

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING**  
**MEMPHIS AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY**  
**February 25, 2013**

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A regular meeting of the MATA Board of Commissioners was held at 3:30 p.m. on Monday February 25, 2013 at 1370 Levee Road in the MATA Board Room.

**BOARD PRESENT:** Chairman, Sean Healy  
Commissioners: Karl Birkholz; Mattie Carter; Charles Pickard;  
Andre Gibson; John Vergos (late); Marion McClendon

**STAFF:** Lawson Albritton; Ashley Best; Frances Boyland; Alison Burton; Darryl Covington; Gary Crawford; Lavelle Fitch; Don Forsee; Tom Fox; William Hudson; John Lancaster; Glen Lockhart; Shelia Maclin; Maury Miles; Gilbert Noble; Alvin Pearson;

**OTHERS:** Rexcey Bowers, MCIL; Bryant Branch, MCIL; Bennett Foster, MBRU; Aury Kangelos, TDOT; David Mason, MBRU; Josue Rodriguez, MCIL; Eddie Settles, backinriver.city.com; Larry Smith, Betty Robinson, MBRU; John Paul Shaffer, Memphis MPO; Henry Wilson, MATA Retiree

Chairman Healy called the meeting to order and called for Board roll call. The secretary, Linda Eskridge called the Board roll. Six Board Members were present; one Board Member John Vergos was late. There was a quorum for the meeting. Chairman Healy called for approval of the January 28, 2013 Board Minutes. Mr. Birkholz made a motion for approval. Mr. Gibson seconded the motion and the January Board minutes were unanimously approved.

**BUSINESS & REPORTS**

**A. FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**1. Resolution to Award an On-call contract to Tolar Manufacturing Company for Bus Shelters - Res. No. 13-08**

**Discussion:** MATA issued an RFP to purchase bus shelters on an as needed basis over five years to supplement what Clear Channel is doing. MATA owns about 50 or 60 shelters that do not have advertising on them and are in poor condition. MATA wants to start replacing those shelters and estimated doing about 20 per year, based on budget. MATA received five proposals, which the committee met and evaluated, and recommended Tolar Manufacturing Company, which was number one under technical ranking and number two under price ranking. There was no DBE goal on this because we decided to purchase off the shelf shelters and come back later and do an RFP for installation, which we do plan to have a goal on.

Staff is asking for a total amount up to a maximum of \$577,050.00 over five years. Pictures were made available to the Board as an example; however a full list will be supplied to the MATA Board before purchase. **Mr. Vergos moved that Resolution No. 13-08 be approved. Mr. Gibson seconded the motion and the resolution was unanimously approved.**

## **B. SERVICE AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **1. Resolution to Amend MATA Speakers Guidelines for Board of Commissioners Meeting - Res. No. 13-09**

**Discussion:** Dr. Fox stated that what's in the package is what was sent out to the Board, which is self-explanatory. MATA's policy was amended to reflect some items from the Memphis City Council's speaking policy. **Chooch made an amendment to delete the last sentence in Item #1 that reads "Persons may speak on no more than two (2) agenda items." Mr. Gibson seconded the amendment. After hearing both speakers the amendment was unanimously approved. Mr. Vergos moved that Resolution No. 13-08 be approved. Mr. McClendon seconded the motion and the resolution was unanimously approved.**

Before the final vote on Res. No. 13-09, two persons requested to speak on this agenda item.

1) **Josue Rodriguez** – *He stated that he personally likes what MATA is trying to implement regarding the Speakers Policy. He feels it would give Board Members an idea of how people will be affected by the decisions made by the Board. He is in support of the changes in the policy.*

2) **Bennett Foster** – *He would like to have the agenda sent to the public before the meeting. He does not want a summarized agenda, but the same agenda that the Board receives. Mr. Healy stated that he and Ms. Eskridge spoke about that earlier and we will get together to determine how to get this out to the public. We will come back to the next meeting with some specifics on receiving this information in advance of the Board Meeting.*

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mr. Gil Noble

First 7 months of fiscal year

Mr. Noble begin by stating that an FY 2012 audit report was placed at each Board Members area which could be discussed later after they had a chance to review it. Mr. Noble did state that it is pretty straight forward compared to our recent audits, and it is an unqualified opinion. MATA has a new auditor, Banks, Finley and White did this audit. After five years the city rebids the audit and the city pays for our audit in conjunction with theirs. MATA have worked with Banks in the past, and they also work separately with MATA's pension plan.

Mr. Noble discussed the financial summary. He stated that through seven months we are slightly unfavorable to revenues by \$700,000 (due to grants not drawn down yet), and slightly favorable to expenses by \$400,000. Net we are slightly unfavorable so far. We have learned that the process for drawing down our federal funds has been delayed compared to recent years. First we learned that the amount was going to be reduced by about \$400,000; but more immediately we also learned that there would be some delays in when we received it. The amounts have been appropriated but the administrative procedure to actually draw down the amounts has been delayed. It still appears that we will be able to get through the year based on our new projection, but is getting tighter due to the fact of getting these funds in later. Due to the fact that it looks close, we decided to approach the Memphis City Council Budget Committee about an advance on the federal funds just in case we did not get it in April. The budget committee seems to have taken that request favorably, and now it would have to go before the full City Council. Right now the projection says we will not need the advance.

Mr. Vergos stated that if it came down to the Board approval on budget measures, he would rather have this motion done in a public setting to allow the public to speak on the issue. He also stated that he would rather have a "just in case motion" that way Mr. Hudson would already have the authorization. Chairman Healy suggested this could be discussed in the March meeting, which would give us enough time before the April draw down. Mr. Hudson agreed.

Mr. Noble stated that we are going to have to make an increase in our balance sheet liability in this fiscal year for our OPEB, which are our Retirees Health benefits. We recently had an update, and we have to turn this over to the auditors. The requirement for this year is another \$2.9MM we have to add to our liability over and above the \$2.7MM that we had budgeted for FY2013. This would be an improvement that we make at the end of the fiscal year and would take the liability from \$12MM to \$17MM. We don't have any trust set up to pay against this liability so it will just increase again this year as it has in the last 3 or 4 years. Mr. Noble answered a few questions from Mr. Gibson regarding a repeat audit finding in the audit report. This ended the financial report.



## Marketing Report



**New Fast pass Design-** The first Fast pass design was created in October 2009 and this is an ideal time to refresh the pass and create something that is fun, active, engaging and fits well with all of the other images and colors that have been developed for MATA Traveler, website and informational materials. This design is slightly abstract. It represents MATA's ability to get anywhere. And, getting anywhere is a product of all of the routes going in all kinds of directions. The new pass will be introduced in June.

**MATA Trolley ads** – New ads have been designed for trolley advertising. This same graphic will also be used for the new website that is nearing completion. This year we will more advanced visibility through the Memphis Convention and Visitor's Bureau advertising.



This basketball season we reduced the number of buses and routes for both the University of Memphis Tigers and the Memphis Grizzlies. For the Tigers, we now run seven buses instead of nine and three for the Grizzlies instead of four. Despite the change, the ridership numbers have not decreased.



We have started discussions with the Memphis Music Commission on bringing back the

Trolley Unplugged Series, a musical experience for Memphians during lunch time in downtown Memphis. **The Memphis Trolley: Unplugged** is a unique traveling experience that places Memphis musicians aboard the Main Street line and the Riverfront Loop to enhance the trolley experience. Whether you're leaving the office for lunch, or taking the scenic Riverfront Loop, the Trolley comes alive with the best of Memphis Music. From Blues to Country, the series features musical genres that aim to provide its passengers with a taste of some of the best musicians in our city.



New system maps were delivered on Friday. They have all of current routes, and are available at all transit centers for \$1.00.



Marketing is working with a production crew on a new BET reality TV series filming partly in Memphis called the Mathis Project, in which TV judge Greg Mathis will be looking in to some old MPD cold cases with the hope of shedding some new light and possibly help in solving some of them. Filming is currently underway and will be here until the end of April. The production has requested to shoot scenes on a trolley and around Central Station.



The Slow Hand Production Company and Japanese TV, Fuji Television (BS-Fuji) has requested to video streetcars in Memphis, March 9th and March 14<sup>th</sup>. The 60- minutes weekly travel documentary feature streetcars in cities around the world. The each segment cover few cities through the streetcar and people who introduce from the point of view of their, such as local food, culture and historical site ... etc. The show has been broadcast about Portugal and Germany in past, and we would like to cover Tampa, New Orleans and Memphis this time. In Memphis, they would like to introduce about all about the streetcar, such as details in the car, stations and the work of conductor ... etc.



Travel Channel is in production for a series called Burger Land with George Motz. They are visiting some of the best hamburger joints in the US, based on his book "Hamburger America". We would really love to have a shot of our Host, George Motz in front or on one of the famous Main Street Trolleys. Here is a link to the pilot episode, which is currently airing on Travel Channel, for your information: <http://www.travelchannel.com/tv-shows/burger-land-wisconsins-burger-belt>

We will be shooting in Memphis on Mar 5th - March 7th.

## GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

### William Hudson

Mr. Hudson stated that as we struggle with the 2013 budget we are working on the 2014 budget as well. He reported to the Board that due to federal issues that is going into next year we will lose about \$2.8MM in funding, which is less than we have this year. We have submitted our budget to the city and have asked for an increase of about \$1.5MM, and at the same time we advised that we would try to find about \$1.5MM. That issue is at hand and staff now has began to work on the budget, which will be very tough. As we get further into the budget we will let the Board know where we are at that point. There will definitely be a change in the way we do things. We want you to know that it is critical at this point as we move forward.

Mr. Hudson reported that we will enter into a fuel contract beginning the last of July and 1<sup>st</sup> of August. Mr. Hudson recognized the purchasing department staff who was very instrumental in assuring that the fuel contract was met, as well as the savings due to purchasing it well in advance.

Mr. Hudson also gave cutos to the MATAplus department who maintained on time performance at 90.2%, which was really great last month.

The Memphis Food Bank is requesting a bus. They want to gut it and deliver foods to various parts of the city, county, as well as to Mississippi. After receipt of the proper paper work, we will submit this to the Board for approval. This ended the GM Report.

#### SPEAKERS:

- Betty Robinson – Ms. Robinson spoke about the Green Route that runs the West Memphis runs. The state troopers and police in West Memphis stated that passengers were violating safety policies by walking on the freeways to the Southland Park. She stated that citations were given to several of them. They spoke with the GM at the Southland Park, and he stated that they were scheduled to be dropped off at the Margaritas Hotel, and he does not know why the bus continues to drop them off on the freeway. She expressed the safety issues with walking on the freeways. They requested the passengers come back and talk with the MATA GM and Board about where they are being dropped off. Some have even gone to jail regarding this.

Mr. Healy stated that MATA works under contract with West Memphis. They dictate the terms and conditions of the route structure. It is confusing why they keep sending them back to MATA. MATA staff went over to talk to the West

Memphis group as well, and they stated that they would leave it as it is. Staff did talk to the mayor and he was told there was a problem with the police, but Mr. Albritton explained what happened with the police and the ticket situation.

- Mr. Josue Rodriguez - Addressed issues with MATAPlus services. He is speaking on his behalf as well as consumers that he work with. He talked about the lateness of the buses. He is not here to ask for any special privileges just for equitable service for passengers. Standing in severe weather is a problem. There are complaints and we do understand there is a 30-minute window, but when it exceeds the window and they are not notified, people get a little impatient. He tells them to call MATA to complain, but they stated it would not do any good. When they do call the complaint line, sometimes it is not working. He also stated that there is no follow up on the complaints, and it would be a good idea to get a tracking number when complaints are made. A number of people wanted to come and speak up, but stated again that things would not change. He is not here to put pressure on anyone, but to assure that people with disabilities, as well as any rider receives equitable service.

Chairman Healy thanked Mr. Rodriquez, and stated that one of the things that were talked about in the last meeting is that MATA is now measuring performance in several areas. Included is customer service and on-time performance. There are goals for each of those, and are being monitored against targets on a monthly basis. Mr. Pearson also stated there is a way to track the complaints and MATA will review that to see why this is not happening

- Mr. Eddie Settles - He represents backinriver.city.com. They operate a public policy blog. They are trying to devote this year's efforts to four basis issues: schools, transportation authorities, budgets, and poverty. He wants MATA and the Board to help raise the information level to assist this agency and Board with trying to make a difference for those who need public transportation, and help them understand more what the challenges, responsibilities, and threats are to MATA's survival to fulfill its function. His request is to find some way to let him to deem information that is vital to what is going on, such as budget, what is going to have to take place with FTA as stated in last Board Meeting, as well as upgrading our customer surveys and things of that nature. It would be very helpful to have a go to person to receive this type of information. That is his request.

Chairman Healy asked Ms. Carter to recognize the visitors that are present for the meeting. Ms. Carter called each by name and stated that it is a pleasure to have each guest present at the Board Meeting. She stated that we are always happy to have them at our Board Meetings and again thanked them for coming.

### **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Healy called for old/new business. Mr. Vergos stated that he read in the paper where the new Shelby county/Memphis school system was having issues on how they would bus everyone to the schools as they merge. He, on his own, sent a letter to Billy Orgel who is chairman and advised that MATA has a Short Range Transit Plan but is not yet in effect. He stated that he made a request to Bethany with Nelson/Nygaard, about making sure that middle schools and high schools were put on that map and could take a MATA bus. This could mean that school could cut back their transportation expenses and MATA could reap some revenues from this. It is being done in other cities, and he wanted the Board to know that he was speaking only for himself, and wanted to bring it to the Board's attention.

The Board Secretary stated the next meeting is scheduled for March 25, 2013 at 3:30 p.m. in the MATA Board Room. After no further discussion, Chairman Healy called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Vergos moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Pickard seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.

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**Sean Healy**  
**Chairman of the MATA Board**

*NOTE: A taped recording of the MATA Board of Commissioners Meetings is always available in the event of clarity on a particular item.*