MINUTES OF
INTERURBAN TRANSIT PARTNERSHIP BOARD
January 30, 2019

ATTENDANCE

Board Members Present: Charis Austin, Rick Baker, David Bilardello, Rosalynn Bliss, Gary Carey, T-acie Coffman, Steven Gilbert, Andy Guy, Jack Hoffman, Stephen Kepley (Chair), Terry Schweitzer, Amna Seibold, Paul Troost

Board Members Absent: Randy Gelderloos, Robert Postema

Staff: Steve Clapp, Robin Crothers, Judy DeVries-Eppinga, Mark Fedorowicz, Peggy Galt, Nancy Groendal, Andrew Johnson (CEO), Deron Kippen, Asher Lockwood (intern), Linda Medina, Nick Monoyios, Lisa Olsen, Brian Pouget, Dina Reed, Brittany Schlaechter, Mary Spalding, Emily Swank, Conrad Venema, Mike Wieringa, Kevin Wisselink, Lisa Young

Others: Al Klepadlo (MV Transportation), Bianca Nunn (MV Transportation), Chris Swank (GVSU), Chris Veenstra (Watkins Ross)

Mayor Kepley called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. He introduced new Board members Rick Baker representing the City of Grand Rapids and Steven Gilbert representing the City of Walker.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT – no comments

2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mayor Kepley opened the floor for nominations for Chair of the Rapid Board for 2019.

Mayor Carey stated that based on good leadership and positive changes during 2018, he would nominate Mayor Stephen Kepley as Board Chair and David Bilardello as Vice-Chair to serve again for 2019.

A motion was made by Seibold, supported by Bliss, to close the nominations. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Stephen Kepley and David Bilardello were unanimously elected as the Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, for the 2019 calendar year.

3. MINUTES – December 5, 2018

Mayor Kepley asked for corrections to the minutes. None were offered. The minutes of the December 5, 2018 Board meeting were approved as written.
4. AGENDA ITEMS

a) FY 2018 Audit Report

Ms. Medina informed the Board that the audit went very well. There were no material findings and the auditors provided an unqualified opinion. She noted that the representative from BDO Seidman was not able to attend the meeting today but he will answer any questions from Board members on the audit at any time. Ms. Medina mentioned that BDO could review the audit and answer questions at the upcoming Finance Committee meeting.

Ms. Medina responded to questions from the Board on the audit. Chris Veenstra from Watkins Ross provided highlights on both pensions. He apologized for not having the pension/actuary reports with him for distribution. Mayor Kepley asked that these reports be provided to the Board at a later date. Mr. Veenstra and staff responded to questions on the pension plans.

A motion was made by Seibold, supported by Austin, to accept the FY 2018 Audit Report. Motion passed unanimously.

b) Amended Agreement with GVSU

Mr. Monoyios stated that approval is requested to execute an amended agreement with Grand Valley State University (GVSU) outlining the terms and conditions of Laker Line BRT service provisions. The Rapid has a 10-year agreement with GVSU for service between campus locations that expires in 2023. That agreement was amended to include cost provisions for the Laker Line BRT. Increased costs are expected with the Laker Line and a methodology for costing was developed and agreed to by The Rapid and GVSU. The Rapid will provide the first year of Laker Line service at the hourly rate for fixed route in order to accurately assess the true BRT operating cost per hour. The resulting BRT hourly cost will be applied to GVSU for the second year of operation, less state operating assistance, and revised annually per original contract provisions. All other provisions of the original contract with GVSU remain the same.

Mr. Hoffman asked about the difference between the current cost of GVSU service and the Laker Line BRT. Mr. Monoyios responded that it is approximately a 20% increase for the Laker Line.

Mayor Seibold wanted to know how much a 20% increase was in actual cost. Mr. Swank from GVSU noted that the cost for Route 50 is approximately $1.7 million.

In response to a question from Mr. Guy, Mr. Monoyios stated that the first year shortfall will be absorbed by The Rapid.

A motion was made by Hoffman, supported by Bliss, to approve the amended GVSU agreement. Motion passed unanimously.

c) Laker Line Security & Access Control Services

Mr. Monoyios reported on a proposed change order to The Rapid’s existing contract with Knight Watch in the amount of $736,350. The change order will cover cameras, servers and software and labor to install 222 cameras at stations along the Laker Line route as well as at
the Laker Line light maintenance facility. A 10% contingency is also requested for unforeseen circumstances associated with construction of the Laker Line.

He noted that a competitive process was used back in 2016 when Knight Watch was selected and approved by the Board. The Federal Transit Administration is aware of this sole source procurement.

Mr. Bilardello asked if this will be different than the Silver Line. Mr. Monoyios stated that we learned from the Silver Line that we need more cameras. We are adding more cameras including inside the TVM and the emergency phone. He asked about upgrading the Silver Line and Mr. Monoyios noted that this needs to be discussed.

Ms. Coffman inquired about additional maintenance cost with more technology for the Laker Line. Ms. Raed mentioned that we have budgeted for additional operating cost and additional storage for cameras. We are looking at our retention policy which includes video storage.

In response to a question from Mr. Hoffman, Mr. Monoyios indicated that there is contingency in the Laker Line budget. We are in good standing with the budget.

A motion was made by Seibold, supported by Guy, to approve the agreement with Knight Watch Security for the purchase of security and access control equipment for the Laker Line BRT project at a cost not to exceed $736,350, plus a 10% contingency for unforeseen circumstances. Motion passed unanimously.

**d) Legal Services**

Ms. DeVries-Eppinga requested authorization to approve a 5-year contract for legal services with Foster Swift Collins & Smith PC for general corporate legal services and with Clark Hill PLC for labor and employment legal services for the period February 1, 2019 through January 31, 2024.

The Rapid’s current legal contracts are split between general corporate and labor and will expire on January 31, 2019. Clark Hill has been our labor and employment legal firm for the past 10 years.

Ms. DeVries-Eppinga reviewed the procurement process. RFP’s were sent to seven firms and five proposals were received. Two firms were selected based on the evaluation criteria to meet with the evaluation team for oral presentations and question and answer sessions. Based on the evaluation, Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith and Clark Hill were unanimously recommended for contract award. She noted that the rates proposed for February 1, 2019 are lower than The Rapid’s current contract fees for legal services.

This is a requirements contract, with no guarantee of a specific level of legal services by the agreement. Average costs for legal services over the past four years were approximately $275,000 annually.

Ms. Coffman asked how these seven firms were chosen for RFP’s. Ms. DeVries-Eppinga responded that these firms requested to be on our bidders’ list for legal services. Ms. Coffman also asked about The Rapid’s policies regarding equity/diversity. Ms. DeVries-Eppinga noted that we are revising our policies.
Ms. Coffman asked about incentivizing firms with equity/diversity policies. Mr. Fedorowicz noted that The Rapid cannot incentivize contracts with federal funds. Discussion took place regarding DBE and equity/diversity policies and regulations.

In response to a question from Mayor Bliss, Ms. DeVries-Eppinga stated that The Rapid did not request information from legal firms regarding the demographics of the firm. Mayor Bliss requested that the Board be provided with information on The Rapid's DBE/MBE policies and goals.

Ms. Coffman suggested that the Rapid Board be kept informed of work in the area of equity/diversity.

Mr. Bilardello commented that DBE policies could be addressed by the Present Performance & Service Committee.

Ms. DeVries-Eppinga stated that she would appreciate receiving a copy of the City of Grand Rapids' DBE policies.

Mr. Bilardello questioned why it has been recommended to change from Miller Johnson to Foster Swift. Mr. Johnson responded that the proposal from Foster Swift was more complete and addressed all of the RFP items.

Mayor Seibold noted that there is a large cost savings with Foster Swift.

Mr. Hoffman commented that he felt that Clark Hill did a great job with the last labor negotiations.

A motion was made by Seibold, supported by Hoffman, to approve the 5-year contracts for legal services with Foster Swift Collins & Smith PC and with Clark Hill PLC for the period February 1, 2019 through January 31, 2024. Motion passed unanimously.

e) FY 2019 Fixed Route Report Card Standards

Mr. Venema reported on proposed fixed route report card standards for FY 2019. Stancards are reviewed on an annual basis. Changes from FY 2018 standards were recommended in the areas of P-oductivity (ridership) and Customer Service. The change in the standard for ridership was a red light for anything more than a 5% decrease changed from the FY 2018 standard of 10%. Customer Service (complaints) was changed from 3.50 complaints or higher for a red light to 4.50 complaints or higher. He noted that it is recommended to maintain the standard for on-time performance at 83.00%. It will be re-evaluated following the COA.

Mr. Guy inquired how the standards are chosen. Mr. Venema noted that the standards were developed by staff and approved by the Board. The report cards are a tool for the Board to identify how the service is performing.

Mayor Seibold mentioned that the Board can request other metrics. She asked about what other transit systems measure.

Mr. Venema stated that we do peer analyses, however, we measure against our own performance.
Mayor Kepley asked that the Present Performance & Service Committee review the report card standards and recommend any changes if they feel it is necessary. He commented that the standards may change based on the outcome of the COA. There are uncontrollable impacts on the metrics such as weather, construction, and congestion. Mr. Venema stated that we can filter out data.

In response to a question from Mayor Bliss, Mr. Johnson mentioned that there is a mic-size transit system benchmarking group that The Rapid could get involved in.

Mr. Baker asked if the Board was evaluating the drop in ridership. Mayor Kepley noted that the Board has discussed ridership which is down nationally.

Mr. Johnson commented that we have an issue with on-time performance especially in downtown Grand Rapids and high traffic areas. We need to find new ways to deal with this issue.

Mayor Bliss stated that the COA will determine the problem areas and determine new ways to provide service and increase ridership. This has been a topic of conversation at the Future Planning & Technology Committee meetings.

A motion was made by Guy, supported by Hoffman, to approve the FY 2019 fixed route report card standards. Motion passed unanimously. The Board referred the topic of metrics/report card standards to the Present Performance & Service Committee for discussion and recommendations for the future.

f) FY 2019 Paratransit Report Card Standards

Mr. Pouget reported on the recommended change to the paratransit report card standards for FY 2019. The standard for Customer Service (complaints) was changed from 1.0 to 0.9 complaints per 1,000 passengers.

A motion was made by Hoffman, supported by Austin, to approve the FY 2019 Paratransit Report Card Standards. Motion passed unanimously. The Board asked that paratransit metrics be included on the Present Committee agenda for further review.

g) Consumer Advisory Committee Appointments

Mr. Pouget stated that the Consumer Advisory Committee recommends the reappointment of Kendrick Heinlein and Tim Steinmeier for two-year terms to expire on December 31, 2020. He noted there should be further appointments coming to the Board at the March meeting.

A motion was made by Austin, supported by Baker, to approve the reappointment of Kendrick Heinlein and Tim Steinmeier to the Consumer Advisory Committee for terms ending on December 31, 2020. Motion passed unanimously.

5. STAFF REPORTS

a) December 2018 Financial Report

Mayor Kepley mentioned that we haven’t used any preventive maintenance funds at this point. Mayor Caray inquired about the line item for Group Medical which was 42% expended and should be 25%. Ms. Medina noted that this is due to pre-payments.
b) Ridership & Productivity – October/November 2018

No questions.

c) Paratransit Ridership – October/November 2018

No questions.

6. CEO’S REPORT

Mr. Johnson showed the Board the video on The Rapid’s Wave program that won a first place award for mid-sized systems at the APTA AdWheel Awards. The video was created by Brittany Schlacter and Michael Bultuis of The Rapid staff in conjunction with GUD Marketing. The award will be presented at the APTA Marketing conference in February. The grand awards are presented at the APTA Annual Meeting in October.

Mr. Johnson reported that the Wave was just rolled out to Grand Rapids Public Schools. He thanked Marie Tubergen, Rapid project manager, for her hard work on this project. We are still working on retail network which will be implemented soon.

Buses have been running well in spite of the winter weather. On-time performance has been good. We have had only minor incidents. He thanked the Rapid drivers for doing a great job.

It was noted by Mr. Johnson that he met with our delegation in Washington DC recently to discuss the potential impacts of a continued shutdown. The Laker Line project and other capital purchases would be affected. He thanked Dina Reed and the Finance staff for analyzing expenses in regard to a continued government shutdown. The level of impact depends on how long the shutdown goes on.

Mr. Johnson introduced new employees Lisa Young, Communications Manager, Lisa Olsen, Special Services Manager, and Peggy Galt, Buyer in the Purchasing Dept. Current employee Kevin Wissalink recently took a position as the Grants and Capital Projects Manager. Kevin was previously in the Planning Dept.

In response to a question from Mr. Hoffman, Mr. Johnson explained that we do not need to get a loan related to the government shutdown. We would defer and delay capital projects to maintain our cash flow. We don’t use federal funds to operate the service.

Mr. Johnson mentioned that our latest purchase of Gillig buses would not be affected by the shutdown. The contract includes a statement that we will pay when we have the federal funds if that becomes necessary. We have now drawn down those funds.

7. CHAIR’S REPORT

Mayor Kepley stated that the Board did a lot of work in 2018 including Board governance structure, a new CEO, a wage study. We want to make sure what we do is relevant and has purpose and meaning. The number of meetings for Board members has gone down over the past year and they were encouraged to attend their committee meetings. If something needs to be changed then let’s change it. He was looking forward to the outcome of the COA including recommendations to meet the needs inside and outside the six cities. He encouraged Board members to ride the buses to become more familiar with the service The Rapid provides.
8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Future Planning & Technology Committee - Mr. Schweitzer stated that at their January 7, 2019 meeting, the committee discussed the COA and identified more detail that was needed in the scope. A draft COA scope will be addressed at their March meeting.

b) Present Performance & Service Committee - Mr. Bilardello informed the Board that at their January 8, 2019 meeting, the committee discussed on-time performance and the COA scope. They will also discuss the report card standards and ridership at their March meeting.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Troost inquired about the possibility of free rides on the subzero windchill days.

Mayor Seibold mentioned a recent story that she heard about a large semi truck drove straight over a traffic circle not knowing because there was so much snow. The truck got stuck in the middle of the traffic circle blocking traffic in all directions. A Rapid bus had to back up hill to get around the truck to be able to turn onto a street where it could continue its route. Mayor Seibold noted that it has been rough out on the roads and thanked that driver in particular for getting the job done.

Ms. Austin commented that the system to notify paratransit riders when their ride is coming does not always work. It still has some bugs that need to be fixed.

Mr. Schweitzer informed the Board that the Future Planning & Technology Committee has two citizen members – Ryan Anderson and Dave Bulkowski. He noted this provides a good perspective for The Rapid. The citizen members do not vote on any issues.

Mayor Bliss welcomed Rick Baker to the Rapid Board. She stated that the Kids Food Basket is looking for places to set up distribution sites on Thursday and Friday this week due to school closings. Many children get their meals at school. She asked about using Rapid Central Station as a distribution site. Mr. Johnson stated that The Rapid would be happy to act as a site for Kids Food Basket on Thursday and Friday.

Mr. Guy thanked The Rapid for running service during the severe winter weather in light of all of the school closings and other closings.

9. ADJOURNMENT - The meeting was adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Crothers, Board Secretary