

INTERURBAN TRANSIT PARTNERSHIP BOARD

January 26, 2011

ATTENDANCE

Board Members Present

Charis Austin
Tim Cochran
Ira Hart
Lisa Haynes
George Heartwell
Jack Hoffman
Barbara Holt
Tammy Hopman
Don Lawless
Rick Morris
Richard Root
Terry Schweitzer
Rob VerHeulen
Jim White

Staff

Kathy Anderson	Bill Kirk
Robin Crothers	Nick Monoyios
Judy DeVries	Brian Pouget
Mark Fedorowicz	Liz Schelling
Sarah Green	Steve Schipper
Alan Hartley	Peter Varga
Taiwo Jaiyeoba	Conrad Venema
Meegan Joyce	Scott Walsh
Jennifer Kalczuk	

Board Members Absent

Steve Kauffman

Others Present

Amy Brundidge, Passenger
Jordan Bunning, DDM
David Bulkowski, DAKC
Leon Carrico, ATU Local 836
Robert Carter, Passenger
Todd Davis, WSA
David Doyle, Friends of Transit
Dan Fox, MV Transportation
Pat Duperron, BDO Seidman
Rachel Foster, Miller Johnson
Richard Jackson, Union 836
Kyla King, Grand Rapids Press
Sgt. Wayne Moore, GRPD/The Rapid
Jackie O'Conner, Area Agency on Aging
Steve Redmond, MDOT
Robyn Saylor, Passenger
Matt Smith, Passenger
Tom Tilman, GGR Bicycle Coalition
Douglas Wright, Passenger

**MINUTES OF
INTERURBAN TRANSIT PARTNERSHIP BOARD
AS RECORDED ON JANUARY 26, 2011**

Commencing at 4:00 p.m. Mr. Lawless called the regular meeting of the Interurban Transit Partnership Board to order.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Rob Carter is concerned about Grand Rapids Public Schools having a millage at the same time as us. He does not believe that Grand Rapids is able to support two millages during these economic times. He would like the city of Walker contacted about updating the traffic signals on Alpine Avenue, between 3 mile and Lamoreaux, to help transit vehicles travel more efficiently.

Douglas Wright would like more bus stops to be handicap accessible.

Jackie O'Conner with the Area Agency on Aging commented that they are pleased that Rapid staff is looking for resources to continue the Ridelink program.

1. Minutes of the December 8, 2010 Board Meeting:

A motion was made by VerHeulen, supported by Root, to approve the December 8, 2010 Board meeting minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by White, supported by Hart, to approve Consent Agenda items 2-7. Motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR AGENDA

Performance Oversight Committee

8. FY 2010 Audit Report:

Mr. Schweitzer reported that BDO Seidman finished the FY 2010 Audit. He explained that the audit expresses an opinion about whether the financial statements that have been prepared by management have been fairly presented and follow the general accepted auditing principles. He mentioned that this year the Performance Oversight Committee had some discussion regarding the audit process and how it takes a sampling of the different accounting procedures to provide an assessment of that performance.

He reported that the FY 2010 audit report was positive and reported no issues. The report highlighted that state operating assistance has decreased, property tax revenue has decreased and that the ITP made two significant real estate purchases in FY 2010. The ITP had a fund balance increase by \$577,000. We also had a review of both pension plans which are both sufficiently funded and in good standing.

Pat Duperron with BDO Seidman reported that they issued an unqualified opinion with no internal control issues. She thanked The Rapid Finance Department for all their hard work preparing for the audit.

Mayor Root commented that having no findings speaks very highly of the Finance Department. He mentioned that it is great to have a positive fund balance but we must keep this in perspective.

Mr. Lawless commented that we need to give credit to staff for paying such close attention to managing costs.

A motion was made by Austin, supported by Root, to approve the FY 2010 Audit Report. Motion passed unanimously.

9. October and November 2010 Ridership and Productivity Reports:

Mr. Schweitzer reported that the October and November 2010 Ridership and Productivity Reports reflect strong ridership numbers, especially on fixed route, which experienced increases on all routes within this period. If this continues we will have an excess of 10 million riders in FY 2011.

A motion was made by Holt, supported by White, to approve the October and November 2010 Ridership and Productivity Reports. Motion passed unanimously.

10. October and November 2010 Paratransit Ridership Reports:

Mr. Schweitzer commented that the October and November 2010 Paratransit Ridership Reports are both positive and reflect ridership increases.

A motion was made by Hoffman, supported by Haynes, to approve the October and November 2010 Paratransit Ridership Reports. Motion passed unanimously.

11. FY 2011 Report Card Standards – Fixed Route:

Mr. Schweitzer reported that these report cards measure fixed-route productivity against a predetermined standard. Each fiscal year, these standards are updated based on statistical analysis of previous years and the expectations of the following year. This year staff is recommending we change standards in four areas.

Staff is recommending that the safety standard be reduced from 1.40 to 1.30 preventable accidents per 100,000 revenue miles since preventable accidents were .30 lower than FY 2009. Staff proposes a reduction in the customer service

standard to 3.50 complaints per 100,000 passengers for FY 2011 due to the average of 2.35 complaints per 100,000 passengers in FY 2010.

Cost per passenger averaged \$2.61 in FY 2010. This resulted in \$.44 below the FY 2010 standard of \$3.05. Calculating the FY 2011 projected fixed-route operating expenses with the projected ridership increase of 2.5% decreases this standard to \$2.97 per passenger. He mentioned that the committee discussed the impact that fluctuation in fuel costs would have on this standard and staff noted that this was considered when calculating the new standard.

In addition, there was an average of 2.10 passengers per revenue mile per quarter in FY 2010. Since no new service is planned for implementation, and ridership is predicted to slightly increase, staff recommends increasing this standard to 2.00 passengers per revenue mile.

Mr. Morris noted that not many other transit agencies take the approach to measure the effectiveness of service and cost effectiveness the way we do. We are always trying to improve service and the standards show we are doing a good job.

Mayor Heartwell inquired if we could increase the productivity level since we have consistently had increases in ridership. Mr. Schweitzer noted that eventually ridership will level off especially if you do not have any change to service.

A motion was made by Holt, supported by Heartwell, to approve the FY 2011 Fixed Route Report Card Standards. Motion passed unanimously.

12. FY 2011 Report Card Standards-Paratransit:

Mr. Schweitzer reported that we are proposing changes to travel time, customer service, and the on-time performance standards.

He noted that the average trip length between FY 2008 and FY 2010 was 32 minutes. The current standard is 33 minutes. Staff is confident that the scheduling software combined with the ITS equipment in each vehicle supports the shortest trips possible. Staff recommends changing the current standard to 32 minutes. There was an average of 0.9 complaints per 1,000 passengers between FY 2008 and FY 2010. This is below the current standard of 3.0 complaints per 1,000 passengers. Continued emphasis placed on safety and training standards by MV as well as better on-time performance results in the staff proposal of a new standard of 2.0 complaints per 1,000 passengers as acceptable. He mentioned that the current on-time performance standard is 92%. The past 2 years actual on-time performance averaged 94.9%. Staff recommends the standard for on-time performance be adjusted to 93%.

Mr. White commented that this is a very important service for seniors.

A motion was made by Hopman, supported by Heartwell, to approve the FY 2011 Paratransit Report Card Standards. Motion passed unanimously.

Strategic Planning Committee

13. BRT Conceptual AE Design Services:

Mr. Hoffman noted that staff is requesting that the Board approve Task 1 and approve the consultant, Wilbur Smith Associates, to move into Task 2 of the BRT project subject to available funds to implement and operate the project. The purpose of Task 2 is to advance and finalize the work done in the conceptual design and engineering phase for project implementation purposes.

Mr. Varga commented that the completion of Task 1 has helped us redefine the project with the federal government and the potential federal costs. He noted that Task 2 will not be done until we have operating funds.

A motion was made by Hoffman, supported by Hart, to approve Task 1 of the BRT Conceptual AE Design Services and to approve moving into Task 2 subject to receipt of funding for construction and operation of the project. Motion passed unanimously.

Governance Committee

14. Millage Election Date:

Mr. Lawless explained that last year we adopted a Transit Master Plan and today we have the opportunity to decide if we want to set a millage election date implementing the first phase of the plan.

Mr. Varga mentioned that one issue has been to determine what other millages are running and on what date. Staff has always advised that if there are other millage elections we should pick the date they are not using, so we are not competing with another millage.

Mayor Heartwell stated that at the strategic planning session in January, Mr. Varga gave two compelling reasons to use the May 3 election date, if it is an open date. The first reason is to get in on the summer 2011 tax collections and the second is to lock in the state match as soon as possible. He believes that the Grand Rapids Public Schools are looking to use the November date. He noted that the Wyoming Public Schools may have decided to place a question on the May ballot.

Mr. Cochran confirmed that Wyoming has decided to use the May election date. He noted that Wyoming is asking for a small millage for facility improvements and reminded us that Wyoming Public Schools covers only about half of the city. He does not believe this will have a vast impact on our millage.

Mr. Lawless asked what Friends of Transit think regarding the election date.

Mr. Bulkowski commented that Disability Advocates and Friends of Transit both support the proposed service enhancements. He is confident that we have a great proposal. He noted that we would have more volunteers in November but that they will get out and recruit people to help for a May election. He commented that Board members will have to help get the word out along with them.

Mr. Morris questioned if there would be enough time to raise funds necessary for a campaign if we go in May. David Doyle noted that we can have a successful millage in May. November would be better as far as time however we do not want to compete with schools.

Mr. White noted that many students were not aware of the last millage and did not think they could vote. He feels we need a college campus campaign to get the students to vote. He questioned if they would still be here in May or if it would be easier to get the student vote in November. Ms. Haynes noted that the semester is over by May and stated that the students would have to be registered to vote here.

Mayor Heartwell made a motion, supported by Holt, to approve the May 3, 2011 millage election date.

Mr. Morris noted that he is a fan of the November date due to time constraints. He is concerned that students will not be here to help get the word out and there may not be enough time to raise funds.

Mayor VerHeulen questioned if the students are done before May. Ms. Haynes noted that the students are done by May 3, however, there are many students that take summer classes at the downtown campus. She also noted that there are many other colleges in the area.

Mr. White suggested we set up a student committee on each campus to get the word out.

Ms. Hopman noted that we would actually need a count of how many students are registered to vote before we could determine what impact the student vote would have.

Mayor VerHeulen commented that even if the students are in session we have no sense of how many are registered.

Mr. Lawless commented that students usually do not vote, however, we do want to encourage everyone to vote.

Mr. Morris noted that his issue is not with the college students voting but with the volunteer help they can provide.

Mr. Hoffman asked Mr. Morris his thoughts about going in November against the schools. Mr. Morris replied that he would hope our proposal would stand on its own. We have a good proposal and if we explain the proposal it should pass.

Mayor Heartwell commented that in order to pass the millage we know we have to win Grand Rapids by a solid margin. History shows that when given two millages, voters will often choose one and we do not want that to happen in Grand Rapids.

Mr. Hoffman asked Mr. Varga his thoughts on the relationship between timing and securing the grant funds.

Mr. Varga replied that the system improvements in the Transit Master Plan provide service to the public that is needed to help get people to jobs and create jobs. Implementing the improvements sooner helps accelerate the receipt of federal funds which accelerates the potential of getting state funds. This is an important message we are sending to the public and a factor to consider. He noted that he has met with Rapid staff and they all want to serve the riders. He mentioned that the Transit Master Plan was put before the public and developed by the public; it is what they have asked for.

Mr. Morris noted that if Mayor Heartwell believes we have a better chance in May for Grand Rapids then he will support the May election date.

Ms. Holt supports May after hearing the comments from Friends of Transit.

Mr. Hoffman supports May.

Mr. Lawless commented that this ballot proposal is a result of the Transit Master Plan. He believes we have good momentum and a good team moving forward.

Mr. Lawless restated the motion to authorize the May 3 election date. The motion passed unanimously.

CEO's REPORT

15. CEO Monthly Report:

Mr. Varga reported that we received an achievement of excellence from the FTA on the Triennial Review. There were no findings on the Triennial Review.

He thanked staff for hard work on the FY 2010 audit.

He noted that the American Public Transportation Association has asked him to serve on the selection committee to choose a new CEO.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Lawless commented that to have no findings on the Triennial Review is a noteworthy achievement.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS

No report.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

No comments.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

There was no discussion on the following information items.

- A. Minutes of 1-12-11 Governance Committee Meetings
- B. Minutes of 1-19-11 Performance Oversight Committee Meeting
- C. Minutes of 1-19-11 Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
- D. Minutes of 1-20-11 External Relations Committee Meeting
- E. Communications

The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Crothers, ITP Board Secretary