

**CAPITAL AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, April 3, 2019 - 3:30 p.m. CATA BOARD ROOM**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	Pat Cannon George Hanley Diana Paiz Engle	Lillie Mae Flannery J.J. Jackson Deb Wiese (Chair)
<b>ABSENT MEMBERS</b>	Geneva Smith	
<b>CATA BOARD MEMBER</b>	Doug Lecato	
<b>CATA PERSONNEL</b>	Craig Frazier Roger Garza Sean Gleason Michelle Willis	Brad Funkhouser Andrew Brieschke Bethany Berdes
<b>GUESTS</b>	John King, Michael Klein, Timothy Sparks (Transdev)	

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Wiese called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.  
Introductions went around the table.

Gloria Banks and Deb Parrish introduced themselves.

A group from Transdev attended the meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Deb Parrish does not like that there are not tie downs and that her walker broke because it banged against the tie down mount.

**APPROVAL OF APRIL AGENDA**

George Hanley motioned to approve the April agenda. The motion was seconded. It passed unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY MINUTES**

Pat Cannon motioned to approve the February minutes. J.J. Jackson seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

## **LAC CHAIR COMMENTS**

Chair Deb Wiese would like to put the LAC Board vacancies under “New Business.” We have five vacancies and two applications to review and vote on.

## **BOARD LIAISON REPORT**

### **February 20, 2019 Board Meeting – CATA Admin Office**

- I. Board approved two-year maintenance contract for the Automatic Passenger Counter (APC) system with InfoDev for the amount of \$32,020.
- II. Board accepted the second reading of the proposed amendments of CATA’s Bylaws Policy #400. This will establish an easier process for other entities to join CATA and to have a seat on the Board of Directors based upon financial contribution. Examples would be: Delta Township, Eaton and or Clinton County, LCC, Mason, etc.
- III. Board approved the agreement with Meridian Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) “Four Corners Project”. This will allow the Meridian DDA to capture 100% of the new taxes collected each year for a period of 20 years. Starting with the new taxes collected for 2018 and end in 2038. The plan expects to generate approx. \$1.9 million of new taxes for CATA over the next 20 years
- IV. Board approved the updated CATA Strategic Plan
- V. Board approved a 1.1% service increase for the Operating Budget and Five-Year Financial Projections. A 1% increase will cost approximately \$100,000.
- VI. Board approved Doug Lecato’s attendance for three of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) conferences.

### **March 20, 2019 Board Meeting – CATA Admin Office**

- I. Board approved the purchase of 10 accessible low floor Dodge Grand Caravan minivans with the BraunAbility conversion from Hoekstra Transportation. The contract is for \$361,800.
- II. Board approved the Fourth Amendment to the agreement between Ingham County and CATA to provide funding for CATA Rural and Spec-Tran Services for the period covering January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2020.
- III. Board accepts Plant Moran’s Audit Report of CATA’s Financial Statements and Report on the Federal Awards for Fiscal Year 2017 – 2018.
- IV. Board approved the Ingham County’s one non-voting appointee to a voting appointee, as described in CATA’s Article of Incorporation and Bylaws.
- V. Board approved MSU’s one non-voting appointee to a voting appointee, as described in CATA’s Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

### **Additional Board Activity**

- I. Next Board Meeting: Wednesday April 17, 2019 at 4pm EST at CATA Admin Office.

J.J. Jackson asked how the DDA taxes would work. Doug Lecato said the taxes are going to Meridian to invest and the \$1.9 million is the projection of the money earned and will be returned to CATA.

Brad Funkhouser said the annual number is 54k per year in the current state and we will continue to get that with 2.4% inflation that is guaranteed and locked in for twenty years.

Doug Lecato said the DDA is going to improve that area since now it is in a state of disrepair.

George Hanley said the meeting is actually in April and not March

Diana Paiz Engle asked if the taxes for Meridian DDA include support from the Redi-Ride taxes.

Brad Funkhouser answered her first question. The Redi-Ride millage is not included in the tax deal with the DDA.

Diana Paiz Engle's second question is about the new low floor mini-vans. She asked if they could see the layout of the mini-vans. Andrew Brieschke is answering about the vans, they are low floor minivans operated by Transdev. They are the same make and model and offer one seating layout. They are new models of what we have now. Diana Paiz Engle says she sits in different mini-vans often.

Andrew Brieschke said the specs are a standard one option. The two seats in the middle row are towards the driver side and has three seats in the back. No options for anything else. It is a boiler plate one option specification.

Diana Paiz Engle wants to note that small changes can make a difference.

Diana Paiz Engle's third question is about the service increase. If the Route 1 is going later is it replacing the Entertainment Express? How is that going to affect Spec-Tran service? Would Spec-Tran service go later as well?

Andrew Brieschke answered her third question. It's a fixed route and Spec-Tran will follow suit during those hours. It is not the whole service area just  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from Route 1.

Chair Deb Wiese asked how is CATA going to market it. Brad Funkhouser said that CATA included in the route changes for this year. The Entertainment Express is gone. The strategic plan tagged an addition to Route 1. If CATA needs to market it better we will do so.

George Hanley asked how late the additional service on Route 1 goes until since most people do not know about the  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile rule.

Chair Deb Wiese suggested that would be something that could be on the recorded line.

Brad Funkhouser said he will bring it up with marketing. Chair Deb Wiese wants to see it on the CATA website so that it is obvious.

## **CATA CEO REPORT**

We officially got a letter two days ago from the FTA Region 5 and it has closed all of the findings. We had eighteen and they are all closed. We put it on CATA's website until they were closed in order to be transparent.

There is new voting membership on the CATA Board that took a change of the Article of Incorporation and Bylaws for the first time. This allows other entities to join the board. It fits with strategic plan.

Our audit was accepted and sent to the state at the end of March.

We started claiming taxes.

Mobility Grant – the LookingBus, we are moving ahead. We need a couple more pieces of equipment and will be out in about a month.

George Hanley asked how the initial batches of testing went with the focus groups. Chair Deb Wiese said there was good attendance and they had open discussions and all concerns were identified, acknowledged and being addressed.

Diana Paiz Engle asked when the iOS app will be available. Sean said it will be a couple of weeks but Brad Funkhouser will make sure Sean gets that info to the LAC.

Chair Deb Wiese said the primary issue the focus group had was how to find the LookingBus stops. She said that she does not necessarily want to notify the driver that she will be on the bus but that she wants to know where the stops are. Brad Funkhouser will find out and make sure it is noted as a question that needs follow up.

CATA identified that they had a deficient OPEB account. This is a common fund that agencies use to fund medical for retirees. The two pension plans are fully funded. CATA is working through a process to mitigate this. We are going through contract negotiations and to write how we will solve it would not be prudent at this time.

George Hanley stated that PA 202 forces all local governments to disclose get their liability up to 40%.

We are going to pay as you go instead of just putting the money away. We have 9 million already banked and it should be doubled and up to 40 million. We should have this resolved by the end of the year.

The contract with Meridian Township is coming to an end and Meridian Township Board took a vote and it was 5-0 for a five-year renewal of Redi-Ride. There have been preliminary discussions about adding an afternoon bus.

George Hanley asked if we were bracing for next week's MSU games. Brad Funkhouser said CATA is prepared.

Pat Cannon asked questions about the newer Spec-Tran vehicles. Also asked if there is an option to retro fit some more rails since they have less. Brad Funkhouser says that if this communication deems it necessary and that CATA will look at that.

Andrew Brieschke responded that we needed new buses and we began a five year contract with Mobility in August and we went to the vendor with a blank slate. We had five different floor plans. We had two problems to solve; how do we maximize wheel chair space and how to maximize Redi-Ride and rural service. After a lot of input, we came up with two from the original five. The most common complaint with the Spec-Tran vehicles is that the wheel chairs were secured in the back which made the rides bumpier. So the stationary seats were set against the back wall so that the wheel chairs could be more towards the front. We are also looking into getting more handrails. We are somewhat limited because we need to safely secure wheelchairs. They will be vertical handrails to the seats and not to the floor.

Floorplan B seats eighteen passengers and the seats flip up to accommodate four wheelchairs.

We reached out to operators, clients and para staff to get their thoughts and opinions. The overall goal is to increase capacity. We discussed the layout with the LAC. Also, the vendor was cost effective and had the best delivery time. They were able to deliver fifteen buses in less than 100 days.

Andrew Brieschke asked them to send an email if they have any specific complaints and they will try to address. Pat Cannon says that it is hard to please everyone.

Diana Paiz Engle said she does recall discussing the floor layout. She only remembers how the wheel chairs would be situated in those. There was not much discussion about the other seating, hand rails, fare boxes, or the half step. So she noted that we really need more detailed discussion of plans for future purchases. She loves the focus group for the app and she would encourage a similar thing for other purchases.

Pat Cannon said that there was a time when the LAC was more involved and did do a hands-on tour of the vehicles.

Brad Funkhouser acknowledged that all of their points are valid.

Brad Funkhouser asked if the issue was that it was more uncomfortable or unsafe.

Diana Paiz Engle said the steps should be of equivalent in rise and tread. So the fact that it has a different rise than the previous three makes it awkward.

Brad Funkhouser asked if this is something we should get used to or should we change them out. Not to just note this looking forward.

Pat Cannon said that the method of the Spec-Tran line is deceptive when you call the line. It says you are 21<sup>st</sup> in line and you can press 1 and CATA will call you back. He also noted that the passengers do not like add-ons. He said that he is really is referring to the message. It creates an expectation and it happens about half the time.

Craig Frazier said we are looking at how to improve the call-in line and that both Transdev and CATA use add-ons.

Brad Funkhouser said we have added capacity since we are exceeding 1000 calls per day and we believe it will increase in the future.

Diana Paiz Engle said add-ons have made people late for their appointments or their pick-ups.

Michelle said it is best to say what time you have to be at the appointment, not when you want to be picked up.

Craig Frazier said we are also looking at how we are grouping people.

Chair Deb Wiese asked Pat Cannon if he ever got a call back. He said yes he did but not until 9pm.

Brad Funkhouser said we need to change the expectation of the caller and make sure everyone is getting called back the same day.

Craig Frazier said if you call back it pushes you all the way back to the bottom. Please email Craig Frazier if you are having a problem.

#### **CATA DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS/PARATRANSIT REPORT**

Ten new vans were ordered on March 21<sup>st</sup> and the expected delivery dates are mid to late June.

Sean Gleason will be at the June 5<sup>th</sup> LAC meeting to talk about the LookingBus.

J.J. Jackson questioned what areas need to be filled. Chair Wiese responded there was no one representing Peckham currently and she would like it if there was a representative from the Disability Network Capital Area. J.J. stated he has been putting the word out at the Tri County Office of Aging. Chair Wiese questioned if George Hanley was still a student, as students are a group to be represented by the LAC. George Hanley stated he will be a student at MSU beginning next semester. Chair Wiese asked the committee to put the word out and perhaps think of individuals who are hearing impaired.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

We received two applications for members Kelly Blackwell and Kevin Brown. Chair Deb Wiese talked about each of them for a little and noted that Kelly Blackwell is present at this meeting. She would like to know if anyone has any questions.

Kelly Blackwell says she is looking forward to the opportunity. She has also used Spec-Tran for more than 20 years.

Chair Deb Wiese asked if anyone has questions or should we proceed to a vote?

Pat Cannon motioned to approve the applications and George Hanley seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

### **MEMBER COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

George Hanley – two drivers that were taking him to MSU campus and were unfamiliar with campus and he had to give them directions. He just wanted to make it known since it happened twice in a very short time. One was a new driver but one he knows but can't remember his name. He recommends that maybe there should be an orientation for MSU drivers. One was yesterday and the other was last week Tuesday or Thursday.

Diana Paiz Engle said that the phone system is still not giving a window for Meridian Redi-Ride. It just gives a time. If clients are to abide by the window and time frame, it should be given on the message.

J.J. Jackson would like to give CATA credit for sending his certification down to Dallas so he could use public transportation while he was there. It is a curb-to-curb service and they require two days in advance to schedule a ride.

George Hanley asked if that translates to all public transportation. Brad Funkhouser said it should be everywhere and seamless.

Diana Paiz Engle is wondering, as she was looking at the applications for this committee, could CATA require a high level of training on how to create accessible documents in Microsoft and fillable pdf's. Right now the application's formatting messes up the application. It should also have screen reader accessibility.

Chair Deb Wiese noted that drivers on the big buses are not letting riders know when they are there. Her ride was late beyond the window and another driver came in a mini-van to pick up someone else and Chair Deb Wiese was told that her bus was on its way. The driver finally came but she said she was doing her paperwork first but Chair Deb Wiese thinks the drivers should tell them that they are there and do their paperwork afterward. Diana Paiz Engle noted that has happened to her as well.

Craig said we will do a memo to the drivers.

Lillie Flannery said she was hesitant with the new buses because change is difficult for her but she finds that things are going well. Most of the drivers have been good that there is not a lot of stuff in the way so she can navigate well.

George Hanley noted that he was at the CTC and saw the information about the Board Meeting.

Chair Deb Wiese says she does not call CATA before her 15 minute window has reached its limit.

Diana Paiz Engle said that dispatchers are mostly calling at the 5 minute mark but sometimes they call before the 5 minute mark and it makes it difficult because she is trying to get out of work.

Pat Cannon noted that CATA services are wonderful and allow us to have the lives we do.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Gloria Banks would like to be considered to be a part of a focus group since she is a client.

Daniel Black noted that he was sorry that he was late but Spec-Tran was on time and he missed it so he had to catch a big bus. Two fixed routes missed him two times because he was at a non-accessible stop. He had to wave his braille kit and his cell phone camera light at him. In terms of accessibility, he would like to interact with some of the folks after the meeting. He would also like the Board Members to have name plates. He has multiple disabilities and he missed some of the comments because he could not hear the Board. He asked if there was some kind of PA system that could be used during the meetings.

Chair Deb Wiese said that an elderly couple was on her vehicle and the man had a knee brace. He was hanging onto the wheel chair latch strap to get off. She was afraid he was going to fall. His wife went down the little step and did not anticipate the bigger step and it surprised her. The driver said the next time they should take the lift. She would like to be on the focus group as well.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Pat Cannon motioned to adjourn and George Hanley seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Chair Wiese adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bethany Berdes  
Administrative Assistant – Executive Office

Reviewed by LAC Chair Deb Wiese