

LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING via ZOOM

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2022, 3:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Deb Wiese, Chair
Kellie Blackwell, Vice Chair
Jeffrey Allshouse
Ethan Devereaux
Erin Shannon
Diana Paiz
George Hanley

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Geneva Smith

CATA BOARD MEMBER: Doug Lecato

CATA PERSONNEL: Bradley Funkhouser, Craig Frazier, Todd Brooks, Ian Carr, Ericka Hartigan, Judy Millington, and Renee Sumerix

TRANSDEV PERSONNEL: Nancy Lohr

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Wiese called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER AGENDA

MOTION:

A motion to approve the December 2022 Agenda was moved by Kellie Blackwell and supported by Erin Shannon.

VOTE:

Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MINUTES

MOTION:

A motion to approve the October 2022 Minutes was moved by Kellie Blackwell and supported by Erin Shannon.

DISCUSSION:

Chair Weise proposed that Diana Piaz's comments be amended to reflect Diana Paiz request as depicted below.

"Diana Paiz also inquired whether the shelter and benches being removed at Frandor could become a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) issue."

Chair Weise proposed that the October Minutes be updated to reflect Diana Paiz comments by Diana Paiz as below.

Diana Paiz stated that the shelter and benches being removed at Frandor are a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) issue.

AMENDED MOTION:

Kelly Blackwell made the motion to approve the amended October 2022 Minutes and supported by Erin Shannon.

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

LAC CHAIR COMMENTS – Deb Wiese

Chair Wiese welcomed new LAC member Ethan Devereaux. She also stated that she looks forward to hearing Mr. Devereaux’s perspective since he’s a student and a frequent fixed route rider.

Ethan Devereaux thanked Chair Wiese and the LAC members. He also noted that he is currently enrolled in Environmental Studies and Sustainability and looks forward to sharing his knowledge and ideas.

Chair Wiese wished Ms. Paiz a Happy Birthday.

BOARD LIAISON REPORT – Doug Lecato

See attached report

CATA CEO REPORT – Bradley Funkhouser

Regional Coordination

Bradley Funkhouser commented on the progress that has been made with MDOT and working on rural services. Mr. Funkhouser explained that EATRAN has undertaken a transit study in Eaton County to help define what is needed to implement regional coordination. The EATRAN Board is expected to approve the transit study next week at their December Board meeting and anticipates the process to be completed within six (6) months.

ATU Labor Contract

Bradley Funkhouser reported that the ATU, Local 1039, labor contract has been settled and includes significant wage increases as well as bonuses that are consistent with TheRide in Ann Arbor.

Technology

Bradley Funkhouser noted that CATA will be updating their technology to include the installation of cameras on buses and LAC members can expect to see a presentation prior to implementation very soon.

Bus Shelters

Bradley Funkhouser stated that CATA has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) in the excess of \$1 million for new bus shelters.

Chair Wiese requested an update on the Holiday Service Grant and the shelter and benches that were removed from the Frandor location.

Bradley Funkhouser stated that he will be meeting with the owner of Frandor, City Council members and Mayor Schor in hopes of opening the lines of communication and finding a way back to providing full-service. This will include reinstalling the shelter and benches that were removed and speaking with the business owners that were impacted. Ultimately, this is private property and CATA and the owner of Frandor had agreed to wait six (6) months before trying to revisit the situation.

Chair Wiese stated that CATA has the LAC's full support and they will assist in whatever way possible.

Bradley Funkhouser further noted that the homeless situation is a driving concern. CATA was asked to house homeless individuals in the transit centers; however, this is not a solution. CATA will pledge money toward social services and assist where possible.

Bradley Funkhouser also stated that holiday services are not grant funded. They are included in the CATA budget and implementation is entirely a staffing issue. He then deferred to Todd Brooks, Director of Operations, for more details.

Todd Brooks explained that CATA plans to offer holiday services by this coming Easter.

Bradley Funkhouser echoed Mr. Brooks remarks and added that CATA anticipates launching by this spring.

George Hanley inquired about the process.

Bradley Funkhouser explained that CATA will use a planning consultant along with the LAC's input to create a timeline of goals.

Doug Lecato inquired whether Frandor is a DEI issue since it is private property.

Bradley Funkhouser stated that it can be a DEI issue no matter if the property is public or private.

Doug Lecato inquired whether it could be a Title IV issue.

Bradley Funkhouser deferred to Ms. Paiz to confirm whether the situation is a DEI community issue or a Title IV federal issue.

Diana Paiz confirmed that it is a DEI issue and not a Title IV issue.

Diana Paiz also inquired whether the shelter needs to be updated as well as adding or improving wheelchair accessibility.

Bradley Funkhouser replied that the shelter will need to be replaced. CATA will also look at new locations. Mr. Funkhouser noted that there are some challenges to finding new locations which require federal government environmental clearance and deferred to Ericka Hartigan, Grants Manager, for more details.

Ericka Hartigan explained that CATA cannot use grant funds for brand new shelter locations if we do not follow federally mandated environmental requirements.

Bradley Funkhouser also noted that CATA will need to do further research, investigate desired locations, and review wheelchair accessibility.

George Hanley stated that he will investigate the locations and provide Mr. Funkhouser with the data. He also suggested that CATA and the LAC review the data together in order to find the best accessible locations.

Diana Paiz stated that the CATA holiday card that was emailed out did not read audibly for those that use a screen reader.

Bradley Funkhouser stated that he will have the Marketing Department review the email for the holiday e-card and include more details.

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS – Todd Brooks

Community Involvement

Todd Brooks reported that the Operations Staff, including Craig Frazier, attended the “Stuff the Bus” event last Saturday, December 3rd. The event was sponsored by the JCI Lansing (Lansing Jaycees) which is part of the Michigan Junior Chamber and Junior Chamber International (JCI). The event was a great success and received numerous donations for Gardner International Magnet School.

Todd Brooks also reported on CATA’s parade participation for this holiday season. Mr. Brooks explained that this year CATA used two (2) vehicles including a 60-foot CATApillar Bus and a Chevy Tahoe LadyBug. Both vehicles were decorated with lights and appeared in Lansing’s Silver Bells parade, Mason’s parade and Williamston’s parade. They will also participate in the Leslie parade this coming Saturday, December 10th.

Operations Department’s Staffing

Todd Brooks reported that there are currently two (2) open positions in the Operations Department. One of the positions will be filled with Josh Price, a previous operator. Mr. Brooks noted that Mr. Price will be a great addition to our team.

Operator Bidding

Todd Brooks reported that the upcoming bid begins on December 19th and it will include drivers from most recent class. Mr. Brooks further noted that the next bid will begin on January 9th.

PARATRANSIT OPERATIONS MANAGER REPORT – Craig Frazier

Ridership

Craig Frazier reported that paratransit ridership is at 1,100 per day and Spec-Tran rides and call volumes are between 800-900 per day which is similar to data collected pre-pandemic.

Fleet

Craig Frazier additionally stated that CATA has ordered new buses and vans.

Chair Wiese inquired about whether the Wait-Stop parameters have been posted.

Craig Frazier replied that the parameters for the Wait-Stop were posted at 11:00 a.m. today.

Chair Wiese inquired about the next steps before the Wait-Stop program is launched on January 9, 2023

Craig Frazier stated that more training will take place before execution.

Craig Frazier also reported that on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, all rides will have a cut-off time of 6:15 p.m. and vehicles must be in garage by 7:00 p.m.

Jeffrey Allshouse applauded on the timely service from both Transdev and paratransit.

George Hanley applauded CATA's customer service and requested Transdev's contact information for Grand Rapids.

Nancy Lohr responded that she would email the contact information to Mr. Hanley.

SERVICE QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE (SQS) – Kellie Blackwell

See attached report

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

Annual Grant Application

- Specialized Services Service Description (Ericka Hartigan)
- Coordination Plan for Specialized Services (Ericka Hartigan)
- Vehicle Accessibility Plan Update (Ericka Hartigan)

Chair Wiese shared the grant application and requested that Ms. Hartigan please provide information on the annual process and forms for new attendees.

Ericka Hartigan explained that CATA receives support from MDOT and each year, CATA applies for matched dollars on the application. As part of the application process, it is necessary for the LAC to be involved and their approval is required in order to move forward. The three (3) forms have been provided to the LAC for review.

Chair Wiese confirmed that she has received the forms and they could be read but had some issues with screen reader accessibility; Chair Wiese further noted that the answer to the Vehicle Accessibility Plan, question number three, was not visible.

Ericka Hartigan stated that the answer to question number three is "no". The agency has not made any changes to the number of vehicles and remains at 108 vehicles.

Chair Wiese noted that she is the LAC liaison to the Office on Aging.

Ericka Hartigan stated that she will update forms to indicate that Chair Wiese is the LAC liaison to the Office of Aging.

MOTION:

Chair Wiese moved that the LAC recommends approval for the specialized Service Grant Application forms that would include the Coordination Plan, the grant application, and the Vehicle Accessibility Plan.

Jeffrey Allshouse seconded the motion.

VOTE:

Motion passed unanimously.

MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Diana Paiz discussed the accessibility of the documentation under the Annual Grant agenda item and that this issue has arisen many times before. Chair Weise deferred the issue to the next SQS Meeting.

George Hanley reported on two (2) studies that are currently underway at MSU. One study uses autonomous vehicles to assist in picking up and transporting persons with disabilities. They are looking for two (2) more people to survey and at least twenty more people to be able to run through simulations. Mr. Hanely stated that he has flyers for those that would like more information.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Bradley Funkhouser stated that he is working on establishing an advisory committee for EATRAN. He expressed his appreciation for the LAC and their ability to accomplish goals and solve problems. Mr. Funkhouser requested any recommendations that the LAC may have for members in the Delta area.

Chair Wiese stated that Ms. Blackwell works for the Disability Rights Coalition and Ms. Shannon works for the Disability Network. They might know of some individuals in Eaton County that may be interested.

MOTION:

A motion to adjourn was made by George Hanley and supported by Jeffrey Allshouse.

VOTE:

Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Wiese adjourned the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Sumerix
Operations Administrative Coordinator