



**Present Performance & Service Committee Members**

Charis Austin      David Bilardello (Chair)      Tracie Coffman      Steven Gilbert      Andy Guy

**PRESENT PERFORMANCE & SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Tuesday, September 14, 2021 – 4 p.m.**

**Rapid Central Station Conference Room | 250 Grandville Avenue, SW/Virtual**

**AGENDA**

	<u>PRESENTER</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
<b>1. PUBLIC COMMENT</b>		
<b>2. MINUTES REVIEW</b> – July 13, 2021	David Bilardello	Review
<b>3. INFORMATION</b>		
A. Ridership and Metrics		
1) On Time Performance – construction, ridership metrics	Max Dillivan	
2) Students – Overall ridership report	Max Dillivan	
3) Customer Appreciation Day – COA 2 days	Marie Tubergen	
B. Maintenance		
1) Update on new bus build – 15 new Gillig buses	Steve Clapp	
2) Family Fleet		
C. Employees		
1) Recruit/Retention Update	Nancy Groendal	
2) FEO, Buyer, Financial Analyst, Supervisor		
D. Safety		
1) Developing bell weather – Covid Predictive Tool	Steve Luther	
2) Covid Plan Update	Steve Luther	
E. Fleet and Facilities		
1) Adding lighting upgrades - LED lighting, one side vs other	Deron Kippen	
2) VIPR team visit	Mike Wieringa	
3) RNG (DTE)		
<b>4. ADJOURNMENT</b>		

Next meeting: November 17, 2021



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## PRESENT PERFORMANCE & SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 13, 2021 – 4 p.m.

Rapid Central Station Conference Room (250 Grandville, SW) | Virtual

### ATTENDANCE:

#### Committee Members Present:

Charis Austin, David Bilardello, Tracie Coffman, Steve Gilbert, Andy Guy

#### Committee Members Absent:

#### Staff Attendees:

Steve Clapp, Max Dillivan, Nancy Groendal, Julie Ilbrink, Bill Kirk, Steve Luther, Linda Medina, Nick Monoyios, James Nguyen, Deb Prato, Jason Prescott, Steve Schipper, Marie Tubergen, Mike Wieringa, Kevin Wisselink

#### Other Attendees:

Francis Miller

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Mr. Bilardello called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

### 1. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Miller offered a public comment. He also left a hand-written document for all members of the board.

No other public comments were offered.

### 2. MINUTES REVIEW – May 11, 2021

Minutes from May 11 were distributed and reviewed. They were approved as written.

### 3. INFORMATION

#### a. Ridership and Metrics

##### 1) Fixed Route

Mr. Dillivan presented information on fixed route ridership recovery. The team is framing ridership in terms of recovery and comparing numbers to last year and 2019. He walked through the statistics from the past five months. Overall, ridership is down from 2019 approximately 55%. Mr. Dillivan walked through the 120-day trend to show we are seeing a very slow increase compared to the 2019 rates.

Mr. Bilardello asked about expectations for the school year starting in the Fall. Mr. Dillivan shared the information they have from local schools is that they will be running at nearly full capacity when school resumes. Mr. Dillivan shared they saw increased ridership on the weekends in 2019 which tapered off in 2020.

Ms. Coffman asked when late-night services will be brought back. Mr. Dillivan shared this item is included in the COA's Expansion Priorities which the Board will review later this year. Ms. Prato commented this is a priority in order to get 2<sup>nd</sup> shift home, 3<sup>rd</sup> shift to work, along with hospitality and retail workers to their weekend jobs.

Mr. Guy asked if there was any connection between ridership levels and methods of payment. Mr. Dillivan shared a promotional event was held to provide free rides to Wave Card users. During this time, they saw about 50% of the ridership population using the Wave Card. They hope to see this increase as they move towards eliminating paper tickets very soon.

## 2) Paratransit

Mr. Prescott presented information on paratransit ridership. They are still seeing riders and are getting them where they need to go. The late trips, missed trips, complaints rate has gone down since last year. He has been working with his team to provide excellent customer service to all riders. He shared they are 44% down from pre-pandemic but are doing much better than last year during the pandemic. One of the stressors they have felt with their contractor is an inability to gain and retain drivers. There is one year left on that contract; his team is focusing on productivity during this timeframe. We will be maintaining and insisting that productivity and efficiencies increase during this last contract year.

## 3) On-Time Performance

Mr. Dillivan presented updates regarding on-time performance. The Rapid considers a bus to be on time if it is anywhere from 0 to 5 minutes late. A bus that arrives before the scheduled time or 5 minutes after the scheduled time is not considered to be on time. Mr. Dillivan shared a graph demonstrating that the fixed route system as a whole is operating above 90% on time and above since March. There were only a small number of dips under the 90% range. He explained that sometimes these dips are experienced more frequently during the summer months as road construction season begins and routes have to go on detour.

## 4) University Partners

Mr. Monoyios presented an update on university parties. We will be resuming capacity with GVSU on the Laker Line, although it is at a slightly reduced service level of 10-minute frequency versus the 6-minute frequency. However, as the school season comes into full swing, they anticipate getting back to the 6-minute schedule. Mr. Monoyios shared Davenport University's executive offices are interested in resuming conversations regarding options to help solve some of their mobility issues.

Mr. Bilardello asked if Ferris State was back to previous levels. Mr. Monoyios shared it was. Mr. Bilardello asked for clarification on GVSU service levels. Mr. Monoyios shared the Laker Line should be at full strength by their winter session.

Mr. Bilardello asked if the Davenport University venture would be presented to the Board. Mr. Monoyios shared that while the conversations have just begun, he ensured the Board will be presented all information.

5) Customer Appreciation Event

Ms. Tubergen shared the results of the Customer Appreciation event which took place from June 20 to June 30, 2021. The goal of this event was to encourage more riders to participate in the Wave Care program. Ms. Tubergen showed the reduced rate card taps increased over 2,000, while adult rate card taps increased about 9,000, resulting in an overall increase in 16.58% in taps. The total sales also increased by 38.12%.

Mr. Gilbert shared he felt this event was great and wanted to know what the overall cost was to the system to hold this event. Ms. Tubergen replied while it is difficult to estimate how many paid versus non-paid rides were taken due to capping levels, however, the best estimate would be that it cost The Rapid approximately \$36,000 in free rides.

6) Peer Agency Review for On-Demand

Mr. Monoyios shared his team is doing a peer agency review for on-demand services. Part of this process is learning how their service models operate, what types of traffic patterns could be expected, and what type of service model would be best for us. He will continue working with peer agencies and will share more when information is available.

Ms. Coffman asked which peer agencies were being reviewed. Mr. Monoyios shared Little Rock, AK, PACE in suburban Chicago, Pinellas County in Florida, and Lane Transit in Eugene, OR. Our COA consultant identified some of these, while others were already known to us as using paratransit services. Ms. Coffman asked if funding sources of each of the peer agencies will be taken into consideration. Ms. Coffman expressed the importance of knowing this information to help The Rapid make funding decisions in the future. Mr. Monoyios agreed and stated he would add this to the list of information he is gathering.

Mr. Guy expressed his thanks for the hard work the team is doing, and shared he looked forward to future updates.

**b. Financial**

1) Laker Line Project

Mr. Wisselink shared the Laker Line project came in significantly under budget. Additionally, they just received notification from the FTA that we can spend this money on other projects on our list. He shared the team would like to address the remaining items of scope and will begin working with FTA for the appropriate approvals.

Mr. Bilardello commented he did notice that the Collindale structure had fallen off the scope and asked if there were any plans to restore it. Mr. Wisselink shared the team feels the utility is not present to do this project.

2) Diesel Fuel

Mr. Wisselink shared a purchase was made from J&H oil for diesel fuel. Future predictions of pricing is not expected to change in the next few years. The budget is currently set higher than the current expenditures, and they would like to continue this to cover any overage. He shared we purchase a diesel efficient fuel which is an Exxon Mobile product which can only be purchased at rack price. It has been shown to increase gas mileage while decreasing noxious emissions and diesel particulate filter which builds up in the engine. Mr. Wisselink shared less than half of the fleet are currently using diesel fuel, while the remainder are CNG. With CNG, we

are paying approximately \$.63/gallon. They are also working with Grand Rapids to utilize the renewable natural gas services.

Ms. Coffman asked which buses would be able to use the fuel through the biodigester. Mr. Wisselink shared all CNG buses will be able to use the fuel.

Mr. Bilardello asked for clarification as to how the financial discussions fall into this committee and asked if it will also be presented to the Finance Committee. Ms. Prato shared the agenda is structured with raw topics which involve financial items along with present performance. We have not previously discussed diesel fuel, however, as the price of regular gas goes to \$4/gallon, we know this will cross over into increased ridership and diesel fuel usage.

### 3) Township Partnerships

Mr. Monoyios shared updates on township partnerships.

- Cascade Township – has reduced their service level by 60 minutes in the evenings and Saturdays. Their DDA agreed to fund the entire service with these changes implemented. It will result in some renumbering of routes.
- Byron Township – has reduced their revenue hours and split between 1M and 1B. Part of the COA is transitioning the hours into peak trips only into Route 10.
- Plainfield Township – a meeting was held with their leadership to discuss future of demand. Route 11 will be going to the Meijer on Plainfield every 15 minutes.
- Gaines Township – Route 2 is going to the Meijer at an increased frequency.

Ms. Coffman asked which township was going to have apartments cut out of the route and if the conversations have taken place. Mr. Dillivan shared it was Gaines Township regarding Woodfield Apartments. The policy has not been fully adopted.

Mr. Bilardello asked if the changes in Cascade effect our side of the border for travel patterns. Mr. Monoyios stated it would mirror the reduced number of trips they opted for. Mr. Bilardello asked if Route 29 goes down 29<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Dillivan shared Route 27 goes down 29<sup>th</sup> Street.

## c. Employees

### 1) Job Fair and Recruiting

Ms. Groendal shared they recently held two successful job fairs on June 22 and June 29. There were 30 applicants that showed up. Offers were made to 18 people. Five of those people declined the offer, therefore, 13 people will be starting the new class next week. Demographics of these new employees are 8 African-American males, 3 African-American females, 1 Hispanic male and 1 Asian male, There are also 2 Hispanic male technicians starting next week

Ms. Groendal shared there are three positions open: Buyer, Marketing Manager and Transportation Supervisor. All technician openings are filled. They are looking to have another class in September.

### 2) Technician Training

Mr. Clapp shared they have recently completed natural gas system training. The technicians are certified to inspect the CNG systems on our CNG buses. Training was brought onsite from the National Gas Vehicle Institute (NGVI) to the Laker Line facility. Students must successfully show they possess the knowledge and skills to serve as a certified CNG fuel system inspector. 9 technicians and 1 fleet maintenance supervisor attended the training.

Mr. Clapp recently hired a fleet asset administrator who has come to us from Cummings. He had also worked previously for The Rapid in the parts room for 5 years and is familiar with the processes. This position will provide much needed support for the management of the organization's assets, data mining, reporting, and warranty administration.

**d. Safety**

1) Safety Update

Mr. Luther shared an update on the COVID response. While it is winding down, we are not quite over it yet. We have not a positive COVID case or exposure in more than a month. The last employee to return to work, went out in early May and was very ill. This employee is scheduled to return July 20.

Mr. Luther shared The Rapid is at 38.5% of employees who have reported being vaccinated, however, he does feel there are more employees that have been vaccinated but are choosing to not report it. Mr. Luther pointed out that while we are below the state and national average, we are higher than several other states.

Mr. Luther shared the frequent disinfection of the buses on the platforms at Central Station, Kentwood Station, and GVSU's PEW campus, will be concluding at the end of July. The nightly disinfection will continue. Mr. Luther also shared we are very well stocked on PPE and sanitizer. He shared masks are still mandated until September 13 but TSA just put out a statement that depending on what the CDC says, they may end the mandate earlier.

**e. Fleet and Facilities**

1) Rapid Central Station

Mr. Schipper shared Rapid Central Station has been fully re-opened to the public. They now have access to the restrooms, the information center and vending machines.

2) Vehicle Fleet Maintenance

Mr. Clapp shared he is currently at the Gillig factory in California to inspect the buses coming off the line, ensuring the first buses coming off the line meet all the specs and standards. As part of his succession planning, supervisor Casey O'Rourke accompanied Mr. Clapp on this trip to participate in learning what is involved in a bus build.

Mr. Clapp shared fleet maintenance tends to see seasonal failures and issues that arise within our fleet. For instance, they see more right rear body damage throughout the winter months, so they stocked up on the right rear body replacement parts for that season. Summer can bring breakdowns of air conditioning units and engine overheating, but so far this summer we have not seen a rise in the normal seasonal issues.

Ms. Prato expressed appreciation for this meeting so we can showcase the talent, successes and challenges we have. We have not experienced being fully staffed with technicians in a long time, the customer appreciation event was to get people familiar and more comfortable with riding the bus. Ms. Prato thanked the team for the work they do every day and is pleased for the interaction they can have with the board members.

**4. AJOURNMENT**

This meeting was adjourned at 5:13 p.m.  
The next meeting is scheduled for September 14, 2021

Respectfully submitted,



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Julie Ilbrink, Board Secretary