

**Stark Area Regional Transit Authority  
Board Of Trustees Meeting  
January 24, 2007 @ 6:00 PM  
Room Gateway Bldg., 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Board**

**I. Call To Order**

Charles DeGraff called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

**II. Attendance** (Quorum was present)

Charles DeGraff (President); Nancy Johnson (Vice-President); Amanda Fletcher; Fred Moore; William Rudner (arrival time @ 6:10 PM); Gerald Bixler; Chet Warren

**Excused**

Phyllis Beyers, Randy Bond

**Staff**

Charles Odimgbe (Executive Director/CEO); Mark Finnicum (Director, Maintenance); Kelly Zachary (HR & Safety Manager); Glenna Caruso (Planning & Community Outreach Manager); Jerry Shilling (Director, Transportation); Teresa Thompson (Administrator, Transportation); Omar Abdullah (Union President/Coach Operator); Carole Kuczynski (Director, Finance & Administration); Victor Butcher (Coach Operator); Tammy Marie Chavers (Executive Assistant)

**Legal Counsel**

Atty. Robert Murphy (Black McCuskey)

**Other**

Karl Lucas, SCATS (Stark County Area Transportation Study)  
Robert Wang (Canton Repository)

**III. Executive Session**

The Board went into an Executive Session at 6:05 PM with a unanimous roll call vote to discuss Labor Negotiation updates and Potential Litigation.

The Board reconvened for the regular Board meeting at 6:35 PM.

**IV. Approval/Correction of Minutes**

1. Work Session/Meeting Minutes (December 6, 2006)

Mr. Warren moved for the approval of the minutes. Mr. Moore seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

2. Work Session Minutes (January 10, 2007)

Mr. Warren moved for the approval of the minutes. Ms. Fletcher seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

**V. Board Committee Reports**

Mr. DeGraff reappointed Mr. Rudner to chair the Finance Committee. Ms. Beyers is to continue as the chair of the Personnel Committee with Mr. Rudner and Mr. Bixler assisting. Mr. DeGraff appointed Ms. Fletcher to chair the Public Property/Capital Improvements Committee and Ms. Johnson as the chair of the Citizens Advisory Board. All of the aforementioned accepted.

**VI. Departmental Reports**

Mr. DeGraff commended the department heads for the quality of their reports.

**Transportation**

As submitted

Mr. DeGraff inquired if November and December preventable accidents were slightly higher in number due to the winter driving conditions. Mr. Odingbe answered it is harder to assess given this winter's conditions have been mild. Mr. Shilling informed the Board that the Transportation Department is taking measures to decrease the preventable accident numbers by implementing the "Smith" system in early February. This system would train trainers to train drivers defensive driving skills. Ms Thompson added that this training would give drivers a different approach to decrease the preventability rate.

**Maintenance**

As submitted

Mr. DeGraff mentioned that it was nice to see that road calls were down. Ms. Fletcher inquired if that was because we send maintenance technicians to conduct minor repairs on the road. Mr. Odingbe replied that even if we send maintenance technicians to conduct road repairs, it still is considered a road call. Mr. Odingbe also made the Board aware that costs to the agency are decreases when road repairs are made.

**Finance**

Ms. Kuczynski added that the first meeting for the Coordinated Transportation Plan for the county was on Tuesday January 25, 2007. This committee was formed in effort to comply with

SAFTEA-LU, the Transportation Act for the next six years. All transportation and human services agencies in Stark County were invited and approximately 38 people in attendance. This group will formulate a plan for government funding utilization for new transportation services. Any transportation agency requesting SAFETEA-LU funds from the county must have their project placed in TIP (Transportation Improvement Plan).

Ms. Kuczynski also informed the Board that Ohio Department Of Transportation (ODOT) and Ohio Public Transportation Association (OPTA) is developing the coordinated Ohio Disaster/Emergency Plan. Meetings will be held once a month. They are currently considering the use of software to inventory buses from all participating transit systems. This software would not only show each systems total inventory but would also make available the vehicles each agency is willing to loan or deploy in the event of an emergency/disaster.

#### **HR & Safety**

As Submitted

#### **Planning & Community Outreach**

As submitted

### **VII. Communication**

#### **From The Executive Director...**

##### **Ridership:**

SARTA'S ridership remains stable for 2006. Total ridership increase for the year remains in double digits (15.79%) overall. It is worthy to note that ridership dropped dramatically throughout the second half of the year. Our research indicates that we may have a much larger increase than we are reporting. We are currently investigating the possibility that the new fare box equipment is not capturing some of our rides; specifically, planning staff has been unable to locate records for all single ride tickets issued for the entire year. We are currently conducting a comparison with actual sales from our customer service outlet to determine how much data was lost due to this programming error. We will keep the Board updated on any new developments regarding this matter.

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

The Board approved a resolution awarding this contract to Alliance Ventures. Jeff Carr Construction filed a protest to the award. A hearing was conducted on the matter and a letter was

forwarded to Carr Construction advising them that we are affirming our Board's decision on this matter.

**Wal-Mart Transit Pullout:**

Phase I of this project is completed. SARTA staff is still waiting for response from Wal-Mart regarding the sidewalk for the pullout. We will continue our effort toward reaching some agreement regarding this matter. We will be unable to close this grant until this issue is resolved.

**Trapeze:**

This project is moving well after earlier challenges with some of the components. We are looking forward to beginning field-testing on some of the Paratransit vehicles soon. We are hopeful that these tests will prove successful to enable the system integrators to begin installation for the rest of the fleet.

**APTA:**

Mr. Odimgbe made the Board aware that he has been appointed to APTA'S Best Transit Award committee. This committee reviews and recommends agencies for Best Transit Awards; the appointment letter is included in the Board Packet. He stated that this would grant him the ability to see what other transit systems are doing. The only downside to this appointment will be that SARTA will not be eligible for any awards as long as their Executive Director is on this committee.

**State Funding For Transit:**

Transit agencies throughout Ohio continue to lobby for more funding from the State of Ohio. The situation is such that member agencies will need approximately \$106,570,000 in 2007 and \$107,447,000 in 2008 in local match to meet members' replacement schedules. We will be partnering with the MPO'S (what does this stand for) umbrella organization to host a legislative conference on March 7, 2007 in Columbus to apprise all legislators in the plight of transit in Ohio.

**SARTA'S New Phone Number:**

Mr. Odimgbe informed the Board of SARTA'S new number, (330) 47SARTA. This number is a marketing tool so that riders can remember the agency number easily. This will not cost the agency to incorporate the new number. For the time being, the old number will still grant you access to our phone system.

### **VIII. For Your Information**

Mr. Odingbe focused on the letter and cost of installing extra equipment on our current bus build. SARTA staff spends approximately 2½-weeks installing special equipment on the buses upon delivery. Meyers Equipment, the bus manufacturer will now be responsible for installation of this equipment so that when the buses arrive here at SARTA they will be readily available for usage.

Mr. Odingbe also announced that all new buses would come equipped with bus racks. However they will not be placed on buses until we have enough bus racks for our fleet.

Mr. Odingbe noted in any industry, letters of appreciation and commendations are rare, yet they are very much appreciated. That is why whenever SARTA receives letters of compliment; it is placed in the FYI section.

Mr. Odingbe stated the proposed increase of fare was in today's Canton Repository. He informed the Board that nothing is official yet until the meetings with the public have been conducted. These meetings will provide the public with the proposed fare increase and reasons for the increase, while offering them an opportunity to provide feedback to the agency. Upon completion of our interaction meetings and public hearings, we will review all information and make any necessary changes and final recommendation to the Board.

### **IX. Resolutions**

- A. Resolution Authorizing The Executive Director/CEO To Advertise For Bids For The Rental Of Maintenance Department Uniforms And Floor Mats And Purchase Of Uniforms For The Transportation Department

Mr. Warren moved for the adoption of this resolution. Mr. Bixler seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

- B. Resolution To Affirm Authorization For The Executive Director To Enter Into A Contract With Alliance Ventures Inc. For The Sum Of \$941,713.63 For The Complete Construction Of The Alliance Transit Center

Mr. Warren moved for the adoption of this resolution. Mr. Bixler seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

**X. Election Of Officers**

Mr. Bixler announced that he and Mr. Bond nominates the same slate of officers for the 2007 year, Mr. DeGraff as President and Ms. Johnson as Vice-President.

Mr. Warren moved for the adoption of officers. Mr. Moore seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

**XI. Adjournment**

Mr. Warren moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 PM. Mr. Moore seconded the motion.

<p>The Board's next Work Session will be held on February 14, 2007 @ 6:00 PM in the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Board Room of SARTA.</p>
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