

**CENTRE AREA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MINUTES**

June 23, 2003

4:00 p.m.

**STATE COLLEGE BOROUGH BUILDING
Conference Room 241, 243 South Allen Street**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Spychalski, Chairman
Donald Sherman, Vice-Chairman
Richard Kipp, Treasurer
Joseph Davidson
Gary Powers

OTHERS PRESENT: Hugh Mose, General Manager
Judith Minor, Director of Administration
L. Eric Bernier, Director of Service Development
Joseph Gilbert, Director of Transportation
Jacqueline Sheader, Marketing Coordinator
Richard McCarl, Borough Liaison

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Spychalski called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

Mr. Sherman applauded Mr. Mose on being named the President of the State College Downtown Rotary Club.

II. PUBLIC HEARING ON FY 2003/04 SERVICE STANDARDS

Chairman Spychalski opened the floor to allow the public an opportunity to provide input to the Authority on the proposed FY 2003/04 Service Standards. No public comments were presented.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS - CITIZEN INPUT

Chairman Spychalski called for comments or input from the general public surrounding items not on the agenda. No public comments were presented.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. *Approval of Minutes of April 28, 2003 Board Meeting*

Mr. Sherman moved that the Board approve the minutes of the April 28, 2003, Board Meeting. Mr. Davidson seconded the motion.

Mr. Davidson noted that there was a discrepancy between the date on the Agenda regarding this item and the date noted on the minutes. Chairman Spychalski noted

that there was a typo on page three in the second paragraph.

There being no further changes or discussion, Chairman Spychalski called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

B. *Receipt of April and May Finance Reports*

Ms. Minor pointed out an incorrect number on the April Finance Report, under Penn State Passes, and noted that the number of Penn State passes sold on the May Finance Report is correct.

Ms. Minor stated that, compared to estimates from the budget, the Authority is on target, with some numbers up and some down from estimated. The one item that is significantly under compared to estimates is Farebox Revenue. Ms. Minor also noted that Cash Fares have not been good this year; on the other hand, Passes will be higher than estimated. Expenditures are pretty much in line overall.

Ms. Minor noted that Revenue Vehicle Maintenance has increased. The Authority has taken a credit for parts that were being charged to the Act 26 grant.

In response to Mr. Sherman's comment, Ms. Minor noted that the cost of natural gas is currently very wild, fluctuating every day. CATA is locked in until June and Ms. Minor plans to purchase natural gas for the month of July by the end of the week. She noted that the budget for natural gas for the year starting July 1 is \$4.90 per Mef. Ms. Minor noted, too, that while staff is paying more for natural gas than hoped at this point, we are also using less, which is why everything is looking good financially. Typically, CATA purchases the gas based on what it plans to use and then sells back any that it hasn't at spot market prices.

In response to Mr. Sherman, Ms. Minor noted that the lower number under Farebox Revenue is somewhat offset by the increased number of passes that have been purchased.

In response to Mr. Powers, Ms. Minor noted that there will be in excess of \$400,000 in federal operating assistance left over at the end of the fiscal year; if the deficit is higher than projected, we'll have less. It looks as though, however, we will fall within the range we expected.

In response to Mr. Sherman, Mr. Mose noted that we are ending the year with about \$100,000 more carryover than what we had originally thought at this time last year. This is largely the result of having our expenditures and revenue in line with the budget and from receiving \$100,000 more in federal money than expected.

In response to Mr. Sherman's question regarding Hugh's progress in rallying support for increased state and federal funding, Mr. Mose noted that he has received return telephone calls from Representative Herman and Representative Hannah who were

cordial and said they would do what they could, but there would be no commitments. He noted, however, that he is always optimistic and feels because SEPTA and the Port Authority are going through such tough times, that legislators will have to do something; his fear is that they will look to a temporary fix and the problem will resurface in upcoming years. It is possible that something may come out of Harrisburg between now and July 1.

Mr. Mose also made note of the fact that revenue-wise, CATA is where it had expected to be and that the loss in Farebox may have come from those Penn State employees on the Ride For Five program, persons who previously paid the cash fare. Overall, though, ridership had dropped more than he had expected.

In response to Mr. Spsychalski, Mr. Mose noted that we have reached the upper limit in fares as far as the amount that people are willing to pay, given the short trip lengths in our community.

Mr. Sherman noted that perhaps the ridership would increase as we enter the second year of the fare increase. Mr. Mose noted that it is hard to compare ridership this year with ridership last year because of the school year being offset; while ridership this year is still down compared to ridership last year at this time, the gap is narrowing. After July 1, the anniversary of the fare increase, the Authority will have a better understanding of the comparisons.

In response to Mr. Sherman, Ms. Sheader noted that approximately ten Summer Youth Passes had been sold since the start of the month. Unfortunately, there have been no takers on the Family Passes, but the program had been promoted in the newsletter. There had been minimal response (1 participant and a few questions) about our role in Operation ASAP, the program organized by the United Way to benefit those who have family members in the military. Mr. Powers noted that he had purchased a Summer Youth Pass for his son.

Mr. Kipp moved that the Board receive the April and May 2003 Finance reports. Mr. Davidson seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Spsychalski called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

C. *Adoption of FY 2003/04 Final Budget*

Mr. Davidson moved that the Board adopt the FY 2003/04 Final Budget, contingent upon the approval of local shares by each participating municipality. Mr. Powers seconded the motion.

Ms. Minor went over some of the financial points of the budget.

In response to Mr. Davidson, Mr. Mose noted that he has had a tough time making

contact with the Bellefonte Borough Manager to discuss the service cuts that will take place on the X Route.

In response to Mr. Spsychalski, Mr. Mose noted that, when he visited Spring Township, their supervisors were most concerned with the fact that Benner Township chooses not to contribute funding to the Authority; other than that, they were supportive of the service. While there will be a few slight impacts to those riding through Spring Township (e.g. the unavailability to travel from Bellefonte to the Vo-Tech school), CATA has tried to scale back service only to the Bellefonte half of the X Route.

Mr. Mose noted that, considering all of the constraints surrounding funding this year, the FY 2003/04 Budget is a good one. The municipalities did agree to the 5% increase in funding, and so has the University. Fingers are crossed on what will come out of Harrisburg and Washington in terms of additional funding.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Spsychalski called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

D. *Fall 2003 Service Changes*

Mr. Bernier summarized the more important service changes that will take effect with the Fall Semester. He noted that K Route trips that were taken out last year will be reinstated and will thus lead to hourly service. In response to Mr. Davidson, Mr. Bernier noted that MBNA makes a contribution for the service through Ferguson Township and that their contribution exceeds the routes Local Share.

Mr. Bernier noted several changes on the P Route that will take place. The P will go into the hospital only on the way out to Innovation Park and will operate every 80 minutes evenings and on Saturdays.

In response to Mr. Sherman, Mr. Bernier noted that the trips during the week will run on 65 minute headways, which is a slight change from this year. This change was made to provide adequate service to those students with classes at Innovation Park.

Mr. Bernier then noted the changes that will take place on the X Route. The morning 6:23 and 10:15 trips, Monday through Friday, will now start at the Vo-Tech, rather than at the Mall; the Bellefonte half of these trips has been removed. In response to Mr. Davidson, Mr. Bernier went over the changes in times. While the change doesn't save much, it results in fewer miles that are allotted to Bellefonte Borough.

Mr. Bernier noted that the changes in the LOOP and LINK were discussed previously.

In response to Mr. Sherman, Mr. Bernier noted that the exact day of the start of Full Service has not been decided as of yet. The date will be either September 1 or

September 2. With September 1 being Labor Day, it may be more beneficial to start Full Service on September 2. Mr. Mose noted that the LOOP and LINK will begin service the Wednesday (August 27) prior to Labor Day. Mr. Gilbert noted that either day will have no effect on bid sheets and driver pay periods. Mr. Mose noted that there will be some kind of service on Labor Day with the LOOP and LINK running normally, and probably Sunday Service on Centre Line.

Further discussion led to the consensus that the Centre Line Full Service should begin this year on Tuesday, September 2.

Mr. Mose applauded the Service Development team on their hard work. Mr. Bernier noted that getting the work done early will allow for the formatting changes that are needed on the maps and timetables.

In response to Mr. Davidson, Mr. Bernier noted that the change in schedule of the W Route from 60 to 65 minutes came about as a result of the W being through routed with the H, which is being extended into the Village at Penn State. We are also adding time just in case something would go into the Kmart space that we would like to serve.

E. Adoption of Proposed FY 2003/04 Service Standards

Mr. Bernier reviewed the process for developing the yearly service standards. PENNDOT defines the standards and we set our own goals and track progress. The handout Eric provided shows CATA's progress over the last five years and our projected performance for this upcoming year.

Mr. Bernier discussed some of the goals, noting that we raised Passengers Per Vehicle Hour and lowered Administrative Employees Per Operations Employee. In response to Mr. Sherman, Mr. Bernier noted that even if we hired more Operations personnel as per the Management Performance Review, we would be less lean, but still low.

In response to Mr. Sherman, Mr. Bernier also noted that as we change our routes it is hard to project ridership for the first year until we have something to compare against.

Mr. Sherman moved that the Board adopt the FY 2003/04 Service Standards as presented. Mr. Kipp seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Spychalski called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

F. Performance Management Review and Adoption of CATA's Action Plan

Mr. Mose noted that this process is a requirement of Act 3 of 1997. The Management Performance Review document and Action Plan addressing its recommendations need to be adopted and sent to PENNDOT.

Mr. Mose noted that in the Action Plan enclosed in the Board Packets that several of the recommendations from the preliminary draft had been deleted for a variety of reasons.

Mr. Mose stated that while Board action is required today to meet the PENNDOT deadline, the Board will have the opportunity to ask questions of the consultant at the upcoming Work Session on July 8.

In response to Mr. Sherman, Mr. Mose state that the recommendation of additional Operations personnel and the availability of that person(s) to enhance safety, and the recommendation of additional staffing in Maintenance were two weaknesses/considerations that staff went through during the Budget process.

In response to Mr. Davidson, Mr. Mose noted that there is no requirement that the Authority implement any plans in the report if the circumstances do not allow. Mr. Mose noted that he worded the Action Plan in such a way that staff was not committing to anything that it could not do at the present time.

Mr. Davidson moved that the Board adopt the Management Performance Review Action Plan as presented and direct the General Manager to submit it to PENNDOT as required by Act 3 of 1997. Mr. Powers seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Spsychalski called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. *Summer Meeting Schedule*

Mr. Mose discussed the possibilities for the upcoming summer's meeting schedule. Due to lack of agenda items, Mr. Mose suggested that the July Board meeting on July 28 be cancelled. In its place, the Board and Staff would meet in a Work Session at the CATA facility on Tuesday, July 8, at 4:00 p.m. The topics for the work session will center on discussion of the Management Performance Review and the Compensation Plan Update.

There was discussion on the August meeting and it was decided by consensus that that regular meeting will remain on the schedule.

Mr. Powers moved that the Board cancel the July 28, 2003, meeting due to a lack of agenda items, but schedule a special meeting for 4:00 p.m. on July 8, at the CATA administrative facility.. Mr. Kipp seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Spsychalski called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

B. *Centre Ride Contract for FY 2003/04*

Mr. Mose reminded the Board that only one response was received in response to the request for proposals and the Board had granted the General Manager authority to negotiate and execute a contract, subject to the Board's concurrence.

Mr. Mose noted that there had been some challenges with regard to insurance. Ms. Minor went over the problems, noting that the insurance pool would like us to have as much insurance as possible in the case that we are sued. Other transit authorities are having problems securing adequate insurance, also.

Ms. Minor noted that there were three options and she discussed each. Ultimately, we are staying with the insurance coverages we have now, so we've accepted Handy Delivery's lowest rates.

Mr. Sherman moved that the Board ratify the contract negotiated with Handy Delivery for the operation of CATA's Centre Ride paratransit service for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2003, FY 2003/04, at a rate of \$8.75 per ambulatory passenger and \$13.50 per non-ambulatory passenger. Mr. Powers seconded the motion.

In response to Mr. Davidson, Ms. Minor state that there are no other paratransit programs that use both vans and taxis. In response to Mr. Sherman, she added that we could not drop taxi services within the Centre Ride program and use only our vans. It would be difficult, too, to restrict certain taxis to only the Centre Ride program.

Mr. Mose noted there is a likelihood that our insurance pool is going to set a minimum coverage level higher than \$50,000, and at that time we will need to look at how we can reorganize the paratransit program so that we have a firewall between Handy's taxi operations and our Centre Ride operations.

In response to Mr. Sherman, Ms. Minor noted that these higher pre-trip rates will affect the budget. The rates are significantly higher because insurance rates have gone up astronomically, regardless of any increases in liability limits.

In response to Mr. Davidson, Ms. Minor replied that we have not received a demand from our insurance carrier that we need more. These are just recommendations from Arthur Gallagher; the insurance pool administrator.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Spsychalski called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

C. *Penn State Contract for FY 2003/04*

Mr. Mose noted that when the agenda was written, no action was required by the Board. However, since that time the University has agreed to the 5% increase.

Therefore, it is requested of the Board to concur with next year's contract with Penn State.

Mr. Mose summarized the service that is to be provided to the University this year. There is to be a total of 33,382 LOOP and LINK service hours at \$39.74 per hour. There are also 6,023 hours of Free Fare service on the H and U Routes (half rate) and the P Route (three-quarters rate).

Mr. Mose asked that the Board concur that the University's Operative Rate will be \$39.74 an hour. The total for the University contract will be \$1,472,218, plus \$28,400 to support the RideShare program.

Mr. Davidson moved that the Board approve the University's rate of \$39.74 per hour. Mr. Kipp seconded the motion.

In response to Mr. Davidson, Ms. Minor noted that the number allotted to Penn State in the budget is slightly smaller. Penn State's contribution is in three separate places in the budget - the Centre Line piece is in Purchased Service, LOOOP in the line below that, and local share is included with the other municipalities.

In response to Mr. Sherman, Mr. Mose noted that the University had abandoned the Guest Shuttle per se last July 1; they combined that with the Staff Shuttle into the Campus Shuttle, which is used to meet ADA Requirements and as a parcel delivery service. It runs at a higher frequency but does not go out to the Penn Stater. He anticipates that that will continue to run.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Spychalski called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

A. General Manager's Report

In response to Mr. Mose, Ms. Minor spoke on the PENNDOT grants for the Centre Ride program. She noted that no action is required, but she wanted to make the Board aware that it has been sent in. The grant is for \$130,000, about 3/4 of the funding that staff estimates will need for the year.

Mr. Mose signified that there was little to report outside his usual bi-weekly memo to the Board. He noted that Rich Wollet, the new Operations Supervisor was to attend today, but is helping to cover Dispatch due to the absence of another.

B. Service Development Report

Mr. Bernier briefly pointed out some of the larger projects that have been occupying his time. Two items have been taking most of his time - the Kmart redevelopment and Penn State's plans to enhance three major bus stops on Campus. Service planning

and public information, formatting the Ride Guide, and upcoming special services are also in the works.

In response to Mr. Davidson, Mr. Bernier noted that there is no plan for shuttle service to the fireworks on the Fourth of July, and the reasons behind CATA not providing such service, including the ample parking and multitude of directions from which visitors come into State College to see the show.

Mr. Bernier also noted that the U Route serving University Terrace will become the UT Route at the start of Full service. This decision resonates from the fact that our V's and U's look very similar on the headsigns and this is just a means of simplifying things.

In response to Mr. Spsychalski, Mr. Bernier noted that Penn State has become more efficient over the past year in handling and changing the bus stop signs on Campus as needed.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Sherman moved for adjournment. Mr. Kipp seconded the motion. There being no further business, Chairman Spsychalski adjourned the meeting at 5:23 p.m.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board moved to Executive Session to discuss personnel issues.

IX. COMPENSATION PLAN FOR NON-REPRESENTED EMPLOYEES

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 6:30 p.m.

It was moved by Joe Davidson and seconded by Richard Kipp that the updated Compensation Plan for Non-represented Employees be adopted as presented by staff, with the understanding that the Human Resources Manager would request a supporting letter from consultant John Maxwell. After brief discussion Chairman Spsychalski called for a vote, and the motion was passed unanimously.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Spsychalski adjourned the meeting at 6:33 pm.