

**Stark Area Regional Transit Authority  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Wednesday, August 23, 2006  
1600 Gateway Blvd SE♦Canton, OH 44707**

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**ROLL CALL**

Following roll call a quorum was present:

Charles DeGraff, President  
Phyllis Beyers  
Randy Bond  
Chet Warren

Nancy Johnson, Vice-President  
Gerald Bixler  
Fred Moore  
William Rudner

**Excused**

Amanda Fletcher

**Staff**

Charles Odingbe, Executive Director/CEO  
Carole Kuczynski, Finance & Administration Director  
Jerry Shilling, Operations Director  
Eppy Zayas, Maintenance Director  
Jack Thompson, Customer Service Manager  
Kelly Zachary, Human Resource Administrator  
Glenna Caruso, Project Manager  
Irene Howell, Administrative Assistant

**Legal Counsel**

Atty. Robert Murphy (Black McCuskey)

**Other(s)**

Will Scott (Will Scott and Associates, LLC)  
Dale Carnhan (Auditor)  
Robert Rice (Auditor)  
Henry Preston

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**July 26, 2006, Board Meeting Minutes**

**Randy Bond moved that the July 26, 2006, Board Meeting Minutes be approved as written.**

**Chet Warren seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed unanimously as follows:**

**AYES: President, DeGraff; Vice-President, Johnson; Beyers, Bixler, Bond, Fletcher, Moore, Rudner, Warren (8)**

**EXCUSED: Fletcher (1)**

**NAYS: (0)**

**ABSTENTIONS: (0)**

**August 9, 2006 Board Work Session Meeting Minutes**

**Chet Warren moved that the July 13, 2006, Board Work Session Minutes, with corrections, be approved. Page 2: should read “deploying ” and not “deploring”**

**Fred Moore seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed unanimously as follows:**

**AYES: President, DeGraff; Vice-President, Johnson; Beyers, Bixler, Bond, Fletcher, Moore, Rudner, Warren (8)**

**EXCUSED: Fletcher (1)**

**NAYS: (0)**

**ABSTENTIONS: (0)**

**CITIZEN’S COMMUNICATION**

**Public Speaks – no one signed up to speak.**

Mr. Odingbe introduced Mr. Will Scott of Scott and Associates who facilitated the Middle Managers’ Retreat on August 22, 2006, and the Executive Team Retreat on August 23, 2006. Mr. Scott will also facilitate the Board Retreat on September 27, 2006.

**GREETINGS FROM RETREAT FACILITATOR**

Mr. Scott made the following comments:

1. Thanked the Board for allowing him to continue to be of service to SARTA;
2. Stated that he was impressed with what SARTA is doing;
3. Mr. Scott noted that he has worked with transits all over the country and not one has accomplished what SARTA has in such a short period of time.
4. Mr. Scott congratulated SARTA on being the recipient of the national award, “Most Outstanding Transit Agency of the Year Award for 2006” from the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). Further comments followed.

**REPORT FROM AUDITORS**

Mr. Rice reported the following:

1. Mr. Rice stated that this is the fourth year Watson Rice & Company, certified public accountants, have done the financial and compliance audit for the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority;
2. The Auditors met with Finance; and Mr. Rice thanked the Financial Department, Carole Kuczynski and staff;
3. There were no disagreements with management about accounting principles, procedures or GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles);

4. There were some none material adjustments/recommendations given to the financial department;
5. The audit was an unqualified opinion. The clean opinion states that nothing came to the attention of the auditor that would make SARTA's financial statements misleading.
6. Mr. Rice explained what a "report to management" meant and that the auditors came across items that they made recommendations on revising.
7. Mr. Rice explained the difference between a "reportable condition", and a "report to management".

Mr. Carnahan reported the following:

1. There were seven recommendations, i.e., internal control and compliance issues.
2. The items on which recommendations were made were reviewed by the Finance Department.
3. Auditors incorporated comments that were made by FTA during the Triennial review.

Mr. Rice stated the following:

1. Mr. Rice referred to the single audit, which is done in addition to the regular audit; the federal government requires the auditors to check FTA grant programs separately. This procedure is carried out according to OMB 133.
2. The "Summary" was noted on page seven of the audit, which shows whether or not the auditor noted any none compliance issues, or whether or not there were any audit findings. No problems were found with the federal funds.
3. The audit letter was submitted for CAFR (Comprehensive Annual Financial Report). Further comments followed.

Mr. DeGraff called for questions or comments.

Mr. Warren asked if the auditors gave recommendations last year.

- Mr. Carnahan stated that verbal recommendations were issued last year and written recommendations were given the year before.

Mr. Warren asked if the recommendations were done.

- Mr. Rice replied yes, and further stated that if any recommendations were not met, they would appear in the next report.

## **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Finance** (William Rudner, Chairperson)

Mr. Rudner reported the following:

1. Mr. Rudner presented the summary of the budget adjustments.
2. The adjusted line items were in brackets. The items that were adjusted down showed that projections were better than thought.

3. Mr. Rudner made note of the "Total Wages & Benefits" line, which shows that SARTA is doing better than projected, \$76,507 less than budgeted, and the same applied for other items i.e., Materials & Supplies and Fuel.
4. Referred to revenue budget, noted as problem items where adjustments need to take place now.
5. Mr. Rudner commented on the "Sales Tax" revenues.
6. Mr. Rudner explained the budget as a floating budget, which means the budget is initially approved based on the best estimates that the Finance Department and the Executive Director/CEO, and at times adjustments must be made. Further comments followed.
7. The Finance Committee also discussed next year's budget and what will need to be done to keep a balanced budget.
8. Mr. Moore asked a question regarding the revenue budget bottom line. Mr. Rudner explained the revenue budget adjustments.
9. Mr. DeGraff asked for a motion to approve the budget adjustments.
10. After further discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to bring the budget adjustments before the Board in the form of a resolution at the next Board Meeting (9/27/06).

**Personnel** – (Phyllis Beyers, Chair.)

1. No report.

**Public Property/Capital Improvements** (Phyllis Beyers, Chairperson)

1. Ms. Beyers deferred the report to Glenna Caruso, Project Manager.
2. Mr. Rudner raised a question in regards to the Radio Project.
3. Mr. Odimgbe gave the following response:
  - We are sixty percent into the project;
  - The uniqueness of the project in that it is a beta project;
  - This is the second Advanced Communications System (ACS) deployed in the nation.
  - It was noted that SARTA is a test site;
  - There were challenges because it is a new system and has not gone through market testing.
  - Completion target date was July 2006, but due to software issues, the timeline was changed to November 2006.
  - It was expected that 80% to 90% of the contingency would be used because it is a beta product.
4. Mr. DeGraff explained what was meant by "beta product". Further discussion followed.

**Citizens Advisory Board**

1. Mr. Odimgbe stated that a citizen, who arrived late, had made a request to speak to the Board.
2. Mr. DeGraff asked for the individual's name, which was Henry Preston, who stated he was a full time SARTA rider.

3. Mr. Henry Preston stated he was at SARTA Board meeting a year ago and Mr. Thompson helped with complaints he had, but that was not why he was at this meeting. He expressed the following concerns:
  - Mr. Preston attended a Canton City Council Meeting and was thanking the Council for the police presence at Cornerstone. Ms. Zachary, Councilperson, informed him that the City of Canton was not responsible for the police presence, but it was through SARTA.
  - Mr. Preston shared with the Board comparisons of crime statistics of Canton/Dallas/Cleveland.
  - Mr. Preston shared some comments regarding Drivers' customer service skills.
  - The comments Mr. Preston made were to show that there is a need to continue to have police presence at Cornerstone.

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **Operations** (Jerry Shilling, Director of Operations) – as submitted

1. Ms. Johnson made an inquiry regarding Sunday service.
2. Mr. Odingbe stated no changes are planned in the service. Further discussion followed

### **Maintenance** (Eppy Zayas, Director) – as submitted

1. Mr. Warren thanked Mr. Zayas and the Maintenance Department as well as Mr. Shilling for the assistance that was given to the Green County Association.

### **Finance** (Carole Kuczynski, Finance & Administration Director) – as submitted

1. Ms. Kuczynski noted the corrections on the "Cash Flow Statement" and copies were given to the Board.
2. Ms. Beyers asked a question regarding the check registry. Ms. Kuczynski answered all inquiries regarding the registry i.e., the check for Fisher Optical was for safety glasses. Further comments followed.

### **Customer Service** (Jack Thompson, Customer Service Manager) – as submitted

1. Ms. Beyers stated she appreciated the bar graph in the report and would like to see other reports done with bar graphs.
2. Mr. DeGraff asked about the new passes for the new fareboxes. Mr. Thompson explained how the new passes would work in conjunction with the new fareboxes.
3. Ms. Johnson asked for an update on the Trolley.
4. Mr. Shilling reported ridership averaging around 16 to 18 per day. Mr. Shilling stated he would incorporate a report on the Trolley in the monthly Board Report for Operations. Mr. Odingbe stated that a push

will be made to increase ridership on the Trolley and as the weather changes the ridership should increase. Further comments followed.

**EEO/Safety/First Care of SARTA** – (Jannet Friedman, EEO/Safety & Risk Administrator) – as submitted

1. Mr. Warren raised a question regarding “drug and alcohol” and asked if there were any problems.
2. Mr. Odingbe stated that there had not been an issue with “drug and alcohol” since he has been with SARTA, and SARTA does test over fifty percent to qualify for our discount.

**Human Resources** – (Kelly Zachary, Human Resources Administrator) - as submitted

**Projects** – (Glenna Caruso, Project Manager) - as submitted

1. Ms. Beyers raised a question regarding the original estimate on the Alliance Project.
2. Ms. Caruso stated that the architect did the estimate. Further comments followed:
  - Mr. DeGraff raised a question regarding the Gateway project and a “close out report” on Gateway. A concise report of what went wrong, what went right, what lessons were learned and use it for future learning. It would allow you to analyze things as they happened and what you learned which would be good to have and summarize as you approach other projects.
  - Ms. Caruso asked if the Board would like to see a “close out report” on Gateway.
  - Mr. DeGraff replied it would be good. Further comments followed

**Labor Management** – as submitted

1. Mr. Odingbe stated that he had advised Ms. Friedman, EEO/Safety and Risk Administrator, to dissolve the committee because it was becoming a waste of SARTA’s time and resources, but Ms. Friedman stated she wanted to continue with the committee and try to get everyone interested again. Further comments followed.
2. Mr. DeGraff raised a question regarding the charge given to the committee.
3. Mr. Odingbe replied that the role changes depending on the challenges. Initially it was a way to bridge the gap between management and union, and later it was a platform for the union members to file complaints, to bring issues that they feel management needs to look into. Further discussion followed.
4. Mr. DeGraff spoke on the union/management relationship and how to improve it, and was the topic something that should be considered at the

Board retreat? Further comments followed with Mr. Scott stating that it was a great idea and should be placed on the agenda.

- a. Mr. Odingbe stated there is an initiative in the works geared towards dealing with the issue. Further comments followed.
- b. Ms. Beyers asked were the drivers complimented on helping SARTA to achieve the award for being the “Number One in Transit in the Nation”.
- c. Mr. Odingbe replied yes, however it was believed that drivers did not feel they were part of the success story. Further comments followed.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

**President** – No communications

### **Board**

1. Mr. Bond stated that at the Monday Council Meeting when Mr. Preston made the statement; Ms. Zachary let everyone know that SARTA was responsible for the police officers being at Cornerstone. Mr. Bond complimented her on doing a good job. Further discussion/comments followed.
2. Mr. DeGraff commented on the Thursday, August 17, 2006, trip to Wooster High School where Mr. Odingbe made a presentation to 126 plus people. There was a lot of interest in public transportation for the entire county and more than one county was interested. The group received the information well. Mr. DeGraff thanked Mr. Odingbe for the excellent presentation and the SARTA staff who were there to answer any questions.

### **Executive Director/CEO** (Charles Odingbe)

Mr. Odingbe reported the following:

1. SARTA staff has been working on how to enter 2007;
2. Noted challenges 2007 pose with cost going up.
3. The impact on sales tax may cause things to be done differently in order to be in line with the first bold step “operating within budget”.
4. These concerns were shared with the Board Finance Chairperson, Bill Rudner.
5. Options range from looking at how we deploy service; see if changes can be made there.
6. Looking at utilizing part-time drivers, which is provided for in the current contract;
7. Looked at inter-lining (combining high performing routes with low performing routes);
8. Looking at different ideas and see which one will be applicable to help solve the issues.
9. Noted that doing this now is very difficult since last year SARTA experienced 40% increase in ridership and this year it dropped to about

38% over last year's number, which makes it the wrong time to be talking about streamlining service. Further comments followed.

10. Trying to avoid an increase in fares;
11. Every option is on the table; service streamline to fare increases, to absorb this impact of losses in sales tax. Also, being very sensitive to the fact that ridership is going up, and don't want to cut service too much. Further comments/discussion followed.

### **EXECUTIVE TEAM MEETINGS MINUTES**

No comments

### **MIDDLE MANAGEMENT MEETINGS MINUTES**

No comments

### **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

No comments

### **RESOLUTIONS**

1. Mr. Charles Odingbe moved the adoption of the following resolution and read the resolution into the record.

#### **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO SURPLUS OBSOLETE VEHICLE INVENTORY**

##### **RESOLUTION – 06-1**

*WHEREAS, in accordance with the FTA “Best Practices in Procurement Manual” and the Ohio Revised Code, this request is made to allow the Executive Director to surplus obsolete vehicle inventory; and*

*WHEREAS, the attached list of vehicles have exhausted their useful life for which they were purchased; and*

*WHEREAS, that with Board approval the assets will be disposed of by a succession of means, first via donation to local non-profit organizations, then as advertised for an “Invitation to Bid” in the local paper and, finally, if any vehicles remain, sent to a scrap yard; and*

*WHEREAS, this resolution will assist SARTA in complying with one of the five Board approved “Five Bold Steps,” of Maximizing Financial Responsibility and Operating within Budget; and*

*NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, after due consideration by the Board of Trustees of the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority that the Executive Director be given authorization to dispose, of obsolete vehicles as follows:*

9825	1FDXE40F9WHB01927 / 1998 TESCO FORD E350	OH2843	\$1.00
9826	1FDXE40F9WHB01930 / 1998 TESCO FORD E350	OH2842	\$1.00
9827	1FDXE40F0WHB01945 / 1998 TESCO FORD E350	OH2848	\$1.00
9828	1FDXE40F0WHB01928 / 1998 TESCO FORD E350	OH2841	\$1.00
9829	1FDXE40F2WHB01932 / 1998 TESCO FORD E350	OH2839	\$1.00
9830	1FDXE40F8WHB01935 / 1998 TESCO FORD E350	OH2849	\$1.00
9831	1FDXE40F1WHB01923 / 1998 TESCO FORD E350	OH2846	\$1.00
9833	1FDXE40F3WHB01924 / 1998 TESCO FORD E350	OH2847	\$1.00
9834	1FDXE40F5WHB01925 / 1998 TESCO FORD E350	OH2838	\$1.00
9835	1FDXE40F0WHB01931 / 1998 TESCO FORD E350	OH2834	\$1.00
9936	1FDXE40F7XHA71389 / 1999 TESCO FORD E450	OH5029	\$1.00
9937	1FDXE40F6XHA71397 / 1999 TESCO FORD E450	OH5030	\$1.00
9938	1FDXE40F5XHA71388 / 1999 TESCO FORD E450	OH5031	\$1.00
9941	1FDXE40F5XHA71357 / 1999 TESCO FORD E450	OH5034	\$1.00
9533	15GCA2013S1085905 / 1995 30' GILLIG PHANTOM	OD1021	\$1.00

**Mr. Chet Warren seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed unanimously as follows:**

**AYES: President, DeGraff; Vice-President, Johnson; Beyers, Bixler, Bond, Fletcher, Moore, Rudner, Warren (8)**

**EXCUSED: Fletcher (1)**

**NAYS: (0)**

**ABSTENTIONS: (0)**

- Mr. Charles Odingbe moved the adoption of the following resolution and read the resolution into the record.

**A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS WITH RMI CEMENT LLC FOR THE HARMONT AVENUE CURB CUT OUT PROJECT**

**RESOLUTION – 06-2**

*WHEREAS, that in accordance with Ohio Revised Code and the FTA policies and procedures, the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority Executive Director advertised RFP's for project #2006-02; and*

*WHEREAS, 4 (four) proposals were received and opened on Monday August 21, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. in SARTA's Board Room; and*

*WHEREAS, of the 4 (four) proposal's received, RMI Cement LLC is the apparent low bidder with a total proposed project cost of \$56,922.50 (fifty-six thousand nine-hundred twenty-two dollars and 50 cents); and*

*WHEREAS, of the remaining proposals, we received one from Stanley Miller Construction Co. at a cost of \$74,879.00 (Seventy-four thousand eight hundred seventy-nine dollars and zero cents), Tony Zumbo & Son Construction Co. Inc. at a cost of \$76,693.50 (Seventy-six thousand six hundred ninety-three dollars and fifty cents), and Alliance Ventures whose proposal amount was not disclosed due to it being deemed as a non-responsive bid; and*

*WHEREAS, according to the Board Approved "Five Bold Steps" the resulting contract will assist SARTA in achieving four of the goals, Operating Within Budget, Grow Ridership, Maximize Financial Flexibility, and Build Public Support; and*

*NOW, THEREFORE, after due consideration, be it resolved by the Board of Trustees of the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority that the Executive Director be authorized to enter into contract negotiations with RMI Cement LLC for the Harmont Ave. Curb Cut Out Project for an amount not to exceed \$56,922.50 plus a 15% contingency.*

**Mr. Gerald Bixler seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed unanimously as follows:**

**AYES: President, DeGraff; Vice-President, Johnson; Beyers, Bixler, Bond, Fletcher, Moore, Rudner, Warren (8)**

**EXCUSED: Fletcher (1)**

**NAYS: (0)**

**ABSTENTIONS: (0)**

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chet Warren moved to adjourn the meeting.

Fred Moore seconded the motion

All members were in favor, the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

The next meeting will be September 13, 2006, SARTA Board Work Session at 1600 Gateway Boulevard Southeast, Canton, Ohio, in the first floor Board Room.