

INTERURBAN TRANSIT PARTNERSHIP

BOARD MEETING

September 28, 2011

ATTENDANCE

Board Members Present

Charis Austin
Tim Cochran
Ira Hart
Lisa Haynes
George Heartwell
Jack Hoffman
Barb Holt
Tammy Hopman
Steve Kauffman
Don Lawless
Rick Root
Terry Schweitzer
Amna Seibold
Rob VerHeulen
James White

Staff

Robin Crothers
Alan Hartley
Meegan Joyce
Jennifer Kalczuk
Bill Kirk
Steve Luther
Nick Monoyios
Brian Pouget
Liz Schelling
Steve Schipper
Peter Varga

Others Present

Zac Bosma, Christman
Dan Fox, MV Transportation
Seth Horton, Progressive AE
Watchdog Miller, Citizen
Sgt. Wayne Moore, GRPD
Grant Pecor, Clark Hill
Troy Reimink, GR Press
Leah Anne Weston, Citizen

**MINUTES OF
INTERURBAN TRANSIT PARTNERSHIP
BOARD MEETING
AS RECORDED ON SEPTEMBER 28 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

Watchdog Miller stated that the \$5 Artprize bus pass is discriminatory and that the \$26 monthly senior pass is much more costly than what is offered at other agencies. He recommends we take the 28th Street eastbound bus out of the Beltline Bar parking lot and look into the route on 28th Street that goes into Meijer. He made some comments about Meijer and suggested splitting Routes 1 and 2 to work better with the BRT.

1. Minutes of the August 31, 2011 Board Meeting:

A motion was made by VerHeulen, supported by Heartwell, to approve the August 31, 2011 Board meeting minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Heartwell, supported by White, to approve Consent Agenda items 2-4. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hoffman asked what factors contributed to the 72% increase in contracted ridership. Mr. Monoyios replied that he would look into what the factors were that caused the increase and let him know.

REGULAR AGENDA

Performance Oversight Committee

5. Renewal of Go!Bus Service Agreements:

Ms. Joyce reported that staff is requesting Board authorization to execute agreements to provide GO!Bus type service for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. She explained that Cascade and Ada townships will no longer be contracting with us for service and have both decided to go with another contractor in hopes of saving money.

A motion was made Holt, supported by Austin, to approve the renewal of the GO!Bus service agreements with Alpine, Byron and Gaines townships, Goodwill Industries and

Community Rebuilders and to approve three-party agreements with MDOT and Kent County as needed to support these agreements. Motion passed unanimously.

Governance Committee

6. FY 2012 Priorities & Work Plan:

Mr. Lawless commented the FY 2012 Priorities and Work Plan is very detailed and comprehensive. The External Relations Committee also had a good discussion about the report.

Mr. Varga noted that there have been no changes to the document since it was presented in September.

A motion was made by Heartwell, supported by Haynes, to approve the FY 2012 Priorities and Work Plan. Motion passed unanimously.

PRESENTATION - Wealthy Operations Center Expansion Project Update

Zac Bosma gave a presentation on the Wealthy Operations Center project. He updated the Board about progress on the project and answered questions.

CEO REPORT

7. CEO Monthly Report:

Mr. Cochran commented that the city of Wyoming is currently working on reinventing 28th Street. He noted that the city of Muskegon is making a similar effort and moving toward a more transit oriented approach. The city of Wyoming recently took a trip to Muskegon to tour what their efforts are so far. He thanked Mr. Pouget for his assistance with this trip.

Mr. Cochran reported that he, along with Rapid staff, went to Cleveland to tour their BRT system. It was a very educational experience and he thanked Wilbur Smith for putting it together. He spoke about the economic impact the system has had on the community and the return on investment.

Mr. Hoffman asked how long they have had the BRT and what ridership numbers are. Mr. Cochran responded that it has been two years and ridership is over 10 million annually.

Ms. Seibold questioned if the BRT is supplementing ridership or taking ridership away from the train system which in the past has been a very effective system. Mr. Cochran noted that the light rail system takes a much broader path to get to the same destinations. This is why this project is of particular interest to the FTA as a demonstration project to see if a BRT system could replace the high cost of a light rail system. He is not sure how many of the light rail trips are impacted due to the BRT,

however, the BRT still has a number of stops outside of the light rail corridor that it serves.

Mr. Varga noted that the BRT system in Cleveland was designed more like the light rail systems function and at a higher cost. He noted that a lot of funds went into the reconstruction of the streets. We are currently working with the city of Grand Rapids to reconstruct part of the Division corridor.

Mr. Varga mentioned that on October 24 we celebrated 10 million rides here at Rapid Central Station. Mr. Lawless commented that it was a great celebration and thanked staff for their hard work.

Mr. Varga reported that he addressed the Michigan Society of Engineers who are very pro transit.

He mentioned that the federal funding situation is fluid at this point. He reported that the reauthorization bill has not been passed and that SAFETEA-LU has been extended again for six more months. This has created a delay in getting our funding. The House and Senate have different views on what they want for a long term solution. He explained that the House is proposing a two-year bill with significant cuts to transportation funding and the Senate is proposing a two-year bill with resources available and no cuts to transportation. They have to come to an agreement within six months. This makes it difficult to speculate what the funding environment will be for transit. He will keep the Board updated of any new developments.

Mr. Kauffman mentioned that along with the transportation funding cuts they are also proposing a 60% cut in AMTRAK funding and he inquired how this would impact our AMTRAK initiative. Mr. Varga replied that the initiative is being funded with capital funds from a FRA grant that has already been administered. He believes the issue will be how AMTRAK is supported nationally. In Michigan we have state support for the AMTRAK corridors so part of it depends on what Michigan will do to sustain support for AMTRAK.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Lawless introduced new Board member Amna Seibold representing the city of East Grand Rapids.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORTS

No Advisory Committee reports.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Labor Negotiations

A motion was made by VerHeulen, supported by Hoffman, to close regular session and go into executive session to discuss labor negotiations. A roll call vote was taken.

YES: Austin, Cochran, Hart, Haynes, Heartwell, Hoffman, Holt, Hopman, Kauffman, Lawless, Seibold, Root, Schweitzer, VerHeulen, White

No: None

Motion passed unanimously. (4:49 p.m.)

A motion was made by Heartwell, supported by VerHeulen, to adjourn executive session and return to regular session. A roll call vote was taken.

Yes: Austin, Cochran, Hart, Heartwell, Hoffman, Holt, Kauffman, Lawless, Seibold, Root, Schweitzer, VerHeulen, White

No: None

Motion passed unanimously. (6:00 p.m.)

No action was recommended in Executive Session.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Kauffman mentioned that Mr. Varga had a guest column in the Grand Rapids Press which was very well presented.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

There was no discussion on the following information items.

- A. Minutes of 9-14-11 Governance Committee Meeting
- B. Minutes of 9-21-11 Performance Oversight Committee Meeting
- C. Minutes of 9-22-11 External Relations Committee Meeting
- D. Communications

The meeting concluded at 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Crothers, ITP Board Secretary