

Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Of the Allen County Regional Transit Authority Board of Trustees
Held at the RTA Administration Building
And Virtually through GoTo Meeting
200 East High St., Lima, Ohio
June 2, 2020 @ 12:00 PM

Present were Holly Rex, Board President; Joshua Parker, Vice-President; Joan Davis, Scott Cockerell, Richard Schroeder, and Robert Moening, Board Members; Karen Garland, Operations Director; Brian Wildermuth, Superintendent; Lori McGuire, Uplift Supervisor; Robert Ruzinsky, Contracted CPA; Marlene Shumaker and Shane Coleman, LACRPC; and Teresa Brown, Board Secretary/Treasurer.

First Item of Business – Roll Call: Roll Call was taken and noted for the minutes. Mr. Olsson was not present.

Second Item of Business – Approval of Previous Minutes: Ms. Davis made a motion to approve the minutes for the previous meeting. Mr. Parker seconded the motion and all members voted in favor thereof.

Third Item of Business – Finance Report/2019 Audit update: The Finance report was sent to the Board Members in advance. We had a gain of \$291,000. This includes a \$202,000 funding from ODOT that we wouldn't have normally gotten but we are still in a good place. The Balance Sheet shows us with a very strong cash position. The FTA Triennial Review was delayed, and we do not have an official start date yet. They talked about the start of their fiscal year which would be October, but we don't know for sure.

ODOT allocated us \$150,842 this year. This is the second year of extra transit funding from the general revenue fund. We also applied for \$250,000 in Capital funding that we applied for last year and did not receive but were asked to reapply for. No one knows what the State Legislature is going to do with their new budget that starts July 1. We will be fine even with no ODOT funding.

We executed the CARES Act grant and were the very first one in Ohio to do so. We also applied for our normal FTA grants and submitted the application for the \$450,000 in vehicle funding that the previous Director had worked out with the MPO, so those loose ends are getting cleaned up. Both grants should be approved within the next couple of weeks, and we will be caught up with all our grants with FTA, ODOT and the MPO.

ODOT awarded us just under 1.2 million dollars to replace buses. They had 3.8 million available and we received 1.2 so that was very good. The competition was the other small urbans and the funding is at 100%. Brian will talk about the buses in a bit and we will need approval to move forward.

We have no idea what will happen with the sales tax funding. There is a three-month lag from when the funds are collected and when we receive them. We have budgeted heavy reductions. They have started the 2019 Financial Audit and we waived the Entrance Conference. It is just asking a few questions we already answered those, the Exit Conference is the important one.

The NTD Report deadline was extended to June 30th and will be done before that.

Bob is assisting the staff with some peer reviews. Our finances are strong, and the agency will not be adversely affected by the current pandemic.

Ms. Davis made a motion to accept the Financial Report. Mr. Schroeder seconded the motion and all members voted in favor thereof.

Fourth Item of Business – Operations Report: Our ridership was down 54% for April from the previous month. The majority of that is from the schools being shut down. Our fixed route ridership is starting to pick back up some already, especially the two newest routes. The NTD report is 75% done. We received insurance quotes from ODOT to join the pool for all full-time employees and those will be sent out to the Board.

The new uniforms are mostly in, we have had some sizing issues and are getting those fixed.

Brian had talked with a couple of the schools and gave them a ball-park figure for the pricing, pending Board approval. Bath and Elida are good with it and we are waiting to hear back from the Lima City Schools.

Beam Designs sent us a timeline for the next couple of phases of the parking lot project. He will have final estimates on July 15th, be going out to bid July 19th, with bids being due on August 5th. They will do the award on August 19th.

Mr. Schroeder made a motion to approve the Operations Report and Ms. Davis seconded the motion. All members voted in favor thereof.

Fifth Item of Business – Discussion/Motion: Wage/Bonus Proposal: We started talking back in December about adjusting the driver and mechanic pay, since the levy passed and we have had a lot of turnover. We have reached out to other Transit agencies in Ohio close to our size to see what they are paying. Our current pay scale starts at \$14 for the drivers, they go to \$15 after 90 days with CDL and then that is it. They have not had a raise for 4 years, and most drivers that have left said the pay and the lack of insurance are what makes them leave. Our turnover rate has been so bad that most of the drivers have been here less than a year. The previous union contract would not let us give a raise without opening contract negotiations, so we had been giving quarterly attendance bonuses instead. The drivers and mechanics could potentially earn an additional \$1000 a year with those. We are trying to move to an actual pay scale with raises built in.

The part-time employees would also see the raise, which they have not in the recent past. Ideally, we would prefer to have full-time drivers, but the part-time drivers are also very valuable. Some of them work a consistent schedule every week and they fill in for vacations, call-offs, etc.

The mechanics would also see an increase and be given an additional \$2.00/hour for having all four ASE certifications we require. We have had trouble getting qualified mechanics, and even with our proposed pay scale they could make more working at a dealership.

Ms. Rex asked how many of the other agencies we had contacted were union, and Brian replied he thought three of them were. A question was asked on how many hours our part-time employees worked. It varies anywhere from 12 – 30 hours most of the time.

Bob said he thinks we are still shooting low on the wage scale and wants us to check further into the local job market. There are jobs at places such as the tank plant, Ford, etc. that pay much more. He mentioned having the Board extend the current Board Action Attendance Bonus until the next Board Meeting, when we can come back with a comprehensive wage package for approval. Mr. Parker said he agreed with that idea so the transition would be more seamless, and not frustrate the employees by taking away the bonus and giving a raise later.

Sixth Item of Business – Discussion/Motion: Board Appreciation Action: Mr. Schroeder made a motion to extend the Board Appreciation Action Attendance Bonus until the next Board Meeting. Ms. Davis seconded the motion and all members voted in favor thereof.

Seventh Item of Business – Discussion/Motion: Contract with Clemans-Nelson: CJ Fultz, who had been attending the Board Meetings, is no longer with Clemans-Nelson. We do use the local branch for advice on employee issues, so the contract is still valuable. Ms. Davis made a motion to continue the existing agreement with Clemans-Nelson for HR related issues, without their presence at the Board Meetings. Mr. Parker seconded the motion and all members voted in favor thereof.

Eighth Item of Business – Discussion/Motion: Pricing Maps: We have worked with Bob to come up with three different pricing maps. One is for the school districts, one is for contract services, and one is for the general public. Elida and Bath schools are on board with the pricing, we have not heard back from Lima City schools yet. With the schools and the contract services, we have to be able to show ODOT and FTA the logic behind our pricing and show that we are meeting our costs and prove they are not subsidizing private transportation.

The schools are a little different from the contracts, as they are not as time consuming, we get more riders on the bus, etc. The contracts were looked at how many people we can pick up in this zone, etc. We tried to make it better for the agencies since we do not currently have a funding issue. The general public cost is half of the contractor rate since generally speaking FTA provides a 50% subsidy for operations, so it gets passed down to the consumer. The pricing is a little more than they used to be, but less than we have been using the past nine months or so.

The map pricing is per person. If you cross a zone, you pay the highest price. You do not pay both rates. Mr. Parker mentioned the pricing looks a lot better. JFS has pushed their other contracts to do per mile pricing, since it is easier for the case workers to figure but they can do the map pricing also. Bob added the map rates do not prevent us from negotiating a per mile rate with other agencies. Mr. Parker made a motion to accept the pricing maps as presented. Mr. Parker withdrew his motion to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest. Mr. Schroeder made a motion to accept the pricing maps as presented. Mr. Cockerell seconded the motion. All members voted in favor thereof, except for Mr. Parker who abstained.

Ninth Item of Business – Discussion/Motion: New Bus Purchase: We have a 1.2 million grant for new buses. Brian spoke with Gillig and it is an 18 – 24 month wait to get a bus once it is ordered. There is enough to get two new buses at \$500,000 per bus, and they are 100% funded. Mr. Schroeder mentioned that the letter from Dayton was not dated and wondered if it was an issue. Bob replied the letter was really for Gillig to show we had permission from Dayton to order off of their contract and the date was not an issue. Mr. Schroeder said the reason he brought it up was the language stated the signatory from Dayton would sign and date the letter. Brian said he would send it back to Dayton so they can date the letter, but it wouldn't affect the motion.

Mr. Moening made a motion to approve the bus purchases and Mr. Cockerell seconded the motion. All members voted in favor thereof.

Tenth Item of Business – RPC Updates: Marlene said there were no updates at this time.

Eleventh Item of Business – Executive Session: Mr. Schroeder made a motion to move to Executive Session to consider employment of a public official and to consider the purchase of real estate. Mr. Cockerell seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Scott – yes, Dick – yes, Rob – yes, Josh – yes, Joan – yes, Holly – yes.

Motion to return from Executive Session – Ms. Davis, Mr. Parker second.

Roll Call: Rob – yes, Scott – yes, Dick – yes, Josh – yes, Holly – yes, Joan – yes.

Mr. Schroeder made a motion to allow the Board President to obtain the services of a licensed Real Estate Appraiser for the potential acquisition of Real Estate property. Mr. Parker seconded the motion and all members voted in favor thereof.

No action is being taken at this time on the employment of a public official.

Twelfth Item of Business – Adjourn: Ms. Davis made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Parker seconded the motion. All members voted in favor thereof.

The next monthly Board Meeting is scheduled for July 7th, 2020.


Holly Rex, Board President


Teresa Brown, Board Secretary/Treasurer