

LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING via ZOOM

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2023, 3:30 P.M.

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

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Geneva Smith and Jeffrey Allshouse

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 3:31 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY AGENDA

Chair Wiese indicated that we are working off an updated Agenda sent out on January 24th. Chair Wiese additionally requested that a new item under New Business be added to the Agenda to discuss whether future meetings are to be held in person or to continue by Zoom.

MOTION:

A motion to approve the February 2023 Agenda with the addition of New Business Item, Future Meeting Platform, was moved by George Hanley and supported by Kellie Blackwell.

VOTE:

Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER MINUTES

MOTION:

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

VOTE: Motion passed unanimously.

LAC CHAIR COMMENTS – Deb Wiese

Chair Wiese commented on attending the January CATA Board meeting where she spoke on the implementation of the Wait-Stop Program. CATA is one (1) of the first agencies to implement such an innovative service. Chair Wiese additionally commented on the CATA January Board Retreat which highlighted CATA's accomplishments, future planning, and challenges over the past year. A PowerPoint presentation will be shared via email.

BOARD LIAISON REPORT – Doug Lecato

See attached report.

CATA CEO REPORT – Bradley Funkhouser

Transdev

Bradley Funkhouser commented on the Transdev contract being the largest contract in CATA's history. The contract is for a three-year term with two (2), one-year options and includes a scope that allows for expansion of service.

Job Fair

Bradley Funkhouser reported on the successful job fairs that took place at the Lansing Center for CATA and Transdev and at the Lansing Mall for EATRAN. Mr. Funkhouser reported that EATRAN received 27 applications, with the possibility of hiring three (3) new drivers while CATA received 75 applications and has a new operator class starting on March 27th.

Holiday Service

Bradley Funkhouser noted that the Holiday Service that was reported on at the CATA January Board Retreat will be the first time in CATA history to launch a pilot service around Easter and will also cover as many holidays as possible throughout the year. This service will be limited yet will accommodate those who are in need of transportation.

Fleet Bus Order

Bradley Funkhouser reported that CATA will be receiving a large bus order soon.

Shelter Contract

Bradley Funkhouser reported that CATA is in the process of a multiyear contract for updating their shelters. The size of this contract is unprecedented and will exceed a cost of over \$1 million. Mr. Funkhouser stated that over the next couple of years, CATA will be increasing the number of shelters and replacing those that need to be updated.

Chair Wiese opened the floor to questions related to Mr. Funkhouser's report.

George Hanley inquired about CATA's emergency process and requested more details on CATA's Holiday Service.

Bradley Funkhouser stated that the Holiday Service schedule will be reported to Chair Wiese in plenty of time before the holidays. He further explained that CATA participates with the Emergency Operations Center and with the mayor's office. CATA also keeps in contact with other community members to share awareness. Mr. Funkhouser noted that in various emergency situations, CATA has offered to keep services running and provide warming centers for those in need.

Chair Wiese inquired about CATA's Holiday Service and whether the service would have limited hours with less available buses. She also inquired about Transdev's contract to expand service without issuing an additional RFP and the status of expanding EATRAN's LAC.

Bradley Funkhouser explained that CATA's Holiday Service will not affect Paratransit service in anyway. Buses will run similar to Sunday service where CATA does not utilize all of their fleet. He further noted that Transdev's contract with CATA includes expanding service into the Tri-County areas where demand has increased. Mr. Funkhouser also reaffirmed that EATRAN is still looking for any individuals that live and/or utilize services in Eaton County and would be interested in serving on EATRAN's LAC. Anyone interested can fill out the LAC application on EATRAN's website.

Discussion ensued regarding eligibility to serve on the LAC as it relates to residence and multiple boards. Neither Mr. Funkhouser nor Chair Wiese thought there are any restrictions to serving on more than one LAC nor are there any restrictions based on residency. The law establishing the LAC Councils has only a few specific requirements. These requirements are posted on the CATA website.

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS – Todd Brooks

Cross Training

Todd Brooks reported on continuing to cross-train employees within CATA's Operations department. He also praised Craig Frazier, Paratransit Manager, on being instrumental in expanding it to both paratransit and fixed routes. Other areas of cross training include payroll, work assignments, and Street Supervisors within the Operations Center.

First Annual Bowling Party

Todd Brooks reported on the first annual bowling party that was held on January 21st at City Limits Bowling Center in Mason, MI. All 22 department members participated in the event which included supervisors, schedulers, call takers, and department managers. Mr. Brooks stated that those who participated are looking forward to the next event in order to build a solid, cohesive department.

Staffing

Todd Brooks reported that CATA's Operations Center Supervisor position has been filled. Mr. Brooks announced that he is happy to report that the new supervisor will start Monday, February 6th. CATA's new employee is from Florida and has a strong transit background with supervisor level experience.

Operator Class

Todd Brooks reported that currently, CATA has a small class of operators that are being trained.

Bid Schedule

Todd Brooks reported that the upcoming sign-up will begin on Monday, March 6, followed by the spring semester sign-up which begins on Monday, March 13, and runs through Sunday, May 7.

PARATRANSIT OPERATIONS MANAGER REPORT – Craig Frazier

Staffing for Paratransit

Craig Frazier reported on the open supervisor position in Paratransit. There are currently two (2) possible candidates for the position. Mr. Frazier explained that once the position is filled, the Paratransit department will be able to return to having both a manager and a supervisor to provide necessary support.

New Vehicles

Craig Frazier reported that the Buy America Audit is now complete, and CATA has 16 new minivans on site. The minivans will have new equipment installed at the beginning of next week.

Ridership

Craig Frazier reported that the Wait-Stop ridership is between 75-80 trips since January 9th. Mr. Frazier stated that the program is going very well, and the items identified to improve services are being addressed and will be discussed with the SQS committee at its March meeting.

Craig Frazier further reported that Spec-Tran daily ridership is between 1100-1200 over the last couple weeks. Total paratransit daily ridership is between 1400-1500 compared to pre-pandemic which was between 1600-1700 and call volumes are at 700 compared to pre-pandemic of 800. Mr. Frazier noted that CATA is close to returning to pre-pandemic ridership.

Job Fair

Deb Wiese inquired on the number of Big Star vehicles that remain part of the subcontract with Transdev and how long Transdev plans to subcontract with Big Star.

Nancy Lohr, Transdev General Manager, reported that Transdev received six (6) applications from the job fair that CATA hosted.

Bradley Funkhouser commented on Mr. Frazier's report and clarified that CATA now uses minivans that contain the CATA logo and come in several colors besides white. He explained that CATA will give a detailed description to assist those trying to

identify CATA's vehicles. The decision to purchase minivans in various colors was made based on the lack of availability of white vehicles.

Nancy Lohr stated that Transdev started with two (2) Big Star drivers. Then they had 11 drivers at the peak of the driver shortage and now are down to nine (9) drivers. Chair Wiese asked Mr. Brooks about the fixed-routes ridership.

Todd Brooks responded that CATA is getting closer to pre-pandemic levels. He further noted that he will provide more accurate numbers for fixed route at future LAC meetings.

SERVICE QUALITY SUBCOMMITTEE (SQS) – Kellie Blackwell

See attached report.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

MDOT Vehicle Accessibility Plan

Chair Wiese referenced the updated Agenda that was sent out to the LAC members which included the review of the Vehicle Accessibility Plan that was presented by CATA's Ericka Hartigan back in December. Chair Wiese noted that the questions submitted along with their corresponding responses from Ms. Hartigan have been provided for review. Chair Wiese clarified that no action is required from the LAC at this time.

Ericka Hartigan stated that during her presentation back in December 2022, she explained that CATA receives support from MDOT and each year, CATA applies for matched dollars on the Annual Grant Application. As part of the application process, it is necessary for the LAC to be involved and their approval is required to move forward. At the last meeting, Ms. Hartigan pointed out the changes that occurred over the past year regarding the Vehicle Accessibility Plan and asked for LAC members to review and submit their questions and/or comments to her. Any comments and/or questions will be included the final Vehicle Accessibility Plan which will then be presented to the Board of Directors for approval.

Ericka Hartigan also noted that a full Vehicle Accessibility Plan has not been submitted since 2005; therefore, MDOT has required an updated submission of the plan in its entirety. Submission is required to receive funds under legislative mandate PA51. The plan has been completed in accordance with the laws utilizing MDOT's templates to include CATA's fares, schedules, days, and times of operation along with CATA's LAC's members and their associations defined.

Chair Wiese stated that any further questions and/or comments provided by LAC members need to be sent to Ms. Hartigan by February 15, 2023.

Discussion ensued and Ms. Hartigan confirmed that she has taken notes of the commentary made at today's meeting and will incorporate them into the final Vehicle Accessibility Plan before submitting to CATA's Board of Directors for approval in March 2023.

New Member Application

Chair Wiese asked that Mr. Frazier read the application submitted.

Craig Frazier stated that he has received a new application from Darren Fowler.

MOTION:

Diana Paiz moved that the LAC recommends approval of Darren Fowler's application for LAC membership and presentation to the Board for final approval.

Ethan Devereaux seconded the motion.

VOTE:

Motion passed unanimously.

Future Meeting Platform

Chair Wiese presented options for meeting via Zoom or in person. After taking a consensus, the preference to meet in person prevailed and will be the platform moving forward with exceptions when necessary.

MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

MOTION:

A motion to adjourn was made by Diana Paiz and supported by Ethan D. Devereaux.

VOTE:

Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Wiese adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Sumerix
Operations Administrative Coordinator