

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING  
MEMPHIS AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
October 28, 2013**

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A regular meeting of the MATA Board of Commissioners was held at 3:30 p.m. on Monday October 28, 2013 in the MATA Board Room at 1370 Levee Road.

**BOARD PRESENT:** Chairman, Sean Healy  
Commissioners: Karl Birkholz; Charles Pickard; John Vergos; Lauren Taylor;  
Mattie Carter; Andre Gibson (via phone)

**STAFF:** Lawson Albritton; Alison Burton; Darryl Covington; Linda Eskridge;  
Lavelle Fitch; Don Forsee; Tom Fox; William Hudson; John Lancaster;  
Glen Lockhart; Shelia Maclin; Maury Miles; Gilbert Noble; Glenda Wade;  
Tommy Wallace

**OTHERS:** Betty Anderson, Travel Trainer; Leon Blue; Michael E. Bonds, citizen;  
Kenneth Bonds; Rick Dunning, First Transit; Bennett Foster, MBRU; Aury  
Kangelos, TDOT; David Mason, MBRU; Ray McClanahan, MBRU; Johnny  
Mosley, Citizens for Better Services; Shahin Samiei, MBRU; Hugh Teaford;  
Darrell Watson; Michael Williams, MBRU

Chairman Healy called the meeting to order. Linda Eskridge, Board Secretary, called the roll. Seven Board Members were physically present, one Board Member, Mr. Andre Gibson, joined the meeting via phone. All eight Board Members were present; and there was a quorum for the meeting. Mr. Vergos made a motion for approval of the September 23, 2013 Board Minutes. Mr. Birkholz seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

**BUSINESS & REPORTS**

**A. FINANCE COMMITTEE**

NONE

**B. SERVICE AND DEVELOPMENT**

**1. Resolution to Approve Service Changes - Res. No. 13-36**

**Discussion:** Mr. Hudson presented this resolution to the MATA Board. Mr. Hudson went through each individual route and discussed the changes. Mr. Vergos asked if these changes are subsequent to what the Board voted on several months ago, and if a public hearing is necessary for these changes. Mr. Hudson stated these are changes that staff is recommending after we implemented the service on September 22, 2013. According to MATA's Policy there are not enough changes to require a public hearing, but public comments are solicited. After the resolution was put on the floor, Chairman Healy called for comments from speakers on this resolution.

**Bennett Foster, MBRU**

Mr. Foster expressed his appreciation for some of the route adjustments, especially with the 46 and 42. He was concerned that with winter coming, if there is going to be more meetings to discuss more bus shelters to accommodate the public that will be waiting in the elements. Mr. Hudson stated that a presentation regarding bus shelters would be made later in this meeting. Mr. Foster suggested that in the future, the service changes could be posted in the window at the NET so that people will know that the changes are coming. Mr. Hudson stated that his request was so noted.

Mr. Vergos expressed his appreciation to staff for listening to the riders needs and moving accordingly. He also asked if there are other issues concerning the routes and schedules to come forward in a month or two, if perhaps staff and Board could relook at some of these changes again. Mr. Hudson stated that in the union contract, there is a time period to change routes, and he would have to get the Board's permission to do so. Mr. Vergos asked if we could have the service change maps highlighted within the entire system. He also would like to see a route system map posted at the NET.

Mr. Gibson asked if these service changes are cost neutral? Mr. Hudson stated this would be about \$100,000 more per year. MATA will try to cover the deficit between now and the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Lauren Taylor asked how decisions are made on service changes. Mr. Hudson stated that staff looks at ridership patterns, number of complaints, rider's suggestions, as well as recommendations from staff. Also statistics from the new IT equipment help staff with the decision-making as well. **Ms. Carter moved that Resolution No. 13-36 be approved. Mr. Vergos seconded the motion and the resolution was unanimously approved.**

**2. Resolution to Authorize Veterans to ride all modes of MATA Transportation free on Veterans Day, November 11, 2013 – Res. No. 13-37.**

**Discussion:** This resolution was requested by Ms. Alison Burton, Director of Marketing and Customer Relations, and was added at the Board Meeting. This would allow MATA to honor veterans by authorizing them to ride all modes of MATA transportation free with a valid ID. This would become Resolution No. 13-37 and will be added to the October Board Agenda. **Mr. Birkholz moved that veterans be authorized to ride all modes of MATA Transportation free on Veterans Day. Mr. Vergos seconded the motion and this became Resolution No. 13-37 and was unanimously approved.**

**3. Resolution Announcing the Retirement of MATA's President/General Manager – Res. No. 13-38**

**Discussion:** This resolution was added at the October Board Meeting. Chairman Healy made the announcement that Mr. Hudson, President/General Manager of MATA will retire upon the end of his contract January 1, 2014. KL Executive Search has been hired to do a nationwide search for Mr. Hudson's replacement. The nationwide search will be funded by a grant of \$45,000 through The Hyde Foundation. The MATA Board of Commissioners will have the role of interviewing the applicants. This replacement could be internal as well as external. **Chairman Healy moved to secure the services of KL Executive Search for a nationwide search to replace MATA's President/General Manager. Mr. Pickard seconded the motion and this became Resolution No. 13-39 and was unanimously approved.**

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

**Mr. Gil Noble**

**September 2013**

**1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of fiscal year**

MATA is close to budget but over by about \$400,000; about \$100,000 under budget in revenues and \$300,000 over budget in expenses. Most of the overages incurred prior to the service cuts on September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Salaries and wages are over budget for the quarter. Healthcare cost is slightly over budget for the quarter. Service and materials combined are slightly favorable to budget. Staff is still reviewing areas we can cut to try to come within the budget. This concluded the quarterly highlights of the financial report.

Chairman Healy asked will the forecast for the second quarter come closer to the plan now that the route changes have been implemented. Mr. Noble replied yes to this question.

Chairman Healy also commented that in addition to the \$100,000 for the service changes, we also have this hurdle to overcome for the first quarter. Mr. Hudson stated we do, but he is very confident that we can do this by controlling the overtime and absenteeism.

**MARKETING REPORT**

**Alison Burton**

October Marketing Report – 2013

MATA will provide transportation to the Memphis Grizzlies games at the FedEx Forum. We expect to work closer with their marketing staff to help promote the shuttles from:

<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>DEPARTURE</b> ( <i>prior to tip-off</i> )
Germantown <i>Germantown Plaza on Exeter</i>	90 min
Bartlett <i>Walmart - On Highway 64 near Wolfchase</i>	75 min
East Memphis <i>Poplar Plaza - On Poplar near Highland</i>	60 min
Southeast Memphis <i>Halle Stadium</i>	75 min

Shuttles will also be provided for the University of Memphis Basketball.

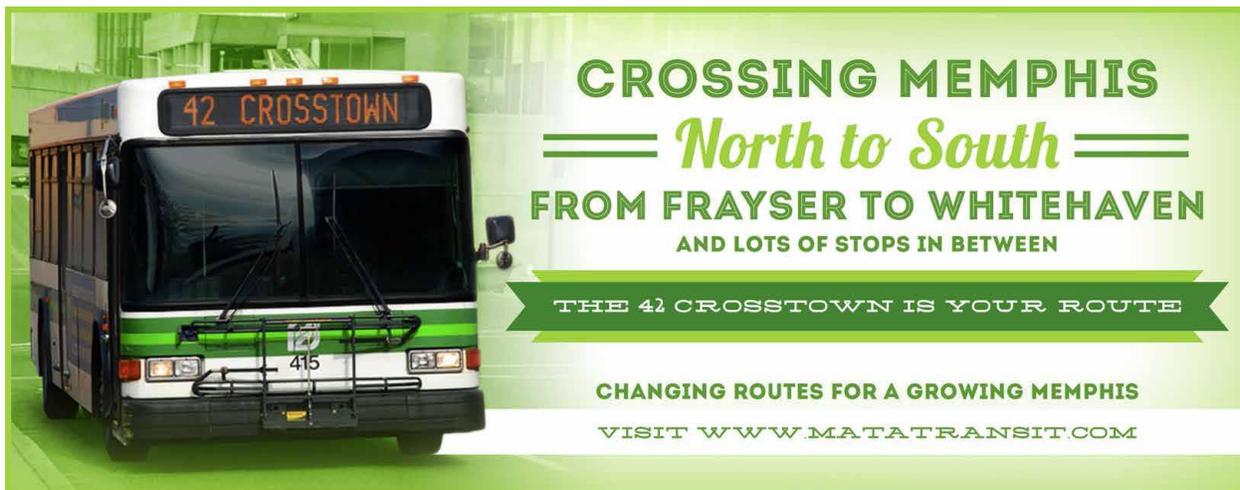
**We encourage everyone to**

**“BEAT TRAFFIC ON GAME DAY, AND RIDE WITH MATA”**

October 12 at Mississippi and Walker, MATA participated with the South MemFix event sponsored by the Mayor’s Innovation Delivery team. This event showcased storefronts, food trucks, music, street improvements, MATA, pop-up retail, oral histories, and kid’s zone, and a preview of some of the revitalization that is going on in that area. Route No. 4 Walker is one of our popular routes that goes through that area. MATA participation was from 12:00 noon until 6:00 p.m.



MATA is continuing to promote Route #42, as a lot of people are using it.



MATA’s call center experienced two retirements during the month of October. We have supplemented the staff with former retirees to assist with the shortage, as we lost a 37- year person, and a 16-year person.

## GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Hudson began his report by discussing new bus shelters. An in-house committee and a riders committee provided input. Gary Crawford showed a presentation on the implementation of the MATA shelters. After the presentation, the floor was opened for questions.

### **Questions and Answers:**

- 1) **(Birkholz)** - How many people can the shelters accommodate. Two, possibly three in some places.
- 2) **(Vergos)** - Are the shelters accessible for persons with disabilities. Yes, every shelter is ADA compliant.
- 3) **(Vergos)** - Are these shelters being placed in locations that are consistent with the Short Range Transit Plan. Tom Fox stated they are consistent with the SRTP, and staff also included a riders committee to get ideas on where these shelters should be placed.
- 4) **(Healy)** - Is Poplar/Cleveland due for a super stop shelter. Yes it is.
- 5) How many people would the new 20ft shelter accommodate? Gary Crawford stated that it would accommodate about 40 people standing. It would be crowded, but they would be out of the weather.

Twenty (20) small shelters have been installed. An order is pending for 20 more regular-sized shelters and three 20ft. super stop shelters.

Mr. Hudson continued his report by mentioning that he wanted the Board and the public to know that he and staff have no thoughts at this time of requesting approval of a fare increase.

### Performance Measures

Mr. Hudson discussed the performance measures for September that were presented to the Board. Staff will continue to work to improve the goals of the Performance Measures. Mr. Birkholz asked how has the reduction in buses affected ridership. Mr. Hudson stated the response was negative at first, as are most changes. However, riders seem to be adjusting well. Dr. Fox stated that as far as ridership is concerned, we only have a partial report for the month of September to compare; but staff can give a more complete report next month. Mr. Vergos asked if passengers are only counted when they board the bus. Passengers are counted every time they board the bus, including when transferring. Chairman Healy stated the number one action that could build some good will with our constituents is on-time performance, and it is going in the wrong direction.

Chairman Healy would like some specifics on steps staff is taking to get to the 60% target. Chairman Healy is asking for action plans by next month's Board Meeting. Ms. Carter asked about the plans for BRT. Mr. Hudson stated that we do not have BRT-type vehicles, but are working on implementation of signal priority on Poplar and Elvis Presley. Mr. Gibson asked if we can get a separate listing on the performance measures report to include general safety, as far as lost time for accidents or incidents on any of our property. Mr. Hudson asked for more time to work on this request.

### **SPEAKERS**

**Ray McClanahan**, 497 LaClede, Memphis, TN 38126  
RE: Weekend Service on the 50 Poplar

Mr. McClanahan stated that he would like to discuss a long standing problem, as well as give MATA his solution to the problem. Mr. McClanahan stated that he waited at Poplar/Highland for 45 minutes to an hour for a bus that never arrived. After no bus arrived, he walked from Poplar/Highland to Madison/Belvedere. He stated he decided to do his own survey on the 50 Poplar, and talked with a lot of people that ride the 50 Poplar. His request is having later bus service on Saturday night.

Mr. McClanahan stated that people would like to go to Beale Street, stay out late and drink without having to worry about driving home. He also stated that he has talked with school students that work at fast food restaurants in Germantown and other parts of east Memphis. They can get to work, but cannot get home. He talked with security guards and other individuals that work late Saturday nights. With that being said, he stated that the service on the 50 Poplar needs to be extended until about 1:00 a.m. in the morning on Saturday nights.

When determining where the money would come from, he stated there are about four different routes that come very close the University of Memphis, and any one of them, with a slight alteration to their route, could take people to and from the University of Memphis and allow the No. 5 to be eliminated. With the money saved from the No. 5, we could more than finance late night service on the 50 Poplar on Friday and Saturday nights. Mr. McClanahan asked Mr. Hudson and the Board to look into this for future consideration.

**Darrell Watson**, 686 Carpenter St., Memphis, TN 38112  
RE: Customer Service

Mr. Watson shared a personal tragedy that happened to him a few years ago, and how he is trying to move forward from that tragedy with school, working, etc. Some of his frustrations are with the bus changes and calling customer service for information. The customer service representatives are very rude, and there is never an apology.

He also mentioned on-time performance, and the fact that when he was taking classes at the Southwest Tennessee Community College Macon Road campus, the bus was always early, and the fact that he had to leave his class early to catch the bus. After calling to explain to customer service about the early bus, nothing was done about it. When calling the customer service numbers, the representative talks as though they are angry and the customer is bothering them. He stated that he agrees there should be a system map at the centers, because he would rather look at a map than to deal with the customer service agents at MATA. The purpose of customer service is to answer questions and give out information, so why do they act like they are angry with the customer when they call in for information.

**Michael Williams**, 844 Main Street, Memphis, TN  
RE: MATA Service

Mr. Williams stated that he had just left the NET and the monitors didn't work, and when asking for certain schedules, they did not have them, and the buses are always late. The No. 46 only stops at certain stops, but he does not see the purpose of it. He stated that you can only fit two people in the bus shelters, which leaves most riders standing out in the elements.

Mr. Hudson asked for all of the speaker's phone numbers so that he can call each one individually regarding their concerns.

Mr. Vergos stated that when we make a mistake with our customers, we should be very apologetic. He also asked if we ever accommodate them with free passes. Mr. Hudson and staff does give passes to customers who were inconvenienced due to negligence on MATA's part; however, as long as it is not a constant repeat.

### OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Healy asked Ms. Burton to clarify her request to the MATA Board regarding honoring the veterans on Veterans Day. Ms. Burton is asking on Veterans Day to allow all veterans with a valid ID to ride all modes of MATA services free of charge. A motion was made by Mr. Birkholz to allow veterans to ride MATA service free of charge on Veterans Day. Mr. Vergos seconded the motion and the request was approved. **(This will become Res. No. 13-37)**. Mr. Birkholz asked Ms. Burton to contact Mr. Joe Kyle's office at the Veterans Administration office to discuss the procedure for identification of veterans.

Mr. Pickard mentioned that the Board received a letter from Mr. Johnny Mosley regarding some issues with the Memphis Advisory Council for Persons with Disabilities regarding an easier way to get disability cards to ride the fixed route services. Mr. Hudson stated that we will look into our policy as well as the federal guidelines regarding this process.

Mr. Vergos had two items for discussion:

### Cooper St. Potential Bus Line

Chooch and Vergos met with the Overton Park Conservancy to do some preliminary discussion on a potential Cooper Street bus line. They talked with Mr. Loeb and he stated they still have interest in it. Mr. Vergos wants everyone to understand there is no movement to add a route along Cooper Street, when we are cutting other routes. We will strictly look at this route to see if it is possible to fully fund with passenger fares and businesses along that route paying sponsorship fees. It is not unheard of for businesses to subsidize parking, making it easier for people to visit the business. Mr. Vergos stated the Overton Square parking garage is opening and he could possibly talk to the city regarding people parking there using the Cooper Line, and possibly receive some of that revenue. **Mr. Vergos would like for staff to put together a cost analysis of running the bus back and forth on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights from 6:00 p.m. until midnight, every 10 minutes. He asked staff to put together some hard figures, (fuel, salaries) to see what the cost is and if it is feasible. He asked for a report back within 30 days if that is feasible time.** Mr. Hudson stated that staff would report back at the November Board Meeting.

### Short Range Transportation Plan (SRTP)

**Mr. Vergos would like to know the status of the SRTP. Are we going to implement it and if so, how?** He feels that is our future goal. He was told it would cost \$1MM to implement it. What he sees happening with MATA is we are going to reduce service, reduce frequency, go back to city council and they will reduce funding, so next year reduce more service, and ultimately increase fares.

He stated that we need to do something to shake up the community to show that MATA wants to implement public transportation in a different way. His theory is we need to redo routes in a more reasonable and understandable way. That's why he is always into maps. There should be a 6 to 8 month period roll out period. He feels there should be an educational process, and we should have bus riders month where we go out urging everyone to ride the bus. Mr. Hudson asked John Lancaster to give the Board an update on where the SRTP is at this time and where we will go within the next year. Mr. Vergos did not think it was necessary for an explanation that he or no one in the community probably understands. He stated if it costs money, let them know what that figure will be. Mr. Vergos stated the SRTP was done (in his mind) as a means to transform public transportation via buses in Memphis, TN. The SRTP speaks of better coverage, less wait time, and better distribution and this should be our goal. **Mr. Healy stated, in regards to Mr. Vergos' request, that he would like to see two things happen: 1) a graphical depiction of what the plan shows and what we have implemented; 2) The timeframe to complete the plans.** Mr. Hudson stated staff would present something to the Board at the November Board Meeting.

Mr. Pickard stated also there has to be a huge marketing effort to improve MATA's image to go along with the changes. MATA is not selling ourselves with how we are improving things. Mr. Healy suggested the Board's marketing subcommittee meet with the appropriate people in a smaller group meeting. Mr. Hudson stated that he would be happy to receive any recommendations from the Board.

Mr. Birkholz stated that the reality is MATA had to cut 17 buses, change all the routes, and it was done because MATA was cut \$2 1/2MM.

### **Announcement from the Chairman**

Chairman Healy made an announcement that comes with mixed emotions that after nearly 50 years with MATA, Mr. Hudson has decided to retire at the end of his contract on January 1, 2014. There will be other forums to recognize Mr. Hudson; however Chairman Healy thanked Mr. Hudson for his many years of service with MATA, and wish Mr. Hudson the best in his future endeavors. Chairman Healy stated that in speaking with Mayor Wharton, he is supportive of conducting a nationwide search for a new general manager.

Chairman Healy proposed a resolution to secure the services of KL Executive Search to assist the Board in conducting the search. Mayor Wharton, Chairman Healy, and others have been successful in receiving a grant from the Hyde Foundation to cover the cost of the search firm. A motion was made by Chairman Healy and seconded by Charles Pickard to secure the services of KL Executive Search. **(This will become Resolution No. 13-38).**

Chairman Healy gave a brief synopsis of the firm, and stated that three firms were recommended by Nelson\Nygaard and APTA. After discussion, KL Executive Search was the recommended firm.

The MATA Board will be in charge of the interview process. Chairman Healy stated they will be looking at both internal and external candidates for Mr. Hudson's replacement. Ms. Lauren Taylor wanted the minutes to reflect that even though the Hyde Foundation trustees were elected to make the grant to help with the search, but it is unconditional. Nothing that she does or does not do will impact the flow of funding to MATA. Therefore, there is no conflict of interest as she is an employee of the Hyde Foundation. Chairman Healy reported that the fee will be between \$37,000 to \$45,000, and the grant from the Hyde Foundation was \$45,000. The role of the Board will be to select the new general manager. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Ms. Carter recognized all visitors that were present at the meeting. She thanked all that were present and personally recognized Mr. Rick Dunning, Senior Vice President for First Transit. Mr. Dunning had a few remarks as well as congratulated Mr. Hudson on his retirement and for a job well-done.

The next Board Meeting is November 25, 2013. Mr. Karl Birkholz moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. John Vergos seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

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**Mr. 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.*