

CAPITAL AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
BOARD RETREAT MEETING

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2026  
LANSING CENTER GOVERNOR'S ROOM  
333 E. MICHIGAN AVENUE, LANSING, MI 48933

**PRESENT:** Nathan Triplett, Chair  
Shanna Draheim, Vice Chair  
Phil Deschaine, Secretary/Treasurer  
Mark Grebner  
Steven Vagnozzi  
Derek Melot  
Eric Tans  
Kellie Blackwell  
John Prush

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Triplett called the meeting to order at 4:18 p.m.

**ABSENT:** Ed Rodgers and Jack Schmitt

**LATE:** Chelsea Dowler

**WELCOME:**

Chair Triplett welcomed everyone.

**INTRODUCTION:**

Bradley Funkhouser welcomed everyone and began by explaining that this is a required retreat per CATA Board policy. He explained that this year, the retreat will focus on CATA's budget outlook. Mr. Funkhouser introduced Jim Frenedt, Director of Finance.

**BUDGET OUTLOOK:**

Jim Frenedt started off by giving a recap from FY 2025. He also reported on CATA's plan moving forward now that a number of items that were previously unknown are now known, such as the state's Local Bus Operating (LBO) funds, the new ATU, Local 1039, labor agreement and service in Delta Township.

Chelsea Dowler arrived at 4:29 p.m.

**DISCUSSION:**

Steve Vagnozzi inquired about the \$8.5 million estimated cash flow.

Jim Frenedt explained that the \$8.5 million estimated cash flow represents CATA's reserves.

Derek Melot summarized CATA's position in FY 2026 and FY 2027. He also inquired about CATA's expenses when there are no cash reserves.

Jim Frenedt stated that it would be in the low \$50 million range.

Shanna Draheim inquired about service cuts.

Jim Frendt stated that CATA would look at the comprehensive operations analysis (COA).

Andrew Brieschke echoed Mr. Frendt's remarks and confirmed that CATA will look at the comprehensive operations analysis (COA) to assist with determining service cuts. He noted that CATA has not committed to service reductions, but it is an option.

Shanna Draheim inquired about the COA timeline.

Andrew Brieschke deferred to Dustin Hagfors, Director of Planning and Development, for more details.

Dustin Hagfors stated that stakeholder meetings will start next week. He explained that he should have recommendations from the consultant by June 2026 and implementation strategies by September 2026.

Phil Deschaine stated that COVID created a unique situation where many government entities and businesses received money to assist with financial strains caused by the pandemic. He noted that many businesses have now spent their COVID money and find themselves having to close or make cuts in order to stay in business.

Chair Triplett inquired about CATA's service levels pre-pandemic compared to service levels throughout the pandemic and now.

Jim Frendt stated that CATA was able to maintain its levels with the COVID money that they received.

Chair Triplett summarized that CATA's current position is a result of saving a lot of the COVID money that was received rather than spending it.

Jim Frendt agreed with Chair Triplett's summary. He also noted that CATA incurred other expenses during the pandemic such as sanitizing the buses multiple times of the day.

Discussion ensued.

Mark Grebner left at 5:24 p.m.

Bradley Funkhouser stated that at the February Board meeting next month, CATA will present different scenarios for service reductions.

Chair Triplett thanked Mr. Frendt for his presentation. He also thanked Staff and Mr. Brieschke for providing additional information.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None

**CLOSING REMARKS:**

Bradley Funkhouser thanked the Board for their patience.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Chair Triplett adjourned the Board Retreat at 5:51 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Phil Deschaine  
Secretary/Treasurer

Tina Orlando  
Recording Secretary