

**Stark Area Regional Transit Authority
Board Of Trustees Meeting Minutes
June 25, 2008 @ 6:00PM
Gateway Board Room**

Mr. Charles DeGraff called the meeting to order @ 6:00pm.

Attendance (Quorum present)

Board

Charles DeGraff (Board President), Nancy Johnson (Vice-President), Phyllis Beyers, James Reinhard, Fred Moore, Amanda Fletcher, Ron Macala

Excused

Jerry Bixler, Chet Warren

Staff

Charles Odingbe (Executive Director/CEO), Carole Kuczynski (Director, Finance), Jenni Alborn (Proline Reservationist), Teresa Thompson (Director, Transportation), James Warner (Planning & Community Outreach Manager), Charles Koppes (Project manager Assistant), Linda Stutler (Customer Service Supervisor), Tom Williams (Transportation Manager), Gary Hiles (Transportation Supervisor), Tammy Marie Chavers (Executive Assistant)

Legal Representation

Robert Murphy (Black McCuskey)

Other

Karl Lucas (SCATS)

Mr. DeGraff started the meeting with the introduction of our newest Board member, Mr. James Reinhard. Mr. Reinhard was appointed by Mayor William Healy to replace and complete the remainder of Mr. Rudner's term as a SARTA Board of Trustee. Mr. Reinhard provided the board with some information on himself including the fact that he is retired from Canton City Schools where he served as their treasurer until retirement. He was subsequently appointed to Chair the Finance committee, a position previously held by Mr. Rudner.

Ms. Jenni Johnson, Proline Reservationist and member of the Middle Management Team, presented a slide show to the Board. The Middle Management Team has been working on the history of public transportation in Stark County and the evolution of SARTA as Stark County's Regional Transit Agency. All work regarding this project was done by SARTA staff under the supervision and guidance of the Middle Management Team.

Also, Ms. Johnson took the opportunity to inform the Board of the agency's picnic scheduled for Sunday, June 30, 2008 at Atwood Lake. All Board members are welcome to attend.

Departmental Reports

- **Transportation** - Teresa Thompson (As submitted)

Mr. Gary Hiles, Transportation Supervisor, presented some recent activities of Transportation Supervisors. These activities included:

- Training- 8 new drivers, new farebox procedure, preventable accidents and the Smith System Training, and Trapeze's OPS program
- Dispatch-cleaning out file cabinets, creating updated folders, and creating documents and forms to simplify day to day operations
- Compliant/Compliment-explained the process between the receiving of complaints/compliments to responding for resolution

The Paratransit report indicated a decline in ridership. Staff informed the Board that this decline is due to migration of some riders from Paratransit to fixed-route. Staff is not concerned about the decline in ridership in this particular area since we are recording increases in the fixed-route sector. Staff is actually working to encourage this shift from the more expensive Paratransit rides to the fixed-route. We continue to provide rides to any and all qualified Paratransit riders requesting service.

Staff informed the Board that all new buses procured by the agency come equipped with eight cameras.

- **Maintenance** – Mark Finnicum (As submitted)
- **Finance** – Carole Kuczynski (As submitted)
Ms. Kuczynski announced that SARTA received the cleanest audit ever. There were no findings and/or management letter of concern by the Auditors. She informed the Board that the Finance department is in its final stages of completing the CAFR.
- **HR/Safety** – Kelly Zachary (As submitted)
- **Planning &Community Outreach** – James Warner (As submitted)

Communications From The Executive Director/CEO...

Ridership

Mr. Odingbe made known that SARTA was featured in a Wall Street Journal article regarding the impact of rising fuel prices on public transportation and how agencies are coping with this crisis.

Alliance

FTA continues to deliberate on the environmental issues regarding the Alliance Transit Center Project. They have not given us any time lines for concluding their review. Staff will be meeting with Alliance Ventures to discuss how to proceed with this project.

Ms. Beyers announced that Fridays in Alliance have been declared “Fuel-Less Fridays” by Alliance Mayor Tony Middleton. Alliance citizens are encouraged to ride the bus or carpool to save on energy.

Ms. Johnson commended SARTA staff for their efforts on “How To Ride The Bus” pamphlets.

Trapeze

Currently, thirty-nine buses have fully functional systems installed. We continue to inch toward project completion at approximately one bus per day.

Budget revision

SARTA staff projects that a budget revision will be ready to present to the Board in July. The goal is to have approval for revisions in August. SARTA staff is working diligently to stretch dollars to accommodate rising expenditures. Mr. Odingbe encouraged the Board to be prepared to make some tough decisions concerning the budget. The fare increase have helped the agency with weathering the budget crunch, but we have more work to do for the remainder of the year and going into 2009.

OPTA

The Ohio Public Transit Association (OPTA) held its annual conference and trade show in Cleveland. Mr. Odingbe who was a presenter at the conference was reelected Vice-President for OPTA. Bill Lhota General Manager for COTA in Columbus was elected President.

Employee of the Month

Mr. Bill Jenkins was recognized as the employee of the month.

Adjournment

Ms. Johnson motioned to adjourn the meeting @ 7:19pm. Mr. Moore seconded the motion.