

CAPITAL AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2023
4:00 P.M. – LANSING CENTER GOVERNOR'S ROOM
333 E. MICHIGAN AVENUE, LANSING, MI 48933

PRESENT: Nathan Triplett, Chair
Jennie Gies
Jack Schmitt
Maggie Sanders

Derek Melot
Phyllis Vaughn
Phil Deschaine

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Triplett called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Phil Deschaine, Jennie Gies, Derek Melot, Maggie Sanders, Jack Schmitt, Nathan Triplett, and Phyllis Vaughn were all present.

ABSENT: Terrance Augustine

LATE: Dusty Fancher, Vice Chair, Shanna Draheim, Secretary/Treasurer, John Prush, Doug Lecato, and Mark Grebner

Dusty Fancher and Doug Lecato arrived at 4:01 p.m.

Shanna Draheim arrived at 4:02 p.m.

Chair Triplett welcomed everyone to the Board meeting. He also mentioned that the meeting is being offered on Zoom for those who wish to view the Board meeting virtually.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Deb Parrish thanked Mr. Funkhouser for speaking about the Holiday Service and its on-time performance over this past Easter Sunday. Ms. Parrish offered a suggestion of riders booking their rides by Thursday in order to make sure there are enough drivers to accommodate for Easter Sunday. She also commended Dan Goodemoot, Director of IT and the MyRide CATA app.

Karla Hudson, from Meridian Township, expressed her frustration at not being able to give her public comment via Zoom. She hopes that the CATA Board will give CATA the approval to improve their technology. Ms. Hudson would also like to see same day service provided by CATA.

Mark Grebner arrived at 4:04 p.m.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS:

MOTION:

Doug Lecato motioned to excuse Terrance Augustine and John Prush. Jack Schmitt supported the motion.

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Clinton Transit

Bradley Funkhouser reported that he and Chair Triplett met with MaLissa Schutt and Gail Watkins from Clinton Transit to outline the expectations for next year. Mr. Funkhouser stated that the Interlocal Agreement between CATA and Clinton Transit will be updated in September 2023. He also shared that Clinton Transit has been averaging approximately 1,000 rides per month.

Route 3

Bradley Funkhouser reported that on the first day of extending Route 3, ridership increased by ten percent. Mr. Funkhouser stated that he expects that ridership on Route 3 will continue to increase as more people become aware of the service.

Job Fair

Bradley Funkhouser reported that there were approximately 72 attendees at the job fair that took place on May 4. CATA gained eleven (11) new drivers and EATRAN gained nine (9). Currently, CATA has eleven (11) new drivers in training which brings CATA's total number of drivers to 250. The increase in the number of drivers will allow CATA to restore more service in the fall.

MyRide CATA App

Bradley Funkhouser stated that last month, CATA launched the MyRide CATA app for Meridian Township's Redi-Ride service. Mr. Funkhouser noted that overall, CATA has received positive feedback from users; however, there are still a few items that need to be improved.

John Prush arrived at 4:07 p.m.

Downtown Facility

Bradley Funkhouser stated that he and Chair Triplett have met with various city representatives and housing partners to discuss building a new CATA facility downtown. Mr. Funkhouser explained that CATA is waiting to see whether the state will invest in a downtown facility. More details to come.

Doug Lecato stated that the Redi-Ride service in Delhi Charter Township has also started.

Bradley Funkhouser thanked Mr. Lecato for the additional information.

ACTION ITEMS – PROPOSED CONSENT AGENDA

- A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 2023, BOARD MEETING
- B. TREASURER’S REPORT FOR MARCH 2023
 - 1. Interim Income Statement
 - 2. Cash Summary
 - 3. Investments
 - 4. Fifth Third Investment Account Reconciliation
- C. AMMENDMENT TO THE SECURITY SERVICES CONTRACT

PROPOSED MOTION: That the CATA Board of Directors authorizes Board Chair, Nathan Triplett, and Chief Executive Officer, Bradley T. Funkhouser, to execute an amendment to the security services contract with Charlesbrook Protection Services for the provision of security services at a cost not to exceed \$503,600, for a one-year term with additional options to extend the contract for one (1), one-year term, followed by one (1), three-year term, to expire in conjunction with RFP 2023-135, on such other terms and conditions as the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer deem necessary.

Jennie Gies requested that Action Item C be moved to discussion.

Mark Grebner inquired about rescinding John Prush’s excused absence.

Chair Triplett stated that the minutes will reflect that Mr. Prush is in attendance.

MOTION:

Phil Deschaine motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with ACTION ITEM C, AMMENDMENT TO THE SECURITY SERVICES CONTRACT moved to discussion and Dusty Fancher supported the motion.

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS - DISCUSSION AGENDA

- A. AMMENDMENT TO THE SECURITY SERVICES CONTRACT

PROPOSED MOTION: That the CATA Board of Directors authorizes Board Chair, Nathan Triplett, and Chief Executive Officer, Bradley T. Funkhouser, to execute an amendment to the security services contract with Charlesbrook Protection Services for the provision of security services at a cost not to exceed \$503,600, for a one-year term with additional options to extend the contract for one (1), one-year term, followed by one (1), three-year term, to expire in conjunction with RFP

2023-135, on such other terms and conditions as the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer deem necessary.

Jennie Gies inquired about CATA's plan for a new facility downtown and whether any of the funds for this project will be used for additional security services.

Bradley Funkhouser noted that the funding for the additional security services will be balanced over the years.

Jennie Gies inquired whether CATA will use the same amount of security.

Bradley Funkhouser explained that with the additional downtown facility, there will be more security. He also stated that CATA will discuss ways to create a safe place with our community leaders. Mr. Funkhouser further noted that CATA is not looking at armed security, but rather adding more social services for those in need.

Jennie Gies inquired about certain areas in which the city is willing to help.

Bradley Funkhouser stated that Mayor Schor and city leaders are trying to find solutions. The idea is to create space for the services that are needed in our community. Mr. Funkhouser reminded everyone that CATA is in the transportation business, yet is committed to the public and will continue to provide help where we can.

Mark Grebner inquired about the hours for additional security.

Lolo Robison, Director of Marketing, Customer Experience and Public Information Officer, stated that the additional hours for security will be in the mornings and evenings.

John Prush inquired about this contract already being approved and the reason for the amendment.

Bradley Funkhouser stated that this contract is being amended for additional security.

Chair Triplett summarized that the reasoning behind the amendment and the request for additional security is to have a short-term contract based on current needs that can be reexamined at a later date.

Bradley Funkhouser agreed with Chair Triplett's summary.

Chair Triplett also noted that there have been many conversations regarding CATA interacting with the homeless. He further explained that the upcoming meeting with the mayor is to help solve this issue and CATA is engaged at every level.

Bradley Funkhouser concurred with Chair Triplett's remarks.

MOTION:

Dusty Fancher motioned to approve DISCUSSION ITEM A, AMMENDMENT TO THE SECURITY SERVICES CONTRACT and Jennie Gies supported the motion.

VOTE: The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Bradley Funkhouser introduced Dustin Hagfors, Director of Planning and Development.

Dustin Hagfors gave his presentation.

Phil Deschaine inquired about the microtransit project at Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) and the areas that were served.

Dustin Hagfors went over the areas that SMART served.

Shanna Draheim requested further information regarding the connection between microtransit and fixed routes.

Dustin Hagfors stated that a trip can be built to fit anyone's specific needs and gave an example.

Shanna Draheim commented on the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) example where they used Uber and Lyft. She inquired whether Via Transportation could compare as well. She also inquired about turnkey solutions being on-demand and how they address needing more drivers.

Dustin Hagfors explained that passengers would still need to pay for Uber or Lyft if the demand for rides increased; however, in Meridian Township and Delhi Township, riders would have Redi-Ride to assist with the high demands. He further explained that Via Transportation adjusts as the demand for rides increases and drivers will be sent where they are needed. Via Transportation also monitors rides in order to provide a consistent wait time.

Bradley Funkhouser stated that CATA has a contract with the ATU, Local 1039, and CATA's existing drivers and services will not be replaced by microtransit.

Doug Lecato inquired about the subsidized fares in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Dustin Hagfors stated that he is not sure about the subsidized fares in Calhoun County. He also explained that CATA can determine the fare cost.

Doug Lecato shared an example about Denver, Colorado's fare cost program with transportation network companies (TNCs).

Dustin Hagfors stated that microtransit service will give customers a fare range to choose from with a max of \$15.00.

Dusty Fancher thanked Mr. Hagfors for his presentation. She also commented on the many types of paratransit that CATA provides and the driver training and background checks that are associated with CATA's hiring process. Ms. Fancher inquired whether Via Transportation performs driver training and background checks for their drivers.

Dustin Hagfors confirmed that CATA can be involved in driver training and background checks. He also stated that some of the transit agencies that use microtransit drivers have them wear the same uniforms as their Union drivers. Mr. Hagfors further noted that CATA can address any concerns in the contract.

Dusty Fancher inquired about CATA's same day service and whether microtransit would provide a faster option.

Dustin Hagfors confirmed that microtransit may well be a faster option for some same day service where riders can schedule their own trip through an app.

Chair Triplett stated that previously, background checks were required for TNCs.

Jennie Gies inquired whether CATA will use a combination of transportation options for riders.

Dustin Hagfors stated that CATA will offer various options for riders where they can customize their ride based on their specific needs.

Jennie Gies inquired whether microtransit service will have a different app than transit fixed routes.

Dustin Hagfors confirmed that microtransit will need a different app from Transit; however, as technology improves, they could possibly use the same app in the future.

Jennie Gies inquired about the impacts that microtransit has on fixed routes.

Dustin Hagfors stated that microtransit allows transportation to be more accessible which ultimately increases ridership. He also noted that there may be times when choosing a fixed route is a better option than using microtransit.

Jennie Gies inquired whether CATA will use state or federal funds.

Dustin Hagfors stated that CATA will use federal funds.

Jennie Gies inquired about microtransit being able to manage all the inputs from riders from the same area at the same time.

Dustin Hagfors explained that the microtransit app is built to handle the demands of increased ridership and it will bring in drivers from other areas to accommodate.

Phyllis Vaughn inquired whether a rider using microtransit would be the only rider being transported and whether the trip would be direct.

Dustin Hagfors explained that sometimes a rider may have to share the trip with other riders and the trips are not always direct. Riders will have options and they will have to determine which type of transportation will best fit their needs. He also noted that microtransit is not a private ride like using Uber and Lyft.

Jennie Gies inquired about the types of vehicles that will be used for microtransit.

Dustin Hagfors replied that CATA will most likely use ADA-accessible vans and/or cutaway buses.

Shanna Draheim inquired whether the microtransit app will provide a calculated estimated time for users.

Dustin Hagfors confirmed that the microtransit app will display estimated times for different routes so that a rider may decide which option is best suited for their schedule.

Maggie Sanders inquired about the cost of a ride if other riders are sharing a trip.

Dustin Hagfors replied that at SMART, there is a standard fare regardless of the number of riders that are sharing a ride.

Mark Grebner expressed his concern over having so many transportation options and the time associated with trying to find the best form of transportation to fit one's needs. He stated that finding transportation should be a simple process and not complicated.

Phyllis Vaughn stated that she is a frequent Spec-Tran and Redi-Ride user. She also shared that when scheduling a ride, she is often asked when she would like to be picked up, yet she prefers to give the time that she would like to arrive to her destination.

Doug Lecato shared that CATA is not the first transit agency looking at microtransit and that microtransit is already being used in Florida, Denver, and Seattle. He expressed his appreciation for the service and likes the progression.

Mark Grebner stated that CATA already provides six (6) paratransit services including, CATA's Rural Service, Redi-Rides in Meridian Township, Delhi Township, and Mason, Spec-Tran, and on Michigan State University's campus. He also shared the rules involved within each service and expressed his concern for setting up a system that is too complex for riders.

Dusty Fancher stated that CATA actually provides ten (10) options. She also expressed her opinion that having options is very beneficial to riders and trusts that CATA will figure out the best plan for using microtransit. Ms. Fancher further stated that while CATA will be responsible for the technical side of microtransit, it's the Board's job is to make sure things run smoothly.

Shanna Draheim echoed Dusty Fancher's remarks.

Phil Deschaine stated that four (4) years ago, CATA expanded the Redi-Ride service in Meridian Township and the riders adapted very well. Mr. Deschaine explained that the expansion was needed to accommodate students using the service. He also commended CATA and their partnership with Meridian Township and is very confident in CATA's ability to improve transportation.

Bradley Funkhouser commented on Mr. Grebner's remarks. He also noted that during the pandemic, CATA was able to adapt and offer solutions to accommodate restrictions that were placed on transit by the state and federal governments. Mr. Funkhouser stated that CATA will not just implement technology to solve an issue, but rather find solutions that will benefit both CATA's employees and riders.

Jack Schmitt left at 4:53 p.m.

Chair Triplett shared the idea of CATA providing a smooth process along with flexible options through technology. He also stated that the objective is to make things simpler. Chair Triplett noted that riders are already using microtransit, and he looks forward to exploring different options in order to improve service.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Fred Wurtzel thanked everyone for the opportunity to speak. He also expressed his opinion that microtransit solves a lot of issues. He inquired about the app being able to determine the pickup and drop-off order. Mr. Wurtzel stated that he has been asking for same day service for years and it is important to him to be able to schedule his own time.

Krista Abdallah inquired about submitting her public comment to the Board. She also stated that she has difficulty being able to see through the windows of wrapped buses.

Karla Hudson, from Meridian Township, stated that she serves on the Transportation Commission. She also mentioned that she has used many types of transportation

services. Ms. Hudson hopes that the CATA Board will advocate for better technology and same-day service.

Doug Lecato commented on the CATA Board's process for submitting public comment. He also expressed his belief that CATA needs to figure out a better way for the public to have access to the Board agenda and update the CATA website to accommodate.

Chair Triplett stated that CATA will look into the issue and make the necessary corrections.

Lolo Robison, Director of Marketing, Customer Experience and Public Information Officer, stated that the cutoff time to submit public comments should be by 4:00 p.m. Wednesday.

Shanna Draheim inquired whether the timeframe for submitting public comment posted on CATA's website is referring to public comments made via Zoom.

Bradley Funkhouser stated that this issue is an oversight coming out of the pandemic and will be corrected. He also commented on CATA's paratransit. CATA is required by law to provide Spec-Tran service, a complimentary service that has a lot of federal regulations. Mr. Funkhouser explained that many transit agencies including CATA, require a twenty-four-hour notice to schedule rides. He further explained that CATA does not decline same day service in times of urgency; however, the times may be negotiated. CATA needs that flexibility to be able to provide rides in times of urgency while being able to service the rides already scheduled. He then noted the various types of same-day service that CATA already provides including Redi-Rides.

Phyllis Vaughn inquired about being able to ride CATA vehicles into Clinton Township.

Bradley Funkhouser stated that at this time, riders are not able to be transported into Clinton Township using CATA vehicles.

Chair Triplett summarized the jurisdictions surrounding Clinton Township and Eaton County. He then noted that Mr. Funkhouser has done a lot of work to quantify the service; however, there is still more to come.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Triplett adjourned the meeting at 5:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shanna Draheim
Secretary/Treasurer

Tina Orlando
Recording Secretary