

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
MEMPHIS AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY
April 28, 2014

CALL TO ORDER: A regular meeting of the MATA Board of Commissioners was called to order at 3:30 p.m. on Monday April 28, 2014 in the MATA Board Room at 1370 Levee Road by Chairman Sean Healy.

BOARD ROLL CALL:

Present: Chairman, Sean Healy
Commissioners: Charles Pickard; Lauren Taylor; John Vergos; Andre Gibson (via phone)

Absent: Mattie Carter, Karl Birkholz, Marion McClendon

Quorum: Yes

Staff: Lawson Albritton; Frances Boyland; Yuri Chambers; Darryl Covington; Linda Eskridge; Lavelle Fitch; Don Forsee; Tom Fox; John Lancaster; Willie Lewis; Glen Lockhart; Shelia Maclin; Maury Miles; Gilbert Noble; Glenda Wade; Tommy Wallace

Guests: **MCIL Attendees:** Terrance Brown; Brittany Carter; Christina Clift; Eloise Collins; Janice Craven; Deborah Cunningham; Bobbie Fields; Michelle Ivery; Russell Jones; Savannah Morrison; Tena Murphy; Vonnie Peeler; Josue Rodriguez; Sher Stewart; Tara Tate, (also with Memphis Federation of Blind); Rosetta Turner

Memphis Bus Riders Union: Bennett Foster; Stevie Johnson; Schaeffer Mallory; Shahin Samiei; Brad Watkins; Shelia Williams

Others: Kwasi Agyakwa, MPO; Ryan Alpert, University of Memphis; Ryan Bratney, University of Memphis; Samantha Bryson, The Commercial Appeal; Ricky Burns; Lyndia Crawford, City of Memphis Law Division; WREG-TV; Sabrina Hall, WREG-TV; Stanley Holland, Bus Rider; Yalonda James, The Commercial Appeal; Aury Kangelos, TDOT; Johnnie Mosley, Citizens for Better Services; James Robinson; Eddie Settles, backinrivercity.com; Henry Wilson, MATA Retiree;

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Vergos made a motion for approval of the March 24, 2014 Board Minutes. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

ACTION ITEMS:

A. FINANCE COMMITTEE

1. Resolution to Authorize the Purchase of Diesel Fuel – Res. No. 14-22

Discussion: Mr. Maury Miles, Sr. Manager of Grants and Procurement, presented this resolution to the MATA Board. At the February Board Meeting, the Board authorized staff to go through a new procurement process for fuel. Staff asked vendors to provide quotes on a weekday basis for a period from April 29 – July 31, 2014 in order to lock in up to 1.5MM gallons of diesel fuel. MATA estimates annual usage for next fiscal year will be 1.8MM gallons. Staff is looking at the potential for buying the difference of 300,000 gallons off the spot market during the next fiscal year. Seven companies were interested in participating in the new process. MATA's current contract expires on June 30, 2014. Staff is asking Board for authorization to beginning watching the quotes, and if the prices do not exceed \$3.05, staff will look at the possibility of locking in the contract at 1.5MM gallons with one of the seven pre-certified companies. **Mr. Vergos moved that Resolution No. 14-22 be approved. Mr. Pickard seconded the motion and the resolution was unanimously approved.**

2. Resolution to Authorize the Purchase of Unleaded Gasoline – Res. No. 14-23

Discussion: Mr. Maury Miles presented this resolution to the MATA Board. Staff estimates a usage of 50,000 gallons for the year. Three of the seven companies chose not to participate in the fixed-price for 50,000 gallons of unleaded gasoline. From April 29 – July 31, 2014 staff will be looking at hopefully locking in a fixed price for 50,000 gallons of unleaded gasoline with the four companies that agreed to participate in the new procurement process. Again, if additional gallons are needed, staff will look at purchasing it on the spot market from whoever is lowest. **Mr. Vergos moved that Resolution No. 14-23 be approved. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion and the resolution was unanimously approved.**

B. SERVICE AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Resolution to Approve Service Changes - Res. No. 14-24

Discussion: Mr. Darryl Covington, Manager of Scheduling, presented the five regular fixed route changes that staff solicited public comments on. Mr. Covington showed a presentation on each of the five routes, and the proposed changes as well as maps on each proposed route change. Dr. Fox talked about the proposed elimination of game shuttles for basketball and football games. Ridership averages about 1% of attendance at these events. Dr. Fox stated that we operated 70 games this year from six locations. We varied from 3 buses to 19 buses. Total estimated loss per season for all shuttle service combined was \$86,000. The fare for the service is \$8.00 per round trip. With budget situation and the constraints on the fares we can charge, staff is recommending elimination of all game shuttles. This is a service that staff feels can be provided in other ways, such as by private charter bus companies. Staff did review other peer transit agencies in regards to game shuttles, and found none that do basketball shuttles, and only a couple that do football shuttles.

MATA received numerous comments in favor of keeping the shuttles. **Mr. Pickard moved that Resolution No. 14-24 be put on the floor for discussion. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion.**

Chairman Healy recognized Mr. Stanley Holland, who requested to speak on this resolution. Mr. Stanley Holland resides 228 Holland Avenue, Memphis, TN 38109. He stated that his concern is with the #57.

The #12 route will allow for some of the people to ride; however, the passengers will be more served if MATA would add 10,000 more feet to the route, which it would allow for the people that live along First Street, Davant and part of the Fairview area. This would be the old #31 route. There is more ridership in that area than any other area. Mr. Holland stated that from his understanding they would have to catch three buses to get to the #42, which is a real problem. He asked if the Board and staff could propose something better. Mr. Covington stated that this request would create additional mileage, and ridership did not support this. Mr. Vergos asked if we could get the route changes in context with the entire city, as well as enhance the graphics more on the maps. Mr. Pickard stated in regards to the game shuttle, did we propose a \$45,000 advertising package to the Grizzlies. Dr. Fox stated there has been conversation with them off and on throughout the year; however we did not propose it on this time. **Mr. Pickard made a motion to amend Res. No. 14-24 to remove the recommendation to cancel all game shuttles. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion.** Mr. Pickard suggested a \$45,000 advertising package to the Memphis Grizzlies and a \$30,000 package to the University of Memphis, as well as with Liberty Bowl and Southern Heritage Classic. Ms. Taylor stated that perhaps MATA staff, Grizzlies and University of Memphis could get together to discuss this matter and talk about what the options are, as all responsibilities should not fall on MATA. Mr. Gibson suggested that staff put something together to show what it would look like for weekend service only for game shuttles, and provide some alternatives for the purchase of advertising. Ms. Taylor asked if we received any funding from Bartlett or Germantown, and if not, could staff consider reaching out to those areas. Dr. Fox stated that we do not receive funding, but could reach out to them as well. Mr. Vergos wanted to disclose the fact that the Rendezvous Restaurant does have a contract with the Grizzlies, but he feels comfortable voting on this matter unless the Board has any objection. There was no objection. Mr. Ryan Alpert with University of Memphis was present and stated that he is in support of the Board tabling the discussion and bringing all the parties together to come up with a timely resolution for all parties, if at all possible. Chairman Healy first called for the Board's approval to amend Res. No. 14-24 to remove the recommendation to cancel all game shuttles. The Board unanimously approved. Chairman Healy then called for the vote on Res. No. 14-24 as amended. The resolution was unanimously approved. Chairman Healy's recommended to staff that we have this done by the end of June, 2014.

2. Resolution to Award a Contract to Trends Group, LLC for the Cleaning and Maintenance of Trolley Stations Alvin Pearson - Res. No. 14-25

Discussion: Ms. Frances Boyland, Sr. Contract Administrator presented this resolution to the Board. This was advertised in the Daily News, and on our MATA web site. Four bids were received and three were determined responsive. Out of three responsive bids, staff recommended Trends Group, LLC, who submitted the lowest and responsive and responsible bid in an amount not to exceed \$160,500 for five years. The DBE goal was set at 5% and Trends Group exceeded that goal at 100%. **Mr. Vergos moved that Res. No. 14-25 be put on the floor for discussion. Mr. Pickard seconded the motion.** Mr. Vergos commented on the fact that the lowest bidder was so significantly lower than the top bidder. Mr. Pearson stated that he is currently doing the work, and apparently feels that they can continue to do it at this rate. They have an excellent record thus far, as staff has not had any complaints. Resolution No. 14-25 was unanimously approved.

3. Resolution Authorizing Free Fares for all Customers with Bicycles on May 16, 2014 - Res. No. 14-26

Discussion: Ms. Niketa Reed, Marketing Manager, presented this resolution to the Board. This is an annual event hosted by the Downtown Memphis Commission. MATA generally serves as sponsors offering free bike rides on that day. On an average day, we usually have about 70 riders and on that particular day last year, it was about 75-76 riders who had an opportunity to ride free. **Ms. Taylor moved that this resolution be put on the floor for discussion. Mr. Vergos seconded the motion.** Chairman Healy asked if any different marketing is being done to get those numbers higher on the free fare day than we see on a regular day.

Niketa stated that Ms. Burton is working on some new marketing strategies. Chooch also stated that he believes the numbers have increased significantly every year. Resolution No. 14-26 was unanimously approved.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Gil Noble

March 2014 (Nine months of the fiscal year)

Revenues are reflecting an accurate position compared to budget. Because the federal preventive maintenance funds did not come in March, the City did have to bridge the \$3MM gap from April 2 until April 16, 2014. This enabled us to proceed and not run out of money. Expenses for March were within \$27,000 of budget, so we continue to run about \$1MM unfavorable to budget. This is still attributed to the \$700,000 that we did not budget for emissions retrofit of several buses. During the month of April, we did receive the funds that were outstanding for this initiative. Revenue funds were received and we budgeted for March in April. On a year-to-date basis, we will be close to budget in April.

Salary/Wages and Healthcare costs combined for the quarter were over budget by \$174,000. Services and material cost were favorable to budget by \$43,000. These constitute roughly 80% of the out of pocket dollars budgeted for the fiscal year. All three quarters combined were showing that we are roughly \$1MM above budget so far this year. Mr. Healy mentioned the big jump in the healthcare cost for the March quarter compared to the previous two fiscal years. Mr. Noble stated that healthcare cost is hard to predict because MATA is self-insured. Ms. Taylor inquired about the high December service and material costs. Mr. Noble stated this is due to the \$700,000 that we did not budget for the emission retrofit. Mr. Vergos mentioned the discussion from the last Board Meeting regarding low ridership for January and February and hoped to see a change for March as well. However, in looking at passenger fares, we seem to be failing below in revenues for March. Mr. Noble stated that line item has been unfavorable to budget consistently all year. He stated he believes it is more likely the service reduction in October and under-estimated the impact when we did the budget.

MARKETING REPORT

April 2014

A copy of the marketing report was forwarded to the MATA Board prior to the Board Meeting. Ms. Niketa Reed presented the marketing report to the Board.

Mobile Apps

Niketa stated that staff issued an RFP for a mobile application development. Deadline for offers is Friday May 9, 2014. This will bring real time data into a trip planning tool.

Hybrid Buses

MATA received 15 hybrid electric buses, and staff ordered them in green. This is part of our new campaign that we are still in the process of developing.

Trolley Unplugged - Local artists will be on the Main Street Trolley from now to the end of the summer. Passengers can ride free every Friday and Saturday from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

Car-Free Challenge - MATA was selected as feature participants in this challenge. Employees rode buses, carpooled, and some bike riding took place as well. Dr. Fox, Interim general manager committed 15 days to the challenge and succeeded. Dr. Fox rode the bus to work and biked to work as well. Pictures are posted on the car-free Memphis blog. MATA riders got a chance to participate as well by submitting a picture of themselves on the bus, the trolley, or at a bus or trolley stop. Their names were entered into a drawing for a 31-day pass. MATA wanted to make sure they were involved as well.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES REPORT (March)

Dr. Fox stated for the month of March, 11 out of the 20 measures exceeded the target, and two were within 10% of the target. We would have had one more, but because of the accident on the trolley line with the truck hitting the catenary wire we lost a little ridership in the first week of March. Of the 20 measures, seven did not meet their target. Eleven measures are the highest number that we have achieved within the last few months, so we are showing some progress. Within the next couple of months, staff will give the Board a six-month trend on the progress in the performance measures. Chairman Healy mentioned a concern with wait time on customer calls, as it is continually heading in the wrong direction.

Dr. Fox stated it has been a staffing issue. Within the next couple of months the staffing issue should be resolved, and we should see the wait time improve. The other part of the performance measures consisted of a power point presentation on miles between chargeable road calls. Glen Lockhart, Director of Bus Maintenance, presented from the bus side and Warren Henderson, Manager of Trolley Maintenance presented from the trolley side. Mr. Vergos stated that MATA has to put these vehicles out every day, no matter what. He feels that staff is doing a good job and the Board appreciates that, and hopes the general public appreciates it as well.

Dr. Fox addressed Mr. Gibson on his request for a presentation on the customer service aspect of operator training. Ms. Burton will make this presentation upon her return, hopefully by next Board Meeting or the end of June meeting.

INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Dr. Fox forwarded a copy of the general manager's report prior to the Board Meeting. He went over some highlights of the report. Board Members received a copy a Commercial Appeal article showing that the Airways Transit Center received another architectural award from the Memphis Chapter of AIA. This is the 3rd architectural award the project has won.

MATA received some good media coverage to show off our transit signal priority project on Poplar Avenue. We have demonstrated a 20% improvement in travel time on Poplar Avenue.

The Goodlett Farms route started Monday, (May 21, 2014), but ridership has been very light. However, Conduit Global has not moved in their building yet. Timetables and informational materials have been sent to the apartment complexes and other employers along the route.

MATA will have our budget hearing with the Memphis City Council Committee on April 29, 2014 at 1:45 to 2:30pm. The mayor has recommended a \$1.5MM increase from last year's budget, which will basically bring us back to FY13 levels.

Dr. Fox participated in a bus tour with Secretary Foxx with U.S. DOT and EPA Administrator McCarthy. There was also an afternoon roundtable, in which Mr. Andre Gibson participated in the roundtable as well. We drove them by the Airways Transit Center, and we showed off our transit signal priority project as part of the tour that was taken on a MATA hybrid bus.

Alvin Pearson, Asst. GM, talked about the trolley fleet situation. Federal inspectors from TDOT and an inspector hired by FTA will be on the property April 29, 2014 to inspect the last trolley fire. Mr. Pearson stated they also reached out to APTA and they are going to send antique trolley experts in at a later date. The insurance company has inspected the trolley, and it will probably be totaled. Mr. Pearson gave a brief report last month on when the incident where the truck hit the catenary line. We lost approximately \$35,000 during that time period, along with loss of ridership as well. A written report or an email report will be given next month or perhaps earlier, to let the Board know what the findings will be. Mr. Pickard inquired about a report on the first trolley fire. Mr. Pearson stated that TDOT has signed off on it, and he would get the Board a copy of the report, as well as the corrective actions.

John Lancaster gave a brief presentation, which is a follow up to the service standards presentation given by him a few months ago. This presentation showed the eight proposed service standard concepts as it relates to the service changes that were approved by the MATA Board today (4/28/14).

The next step is to propose the service standards in more detail to the Board and advertise for public comment, and hopefully in either June or July get these adopted.

SPEAKERS:

Several speakers requested to speak. Each having three minutes to express themselves.

Ms. Bobbie Fields -3751 Prescott Road, Memphis, TN 38118 – Ms. Fields is part of the Specialized Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC). Ms. Fields presented a list of recommendations relating to MATApplus from the committee for the MATA Board and staff to review and address. A meeting will be scheduled with STAC members to go over the recommendations before the end of the month.

Mr. Josue Rodriguez – Ms. Fields addressed most of the concerns from Mr. Rodriguez. He asked for a timeline from the Board on when they would receive a reply on the recommendations. Mr. Pickard is the chairman of the ADA Committee, and will plan to meet with MATA staff and STAC members to address the concerns. A STAC Committee meeting is scheduled for early June, 2014, and MATA staff will commit to a meeting with the STAC committee by the end of May, 2014.

Ms. Christina Clift, 4824 Tamarock, Millington, TN 38053 – Representing the Memphis Federation for the Blind, which is a national organization of people who are blind or visually impaired. Her concern is the poor service that individuals with disabilities are receiving when riding MATApplus. We know that MATA is under tremendous funding constraints. We are very patient when it comes to riding the bus. She stated they are here today because they don't want to have to contact FTA to get better service. At times the service has gotten better but in past week or so it has gone down. She is not speaking for herself, but on behalf of those that have to wait on buses for 2 hours and not making it to their jobs on time. Ms. Clift stated she took note of the discussion of the improvements on the trolleys, they would like to have that same attention to be put toward MATApplus, and maybe they could get some improvements and better service.

Savannah Morris, 273 Johnson Circle, Memphis, TN 38112 – Ms. Morris' concerns are with the MATApplus service. Ms. Morris has been riding MATApplus for over 30 years, and it was much better then, than now. She stated she is always ready to go, but the bus is never there on time. She has waiting up to 3 hours for a pick up. It really needs a lot of improvements. If you just look back to where we started from, perhaps you can see the difference in how MATApplus service has gone down tremendously.

Mr. Russell Jones - 3295 Woodhollow Dr., Memphis, TN 38118 - Mr. Jones stated that they will provide staff with all of the recommendations they are recommending. However, one in particular is we would like for the managers of MATApplus to assure that current and future operators be given the opportunity to go through a refresher course on sensitivity training. There are a lot of operators that do not have compassion for persons with disabilities, as well as visually impaired individuals. He stated that during the week he gets fairly good service; however, on Sundays he was informed that he would not be able to ride MATApplus to church. However, it has been noted that MATApplus buses have been seen in the same apartments in which he lives. He asked Dr. Fox and Mr. Albritton to check into this.

Ms. Tena Murphy - 6580 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN 38138 - Ms. Murphy voiced some concerns about MATApplus to include late buses. They are either too early or too late. They have even been more than 1 ½ hours late. Her other concern is the air on the buses needs to be turned down, the bus is too cold. She asked the Board and staff to look into that as well.

Chairman Healy thanked all of the speakers for attending today and voicing their concerns with MATA, specifically with MATApplus. Chairman Healy asked staff to include MATApplus as a focus on our service update for next month's performance measures.

Mr. Vergos asked if staff is aware of how long a MATApplus rider has been waiting on a bus, or do the riders have to make a complaint before staff becomes aware of it? Dr. Fox stated that staff is aware before the rider makes the complaint. Mr. Vergos also asked if there is some type of refund or incentive given the rider considering how long of a wait time they experience. He also asked is this part of MATA's policy, or could we consider it, or is it even legal? Dr. Fox stated that we can give this some consideration. Chairman Healy suggested this be part of the discussion at the STAC meeting that will be scheduled with staff and Chooch before the end of May.

Ms. Vonnie Peeler, representing MCIL and University of Memphis - Ms. Peeler was basically trying to understand where the MATApplus late issues are really coming from. Is it staff, management, or is it the times that the customers are calling in to schedule trips. She posed this question because she is a former Memphis City Schools bus driver, and is familiar with this type of issue. There were times, as drivers, they were labeled as being late, however, that was not always the case, and they were not always at fault. She felt this is something that should be looked at more closely. Chairman Healy stated those are great questions and concerns. Again these are questions that can be discussed at the STAC committee meeting as well.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

The Board Retreat is on hold due to some changes to the MATA Board of Commissioners. Also Chairman Healy stated we are in the continuing process of selecting a new general manager. A meeting will be scheduled for May 9, 2014 with the search firm and they are working to narrow the candidates down to 3 to 5 candidates.

The next regular Board Meeting falls on Memorial Day holiday. Ms. Eskridge polled the MATA Board earlier to see if they were in agreement for the May meeting to be held on Monday June 2, 2014. Having the meeting later rather than earlier would allow staff ample time to prepare necessary resolutions for the meeting. The Board agreed to this date.

Chairman Healy called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Vergos motion that the meeting be adjourned. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.

Mr. Sean Healy
Vice Chairman of the Board