

CAPITAL AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
BOARD RETREAT MEETING

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024
LANSING CENTER GOVERNOR'S ROOM
333 E. MICHIGAN AVENUE, LANSING, MI 48933

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Triplett called the meeting to order at 4:22 p.m. He thanked the Board for their time and the CATA staff for all their hard work in organizing the Board Retreat.

INTRODUCTION:

Bradley Funkhouser welcomed everyone and started off the retreat by explaining the purpose of the Board Retreat is to give a brief overview of the past year and year to come. Mr. Funkhouser also clarified that CATA offers holiday service on Easter, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. He then introduced the first speaker, Todd Brooks, Director of Operations.

DEPARTMENT TRENDS AND UPDATES:

OPERATIONS & PARATRANSIT: Todd Brooks, Director of Operations, gave an overview of his staff including the promotion of two (2) operators to supervisory positions and hiring one (1) external candidate to a supervisory position. In 2023, CATA hired and trained five (5) new operator classes and the current headcount is 247 operators (full-time: 218, and part-time: 29).

Todd Brooks thanked Steve Soliz, Union President, Local 1039, for his assistance in updating the Union's Work Rules without any issues.

Some of the department's key accomplishments for 2023 included assisting the Lansing School District with transportation for their students, and providing shuttle service for Routes 1, 3, 8, 11, 12, 13, and 30 during construction projects and/or capacity concerns. Mr. Brooks also stated that all of CATA's employees completed an Active Violence Emergency Response Training class and his staff and members of the LAC participated in CATA's all-operator training sessions over the summer. He further noted that his staff took part in specialized training from Trapeze software and Transit Master. Mr. Brooks continued his report by acknowledging CATA's community partnerships including MSU, East Lansing's Art Festival, Tri-County Office on Aging, Capital Area Disability Network, Davies Project, RSVP Foster Grandparent Program, Lansing Jaycees - Stuff the Bus, Lansing for a Lifetime Committee, and parade participation within the surrounding areas.

Todd Brooks further shared the goals for 2024 including continuing quarterly training meetings, working on providing holiday service, working with LCC to

provide custom writing classes to staff members, continue with department cross-training, and review paratransit work to ensure maximum optimization.

Doug Lecato stated that he used to participate in the Lansing Jaycees - Stuff the Bus event and requested that the Board be notified once Mr. Brooks has the event date for 2024.

Todd Brooks stated that he will let the Board know the date for the 2024 Lansing Jaycees - Stuff the Bus event, once he has the information.

Shanna Draheim requested more information related to CATA having fewer full-time split-shifts.

Todd Brooks explained that the Union requested fewer full-time split-shifts. Upon hiring more operators, CATA was able to have fewer full-time split-shifts, which has made a big difference with the operators.

Jack Schmitt expressed his appreciation for CATA offering internal promotions.

Doug Lecato stated that he had received good feedback from the CATA operators.

Todd Brooks thanked Mr. Lecato for sharing his feedback.

MAINTENANCE: Dan Hodges, Director of Maintenance, gave an overview of his department including promoting one (1) Mechanic Helper to First Class Mechanic and two (2) Utility employees to Mechanic Helper. CATA also hired one (1) midnight supervisor, one (1) Mechanic Helper and four (4) Utility employees. Mr. Hodges also stated that CATA received six (6) new 40-foot and one (1) 60-foot Nova buses, eight (8) new Ford cutaway 25-foot buses, six (6) new Chrysler Voyager vans for Transdev, transferred six (6) used ADA Chrysler minivans to EATRAN and transferred two (2) used 27-foot cutaway buses to Marquette Transit. CATA also auctioned eight (8) used large buses and three (3) used trucks/SUVs/vans.

Some goals and challenges for 2024 will be to order up to three (3) large electric buses, cutaway buses, and one (1) new service truck. Mr. Hodges further noted that his department will expand the mechanic and new-hire training programs, complete a mock FTA Triennial audit and an annual parts inventory audit for Finance.

Doug Lecato stated that he thought Nova was out of business and no longer supplying buses.

Dan Hodges explained that Nova is still making buses; however, they will soon no longer operate in the U.S.

MARKETING: Lolo Robison, Director of Marketing and Customer Experience, gave her overview of the department's projects including the promotion on Meridian's Redi-Ride service extension to McLaren Greater Lansing Hospital, hosted EATRAN's

Next Stop press event, and promoted the expansion of Route 3. She also reported that Customer Experience has increased the number of Listening Bus sessions, supported various holiday services, completed a comprehensive website accessibility audit, and elevated accessibility standards across CATA's social media platforms. Ms. Robison continued by acknowledging CATA's community partnerships including promoting the Odyssey of the Mind event, Lansing's Community Connect "Coat Drive", Lansing School District, and the Refugee Development Center, continued human trafficking awareness and prevention campaign, and worked with MDOT to edit forms for better accessibility and compliance.

Lolo Robison commented on some of the goals in 2024 for the Marketing Department which will include having language translation services for ten plus languages including American Sign Language, having a digital trip planning map, promoting a mechanic job fair at Baker College, transitioning from PDF to web-based forms to enhance online accessibility, and redesigning CATA and EATRAN's websites.

Shanna Draheim expressed her appreciation for CATA's community partnerships and the Marketing Department's balance between recognizing riders of need and riders of choice. She also inquired whether CATA reaches out to new housing developments in the area to find out their transit needs and to promote CATA.

Lolo Robison stated that Mr. Funkhouser along with CATA's Planning Department work together to reach out to new developments in the area in order to fulfill their transit needs. She also stated that her department is always involved in the process of promoting CATA.

Jack Schmitt inquired about the contract CATA has with Outfront Media Group for advertising and wondered whether they had guaranteed CATA a certain amount of revenue.

Lolo Robison stated that Outfront Media Group did guarantee CATA a certain amount of revenue; however, due to the pandemic, the amount of guaranteed revenue was adjusted.

HUMAN RESOURCES: Marshea Brown, Director of Human Resources, started with the year in review. The Human Resources Department hosted four (4) job fairs, administered wage increases, implemented signing bonuses associated with the ATU contract ratification, enhanced employee supplemental benefits, and updated CATA's Administrative Pension Plan summary program descriptions. Some of the future goals for the department included updating the Administrative Guidebook and CATA's Employee Benefits Plan, and conducting a salary survey. Ms. Brown further noted that the DEI Task Force will continue to provide education and training options for members and volunteering in the community.

Marshea Brown also noted CATA's demographics and stated that since she has been at CATA, the number of both African Americans and female employees have increased.

Doug Lecato inquired whether CATA tried volunteering at the food bank during December.

Marshea Brown stated that December is a very busy month and there were no open dates left to volunteer. She explained that April is volunteer month; therefore, CATA is scheduled to volunteer at that time. Ms. Brown also stated that anyone that is interested in volunteering can reach out to her.

Doug Lecato referenced Mr. Brooks comments made regarding CATA's Leadership Training Program and inquired about the candidate mentioned.

Marshea Brown stated that the candidate is a Maintenance Supervisor.

Doug Lecato inquired whether all employees at CATA have access to these learning programs offered by CATA.

Marshea Brown confirmed that all CATA employees have access to join any of these programs.

FACILITIES: Andrew Brieschke, Deputy CEO, reported on some of the improvements made by Facilities, included replacing CATA's air compressors, and continuing to update CATA's bus stops and security throughout CATA's facilities. Some future projects are installing electric bus charging stations, completing an updated TAM Plan, a Facility assessment for improving CATA's infrastructure including roof replacement, increasing the amount of accessible parking spots, and installing new controls and parts for CATA's bus washer.

Mark Grebner left at 5:16 p.m.

Doug Lecato extended his appreciation to Norm VanAlstine, Facilities Manager, and recognized him for his hard work and dedication to CATA. He also noted that Mr. VanAlstine saves CATA a lot of money by having a portion of work done in-house and appreciates the clean buses. He further commented on CATA's bus washer and how great it is to have in the facility.

Andrew Brieschke thanked Mr. Lecato for his comments and stated that he will relay Mr. Lecato's compliments to Mr. VanAlstine. He also stated that CATA is quite proud to have a bus washer on-site even though it is expensive to maintain. Mr. Brieschke noted that the updates to the bus washer will approximately cost \$1.1 million.

John Prush inquired about the twenty year old Facilities van that is used for delivering bus schedules.

Andrew Brieschke clarified that it is a full-sized van that has been upfitted in the back with shelves. He explained that it is used as CATA's scheduled delivery van and is used by Facilities. Mr. Brieschke noted that although it has few miles and few maintenance issues, it is beyond useful life and needs replacing.

John Prush inquired whether CATA has noticed an increase in the Transit app being used by their riders.

Andrew Brieschke stated that CATA has noticed an increase in the Transit app being used by its riders; however, there is still a large group of riders that rely on the paper maps that CATA provides. He also noted that CATA's Marketing Department works with Facilities to make sure that the maps are placed efficiently and not wasted.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: Dan Goodemoot, Director of IT, outlined his department's accomplishments over the past year which included completing an IT Security Evaluation Project, implementing the first phase of a two-factor authentication security process, server and storage migrations to a new hardware platform, and Michigan Public Safety Communication radio system console training. Improvements and/or upgrades were made to the MyRide CATA app and to CATA's secondary network.

Dan Goodemoot further reported on some future projects for his department which included upgrading CATA's firewall, implementing the MPSCS radio system, and wireless network upgrades. He also noted that his department will be working on installing cameras on buses, improving CATA's Paratransit website, and launching CATA's contactless payment system on buses.

Shanna Draheim thanked Mr. Goodemoot for his department's overview. She also inquired whether CATA's contactless payment option will be available in all of CATA's buses.

Dan Goodemoot confirmed that all of CATA's fixed-route and paratransit buses that have fareboxes will have a contactless payment option. He also noted that buses without fareboxes will have handheld devices in them.

Doug Lecato inquired about paratransit buses having contactless payment options.

Dan Goodemoot confirmed that if the bus does not have a farebox, then the operators will use a handheld device for riders to use.

Chair Triplett mentioned that out of all CATA's accomplishments and goals for 2024, he is really excited to see CATA's continued regional coordination with Clinton Transit and EATRAN, having electric vehicles in CATA's fleet and providing contactless payment for riders.

PLANNING: Dustin Hagfors, Director of Planning and Development, provided an overview on his department and reported on some of CATA's achievements in 2023, including ridership increasing back to pre-pandemic levels, and updating and installing new shelters within the service area. Mr. Hagfors also commented on CATA achieving gold level status in receiving APTA's Sustainability Commitment certificate. He further acknowledged CATA's regional partnerships with EATRAN and Clinton Transit.

Dustin Hagfors stated that in 2024, CATA will continue to update and install new shelters, work towards implementing CATA's fleet electrification plan, and continue reducing our carbon footprint to reach platinum level of APTA's Sustainability Commitment. His department will also continue to research a CATA downtown facility, increase service levels, implement microtransit, and continue to expand service through regional coordination.

Bradley Funkhouser stated that Jim Frenedt, Director of Finance, will present CATA's financials at the February Board meeting. He also noted that the Board Retreat PowerPoint will be emailed to Board members by the end of the week. Mr. Funkhouser requested feedback from Board members to be sent to him by January 31, 2024.

DISCUSSION:

Shanna Draheim inquired whether Board members will have an opportunity for discussion after the finance report is presented.

Bradley Funkhouser confirmed that Board members will have an opportunity for discussion after the finance report.

Jack Schmitt thanked CATA Staff for their presentations.

Chair Triplett echoed Jack Schmitt's remarks. He also expressed his appreciation for the CATA Board of Directors and the public for attending the retreat.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Daniel Black commented on Ms. Brown's report regarding CATA's DEI Task Force and wondered whether any disabled employees were included in her demographic report.

Deb Parrish commented on CATA's wait-stop pilot and expressed her appreciation that the program is being utilized. She also shared her enthusiasm for the MyRide CATA app, as well as CATA's projects for 2024.

Daniel Black shared a story about a CATA bus not arriving on time and his frustration when speaking with CATA's call center.

CLOSING REMARKS:

Bradley Funkhouser thanked Board members and the public for attending CATA's Board Retreat and enduring the cold weather outside. He also expressed his appreciation for the CATA Staff and their hard work.

Chair Triplett also thanked everyone for attending CATA's Board Retreat.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Triplett adjourned at 5:51. p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shanna Draheim
Vice Chair and Acting Secretary/Treasurer

Tina Orlando
Recording Secretary