment

## **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

1. Mr. Odingbe stated that SARTA is continuing talks with Holmes, Wayne and Tuscarawas transportation groups and have offered technical assistance. Further discussion followed.
2. Mr. Odingbe stated that SARTA will try out the trolley bus by starting out with one used trolley and, depending on the success rate, may expand the service to Massillon and Alliance. Further discussion followed.
3. Mr. Odingbe stated that, there is information in the Board packets regarding Alliance Transit Center design.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

Mr. Odingbe read the following resolutions:

1. Resolution to authorize Executive Director/CEO to purchase new fireboxes from GFI Genfare for a fee of \$896,290.00 plus a 15% contingency for a total fee not to exceed One Million Thirty Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty-Three dollars and no cents (\$1,030,733.00).
2. Mr. DeGraff asked if this purchase would be funded with grant funds. Mr. Odingbe replied that it was all grant money.

**Chet Warren moved that the Resolution be adopted by the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority Board of Trustees to authorize the Executive Director/CEO to purchase new fareboxes from GFI Genfare for a fee of \$896,290.00 plus a 15% contingency for a total fee not to exceed One Million Thirty Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty-Three dollars and no cents (\$1,030,733.00).**

**Amanda Fletcher seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed unanimously as follows:**

**AYES: DeGraff, President; Johnson, Vice-President; Beyers, Fletcher, Rudner, Warren (6)**

**NAYS: None (0)**

**ABSTENTIONS: None (0)**

**EXCUSED: Bond, Bixler, Moore (3)**

3. Resolution that the Board of Trustees of the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority (SARTA) to adopt the revisions to the Procurement Policy as submitted. Ms. Winchell explained the reason for the revisions. Question: Regarding the Revised Code addressing the policy change. Reply: Yes, the Revised Code reiterated the revisions.

**Chet Warren made the motion that the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority Board of Trustees adopt the revisions to the Procurement Policy as submitted.**

**William Rudner seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed unanimously as follows:**

**AYES: DeGraff, President; Johnson, Vice-President; Beyers, Fletcher,  
Rudner, Warren (6)**

**NAYS: None (0)**

**ABSTENTIONS: None (0)**

**EXCUSED: Bond, Bixler, Moore (3)**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Ms. Beyers had questions regarding the following:
  - a. Item #13, page 8 of the Revised Procurement Policy, regarding Bid Bond Requirement and Performance Bond. Mr. Odimgbe stated that bid bond is required for construction projects. Performance Bond is required at one hundred percent. Mr. Odimgbe stated he would find out the percentage on the bid bond requirement information and see that Ms. Beyers receives it.
2. Mr. Odimgbe stated that the test came back from OSHA on the air quality in the garage. It was reported to the Board that SARTA was well below the minimum standards set by OSHA on particulate in the air. The report given to the Board from OSHA confirms SARTA's air quality is well below the standards established by OSHA. Further discussion followed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Chet Warren moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m.**

**Amanda Fletcher seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed unanimously as follows:**

**AYES: DeGraff, President; Johnson, Vice-President; Beyers, Fletcher,  
Rudner, Warren (6)**

**NAYS: None (0)**

**ABSTENTIONS: None (0)**

**EXCUSED: Bond, Bixler, Moore (3)**

**The next meeting, Board Work Session, will be held Wednesday, April 12, 2006, at the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority office's first floor Board Room at 6:00 p.m.**