

**Stark Area Regional Transit Authority
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
July 15, 2009 @ 6:00 PM
Gateway Board Room**

Mr. DeGraff called the meeting to order at 6:07pm.

Attendance

Board (Quorum present)

Chuck DeGraff (President), Nancy Johnson (Vice-President), John Beckem, Phyllis Beyers, Jerry Bixler, Amanda Fletcher, Ron Macala, James Reinhard, Chet Warren

Staff

Tom Bernabei (Executive Director/CEO, Interim), James Warner (Planning & Community Outreach Manager), Everett Todd (Transportation Planner), Shannon Rine (Transit Supervisor), Donna Davis (Tranist Supervisor), Gary Burnhouse (Coach Operator), Mark Finnicum (Director, Maintenance), Matt Jacob (Coach Operator), Lynn Heddleson (Training Supervisor), Rosemary Adams (Coach Operator), Tonya Ando (Coach Operator), Michael Wolfe (Coach Operator), Jim Emmons (Coach Operator), Tom Williams (Transportation Manager), William Mercer (Maintenance Technician), Teresa Thompson (Director, Transportation), Bobbie Barnett (Customer Service Representative), Lorne Anderson (Coach Operator), Mike Dillon (Coach Operator), Michelle Harrison (Transit Supervisor), Richard Kyle (Planning & Community Outreach Assistant Manager/Marketing), Jeff Heimberger (IT Administrator), John Ferrell (Maintenance Manager), Suzette Stiles (Coach Operator), Kelly Zachary (HR/Safety Manager), Chrissy Wey (HR/Safety Administrator), Omar Abdullah (Coach Operator/Union President), Ernie Hawk (Coach Operator), Tammy Marie Brown (Executive Assistant)

Legal Counsel

Gust Callas (Black McCuskey)

Other

Robert Wang (Canton Repository), Lou Maholic (Local 1880), Reginald Grant (Citizen), Regina Ayers (Citizen), Joe Lee (Citizen), Marilyn Jackson (Citizen), Linda Bailey (Citizen)

Approval/Correction of Minutes

June 24, 2009 ~ Meeting

Mr. Macala motioned to adopt the meeting minutes. Mr. Warren seconded the motion; motion passed unanimously.

Resolutions

A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE USE OF CELLULAR PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY TO INCLUDE THE USE OF GPS DEVICES

This amendment adds to the previously approved Policy permission for operators to use GPS searching and mapping devices, which was not included in the Policy passed on June 24, 2009.

Mr. Warren motioned to adopt the resolution. Ms. Fletcher seconded the motion; resolution passed unanimously.

A RESOLUTION APPROVING REVISIONS TO THE SARTA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Mr. Bernabei advised the Board that the Executive Team has been making an ongoing review of the operational structure of their various departments. This, in part, arises out of his observations for the necessity for changes in responsibility for certain functions; and in part, out of the Board's request at the last meeting for review for more streamlined departmental organization.

Each department head presented the Board with their proposed changes for their department and answered questions from the Board. Copies of the presentations made by each department head are attached to these minutes.

*****Executive Session*****

7:10 – 9:00PM

Employment Compensation, and Layoffs of Public Employees

Ms. Fletcher motioned to enter executive session. Mr. Warren seconded the motion. Roll Call. All answered "yes." Mr. Bernabei asked the Executive Team to stay. Mr. Warren motioned to conclude the executive session. Ms. Fletcher seconded the motion. Roll call. All answered "yes."

Mr. Warren motioned to adopt the resolution. Mr. Fletcher seconded the motion.

Ms Beyers motioned to table the resolution. She stated her concern that this reorganization should be held until the new CEO is in place because he may want to make his own reorganization.

Mr. Bernabei requested that the Board approve these proposed revisions. He recognizes that the new CEO may propose changes and these changes can be changed by the new CEO as necessary. The revisions are based on the

recommendations of each department head individually and jointly and they are needed for better operations of the Agency as a whole.

The Resolution was passed with one dissent (Phylis Beyers.)

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING AN AMENDED 2009 BUDGET

Mr. Bernabei reported on the continuing decline in sales tax revenues. May, 2009 revenues declined 9.4% over the same period in 2008; June revenues declined 8.4%; and July revenues declined 17.5%. (July, 2009 receipts are based on sales which occurred in April, 2009.) He is currently projecting 2009 sales tax revenues in the amount of \$10.77 million compared to actual receipts of \$11.78 million in 2008. The current 2009 projection is \$1.6 million below the budgeted sales tax revenues contained in the 2009 approved budget. Approximately \$636,000 in expenditures have been eliminated from the budget through operational cuts and attrition in positions in Administration. There remains; however, a projected deficit of \$1.012 million. Mr. Bernabei presented a menu of budgetary choices to balance the budget, which include implementing a fare increase, a combination of layoffs and service reductions and several one-time adjustments. A copy of the proposed amended budget with menu of adjustments is attached to these minutes.

Mr. Bernabei emphasized that the budget review needs to be ongoing month to month and will change based upon future sales tax receipts. He expressed concern that operational cuts need to be made, not only to balance the 2009 budget shortfall but also to address future anticipated budgetary shortfalls. SARTA's expenses over true revenues have been increasing significantly for at least five years with no substantial adjustments in base operational costs (services or personnel.) The budgetary shortfalls have been primarily met by increasing preventive maintenance drawdowns from the Federal 5307 capital grant, which in turn has set scheduled bus replacements behind schedule. Fortunately, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds and potential other related grants this year will help to put bus replacements back on schedule.

After discussion, the Board recommended a series of adjustments which include the layoff of seventeen full-time Coach Operators and two part-time Coach Operators. In addition, the previously adopted fare increase will be implemented. Sunday Service and Holiday Service will be eliminated. Reduction to frequency on routes 102, 105, 120, and partial 126 will be imposed, as well as the Inner-line of routes 111/110.

Dr. Beckem motioned to adopt the resolution. Mr. Warren seconded the motion; resolution passed unanimously.

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

(1) TO AMEND THE LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN (TIP), THE STATE OF OHIO TRANSPORTATION PLAN (STIP) AND THE APPLICATION FOR AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA) GRANT FUNDS TO THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION TO AMEND THE ARRA FUNDING APPLICATION FROM 100% CAPITAL EXPENDITURES ONLY TO 90% CAPITAL AND 10% OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURES AND TO AMEND THE PURCHASE OF BUSES FROM NINE 35' DIESEL-ELECTRIC BUSES TO TWELVE 35' DIESEL BUSES; AND

(2) TO ENTER INTO AN AMENDED CONTRACT WITH GILLIG, INC. FOR THE PURCHASE OF TWELVE 35' DIESEL BUSES AT A COST OF \$4,256,988.

Mr. Bernabei requested the Board to reconsider its previously approved actions concerning the ARRA grant of \$5.1 million. The previously approved grant applications provided that 100% of the funds be used for capital purchases for 9 hybrid buses and a bus wash system. He is currently recommending that the grant application be changed to use 10% of the grant for operational costs (\$514,000) and the balance for the purchase of 12 standard diesel buses, in lieu of hybrids, and to purchase the bus wash system.

Mr. Finnicum gave a presentation on the cost comparison on purchasing diesel buses versus hybrid buses. Mr. Finnicum recommended that SARTA purchase diesel buses and use bio-diesel fuel, which should provide better fuel mileage than hybrids at significantly less capital costs.

Ms. Fletcher motioned to pass the resolution. Mr. Macala seconded the motion; resolution passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Mr. Warren motioned to adjourn the meeting @ 9:52pm. Ms. Fletcher seconded the motion.