



Approved Minutes

March 17, 2016

Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority Board of Directors

Ann Arbor District Library, 343 South Fifth Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 6:30 p.m.

Board: Mike Allemang, Jack Bernard, Eli Cooper, Gillian Ream Gainsley, Charles Griffith, Prashanth Gururaja, Larry Krieg, Eric Mahler (Chair)

Absent with Notice: Sue Gott, Stephen Wade

Staff: Gwyn Belcher, Michael Benham, Jan Black, Terry Black, Matt Carpenter, Ron Copeland, Bill De Groot, Dawn Gabay, Phil Webb, Michelle Whitlow, Reggie Whitlow

Local Advisory Council: Rebecca Burke

Recording Secretary: Karen Wheeler

Chairman Eric Mahler declared that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

1.0 Public Hearing

There was no public hearing.

2.0 Communications and Announcements

Mr. Mahler welcomed new board member Prashanth Gururaja. Mr. Gururaja introduced himself noting that he is an Ann Arbor resident and works at the Environmental Protection Agency's Emission Lab. Mr. Gururaja has been involved in transit related issues including the Regional Transit Authority's Citizen Advisory Council.

2.1 Mr. Mahler appointed Gillian Ream Gainsley Acting Secretary.

3.0 Public Time – Comment on Agenda Items

Jim Mogensen appeared before the Board. Mr. Mogensen indicated that the minutes of the February board meeting incorrectly reported his comments regarding the proposed procedure for third party fares. Mr. Mogensen stated that discounts for senior citizens, people with disabilities and school children are social discounts, and transfers are functional or operational discounts. Mr. Mogensen requested a change to the minutes.

Mr. Mahler noted the change.

Michelle Barney appeared before the Board. Ms. Barney conveyed details of an incident on A-Ride service where conflicting destination details in a reservation (the building name and street address did not match) caused confusion about where the passenger should be taken. The passenger was not able to communicate which destination was correct. The A-Ride driver remained with the passenger until it was determined that the passenger was in the correct location. Ms. Barney stressed the importance of A-Ride drivers having accurate trip details.

No one further appearing, Mr. Mahler declared Public Time closed.

4.0 Review and Approval of Minutes of February 18, 2016

Gillian Ream Gainsley moved approval of the minutes with the edits suggested by Mr. Mogensen. Eli Cooper supported the motion. The motion carried. Larry Krieg abstained.

5.0 Board and Staff Reports

5.1 Chief Executive Officer

Mr. Carpenter reported on an A-Ride service disruption due to a systemic malfunction due to the A-Ride contractor failing to download the March 17 manifests. As a result, several A-Ride pick-ups were late. Mr. Carpenter apologized for the disturbance, and indicated that staff is working with the contractor. Mr. Carpenter reported on the opportunity for AAATA to comment on proposed changes to Wayne County Airport Authority (WCAA) regulations regarding pick-up locations for people with disabilities. Mr. Carpenter responded to WCAA on behalf of AAATA. Mr. Carpenter noted that the proposed changes may not be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Mr. Carpenter indicated that implementation of the changes was postponed to March 28, and that he would share developments with the Board.

Mr. Carpenter reported on plans for the May 1 service expansion rollout, and recent successes: a joint management/union bottled water drive for the City of Flint, funding from the DDA for the GSA walkway adjacent to the BTC, progress on repairs to the YTC, and speaking at the City of Ann Arbor's Sustainability Forum.

5.2 Planning and Development Committee

Ms. Gainsley reported on the Planning and Development Committee meeting. The committee discussed the Space Assessment Consultant, an item delayed from a previous meeting. The committee wanted to make sure that the assessment is in line with the strategic goals of the organization. Ms. Gainsley noted the addition of a charrette process for the Board to assess space needs. The committee recommended approval of the resolution. There was discussion on the M-14 closure and impacts on traffic and buses. Staff assured the Committee that headways are being monitored. It is hoped that within a week or two traffic patterns will smooth themselves out and give a

clearer picture of how late buses are running. Staff made a commitment to provide the best possible service in challenging circumstances.

5.3 Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committee

Mr. Allemang reported on the Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committee meeting. The committee discussed the A-Ride Survey results and financial statistics. The Report of Operations shows a \$700,000 surplus due to expenses being less than budgeted. The committee reviewed the performance statistics. Ridership continues to be ahead of last year on A-Ride service, and is falling short of budget on fixed-route. Mr. Allemang reported that the committee has discussed ridership declines for several months. Staff will provide detailed data and make recommendations on what actions to take. Mr. Allemang will report back to the board on progress.

The committee discussed and endorsed a resolution to approve a contract for media planning and placement services.

5.4 Local Advisory Council

Rebecca Burke reported on the Local Advisory Council (LAC) meeting. LAC reviewed three A-Ride policies proposed for revision to improve the quality of service for passengers: Will-Call Return Policy, Travel Time, and No Strand Policy. LAC is considering three possible changes to the Will-Call Policy, as well as considering expanding the arrival window from the current 30 minutes to 45 minutes. The Travel Time Policy is proposed for revision to expand on-board travel times, comparable to trips made on fixed-route service, to allow for the service expansion. A new No Strand Policy is proposed to assure a return ride for A-Ride passengers who miss a scheduled ride.

5.5 Governance

Eric Mahler made a [presentation](#) on Board Governance to begin a conversation about the board's role, work and value. Mr. Mahler hopes to engage the board in conversation and explore how to go from good to great, and position the board and TheRide for future success. Mr. Mahler reported on the following facets of board governance:

Identifying the **Role of the Board** by defining what good governance is, and what good governance is not. The **Need for Change** by moving toward providing clear strategic direction and guidance with clear expectations. **Opportunities with Change** through good governance to remove barriers to efficiency and plan better for the organization's future.

Mr. Mahler referred to three **Board Types** detailed in a [handout](#) distributed to the board: Working Board, Management Board and Strategic Policy Board. Mr. Mahler suggested that the board can maximize value by becoming more strategic and moving in the direction of a policy board. Mr. Mahler indicated that policy governance is designed

to maximize value, set clear policy, describe what should be accomplished, how, and then hold the CEO and staff accountable.

Mr. Mahler distributed a pamphlet to board members entitled *Carver Policy Governance Guide: The Policy Governance Model and the Role of the Board Member* by John Carver and Miriam Carver. Mr. Mahler discussed principles of the Carver Model including ownership accountability, board governance driven by policies, and the four categories under which a policy could be established: 1. Ends, 2. Executive Limitations, 3. Board-Management Delegation, and 4. Governance Process. Mr. Mahler provided examples under each category.

Mr. Mahler requested that board members read the Carver pamphlet and share feedback in coming meetings to determine if there is a desire to pursue moving forward as a policy board. Mr. Mahler acknowledged that changing direction can be stressful, but he is confident that if the board undertakes the exercise, it will succeed.

6.0 Question Time

Ms. Gainsley was complimentary of Mr. Mahler's presentation on governance, and supportive of the concept of the board placing more of an emphasis on major strategic policy. Ms. Gainsley commented on the May 1 service expansion noting that out of many public meetings, there is only one meeting scheduled in Ypsilanti, and no meetings to be held Ypsilanti Township. Ms. Gainsley requested information on outreach efforts planned for Ypsilanti Township.

Mr. Gururaja commented on bus stops that were not cleared during a recent snow storm and asked about enforcement of clearing stops. Mr. Carpenter responded that a lot of work goes into keeping bus stops accessible for all users with heavy reliance on community partnerships. Mr. Carpenter offered to share information on snow clearing programs.

Mr. Krieg thanked Mr. Mahler for his presentation on governance. Mr. Krieg asked about latitude in the policy governance model for retaining a depth of robust monitoring and interactions with staff to fulfill the mission to provide good transportation service.

Mr. Cooper commented that snow removal within the City of Ann Arbor has been a particular focus area with regard to providing for pedestrian activity during the inclement winter season. Mr. Cooper referred to the City's website which includes a page directly related to sidewalk maintenance and details property owner responsibilities which includes the sidewalk and areas that provide access to curb ramps and transit, where connected directly to the sidewalk system. The Community Standards division of the City has an enforcement mechanism which is also outlined on the City website. The City partners with TheRide to ensure that people have the opportunity to move around safely in the winter months.

Mr. Cooper referred to the PDC report and the discussion on space needs noting the 30 year vision for the organization and subsequent Five-Year Transit Improvement Program. Mr. Cooper indicated that there is still a broader vision adopted by the board and questioned

whether that was given consideration for how that would fit into deliberations moving forward in looking at space planning needs.

Mr. Carpenter responded that some fleet size projections have been developed based on the 30 Year Service Plan noting that the size of the bus fleet is perhaps the key driver of operational facility needs. Mr. Carpenter is eager to hear from the board what the vision will continue to be. If the Plan remains the direction in which to head, that vision drives operational decisions which staff will bring forward as recommendations.

Mr. Cooper asked which of his board colleagues would attend upcoming Connector public meetings, and which of his board colleagues would attend an upcoming public meeting on the RTA.

Mr. Bernard agreed with the idea of linking space planning to strategic objectives. Mr. Bernard suggested hearing directly from staff who work in a particular space to understand what the needs are.

Mr. Griffith reported that the space planning presentation made at PDC included examples of space and staffing constraints. Mr. Griffith suggested sharing the examples with other board members, if desired.

Ms. Gainsley added that the first step proposed by the space plan consultant is to conduct a robust process to collect feedback from staff. The piece added is for the consultant to talk with the board too, which was not included before.

Mr. Bernard shared his enthusiasm for the board moving in a direction toward a policy model. Mr. Bernard referred to the 30 Year Plan indicating that he won't doubt that the Plan is the right trajectory, until presented with data indicating it is not. Mr. Bernard suggested that just because the board moves in a new direction, they should not invest time in changing the Plan until there is data and evidence to support making changes.

Mr. Bernard suggested that the board's ideal role is to be the responsible party for choosing the best options for providing service. Mr. Bernard referred to A-Ride services that go well beyond what is required by law as an example of a decision made to respond to the needs of its constituency. Mr. Bernard noted that the service costs something, and suggested that it is the work of the board to decide which path to take.

Mr. Griffith thanked Mr. Mahler for his presentation, spoke in favor of a new direction for the board, and reflected on strategic visioning work the board has undertaken over the past several years.

Mr. Griffith asked about the intended planning exercise for PMER to address ridership trends and what a plan is being created for. Mr. Carpenter responded that the intent is to develop a useful, cognitive model to think through a problem step-by-step and structure the discussion about data collection and analysis. Once the group feels comfortable that the problem is identified, they will start talking about what to do about it.

Mr. Griffith commented on an incident that appeared to involve a pedestrian and an AAATA bus in downtown Ann Arbor. Mr. Carpenter confirmed that a pedestrian came into contact with a bus, but the person was not significantly injured. Mr. Carpenter underscored the importance of the thoughtful placement of bus stops. Mr. Griffith noted that space is constrained on Fourth Avenue. Mr. Griffith thanked Mr. Carpenter for sharing the information and the assurance that the passenger is okay.

Mr. Krieg asked about applying the policy board model to the space expansion question and asked if it would be appropriate for board members to go into the current space and see what the working conditions are, or if that was too much contact with staff. Mr. Mahler suggested asking the CEO for a tour of the facilities, if that would help someone feel fully informed.

Mr. Krieg commented that new initiatives, such as the RTA and the Southeast Michigan Transit Master Plan, have come into existence since adoption of the 30 Year Plan. Mr. Krieg suggested that the 30 Year Plan was negatively received by government agencies in the area, and that either situation could imply that a serious look is given to the Plan to make sure it includes the kind of data expected.

Mr. Bernard restated his preference for not reinventing the wheel until there is data to guide how the board thinks about the Plan.

Mr. Maher commented on the 30 Year Plan suggesting that the document may fit in with the framework of means to an end, not ends themselves.

Mr. Griffith attempted to clarify what appeared to be confusion about a 30 Year Plan for a former countywide initiative that was opposed and later revised to reflect the current three-jurisdiction plan in place today vs. a 30 year visioning document for developing transit over many years which contains some broader goals, and land use and population patterns.

Mr. Allemang voiced his support for going toward a policy board. Mr. Allemang noted that the Carver model does not include review and approval of an annual budget noting that the model does not have to be followed exactly as outlined.

Mr. Mahler indicated that he will be interested to hear feedback on the financial management piece of the model.

Mr. Cooper commented on the conversation about the space plan and 30 year vision. Mr. Cooper suggested mapping out assumptions for where the organization should be in 15-20 years and for the board to serve in an oversight role to make sure that interests that are aligned and resources utilized effectively to achieve aspirations.

Mr. Bernard reported on riding buses and talking with passengers about their experience. Mr. Bernard encouraged board members to take a bus and chat with passengers.

7.0 Old Business

There was no Old Business for the Board to consider.

8.0 New Business

8.1 A-Ride Survey Results

Mr. Carpenter introduced Brian Clouse. Mr. Clouse presented highlights from the [2015/2014 A-Ride Rider Survey Results Comparison](#). The same questions were asked in the 2014 and 2015 surveys. The 2015 responses pertain to the current provider.

Mr. Clouse reported that the survey results were favorable. Mr. Clouse acknowledged that **Reservation line on-hold time** is a concern that been brought to the board's attention. Mr. Clouse indicated that a baseline threshold has not yet been established for this performance measurement. Mr. Clouse reported on **Driver on time performance**, the category with the largest increase in satisfaction at 32%. Mr. Clouse noted that A-Ride service is provided using a dedicated fleet of unified and branded vehicles able to meet ridership needs and efficiently. Mr. Clouse reported on an 18% increase in **Driver courtesy**.

Mr. Clouse reported that staff and the provider are working systematically within the A-Ride program policies. The in-house call center allows for working directly with staff. Mr. Clouse noted increases in A-Ride ridership which will be addressed.

Mr. Bernard requested a presentation on services provided to people with disabilities that go beyond the scope required so that the board has an understanding of where AAATA is extending service.

Mr. Krieg noted the A-Ride policies recommended by LAC and inquired about the path for implementation. Mr. Mahler responded that the policies may need to go through board committee for recommendation to the board.

Ms. Gainsley commented on the positive survey ratings with the exception of **Reservation line on-hold time**. Ms. Gainsley was complimentary of the LAC's approach for weighing outcomes and tradeoffs of implementing different policies and expressed appreciation for ongoing updates on A-Ride service.

Mr. Gururaja commented on the positive survey results, and asked if there are metrics that staff use to corroborate satisfaction or improvement.

Mr. Clouse responded that on-time performance is a threshold in the contract. The provider must meet 97% on-time performance and can be penalized monetarily for failing to meet the threshold. Technology enhancements are planned so that real-time tracking of performance can be monitored through the Mobile Data Terminal.

Mr. Cooper commented that the board is paying particular attention to the reservation on-hold time noting the survey rating of 65%. Mr. Cooper pledged to pay particular attention to that parameter and indicated that he would like to see continuous improvement.

Mr. Clouse indicated that the thresholds will continue to be monitored and reported.

8.2 Operations Space Assessment Consultant

Mr. Carpenter introduced the resolution to award a contract for an operations space assessment. The resolution, endorsed by PDC, is a non-routine contract for space assessment and planning services.

Gillian Ream Gainsley moved the following resolution with support from Larry Krieg.

Resolution 17/2016

APPROVAL OF CONTRACT AWARD FOR OPERATIONS SPACE ASSESSMENT

WHEREAS, the efficient and effective provision of transit services depends upon sufficient operational support facilities, and

WHEREAS, a preliminary assessment of AAATA facilities suggests that recent and continuing expansions of services to the community may bring support facilities to the limit of their capacity, and

WHEREAS, AAATA staff determined that in-depth analysis of the operational space issue will benefit from the expertise of a firm specializing in transit operations and space planning, and

WHEREAS, the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA) issued Request for Proposal (RFP) # 2016-06 "Operations Space Assessment" for the purpose of identifying a firm to provide space assessment and planning services, and

WHEREAS, an AAATA evaluation team reviewed proposals, interviewed finalist proposers, and determined that the Kimley-Horn team offered the best proposal for the requested services,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the AAATA Board of Directors authorizes the CEO to negotiate and enter into a contract with recommended proposer, Kimley-Horn of Michigan, headquartered in Troy, MI.

The motion passed unanimously.

8.3 Routine Approvals

Mr. Carpenter introduced the resolution recommending approval of a contract for media planning and placement services.

Jack Bernard moved the following resolution with support from Larry Krieg.

8.3.1 Media Planning and Placement

Resolution 18/2016

APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR MEDIA PLANNING AND PLACEMENT SERVICES

WHEREAS, Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA) contracts for marketing services which includes media planning and placement, graphic design, public relations, and strategic campaign development, and

WHEREAS, AAATA wishes to align all marketing service contract expiration dates so that they all expire on March 31, 2017, and

WHEREAS, these marketing services are currently split into two different contracts with different expiration dates, and

WHEREAS, AAATA Staff issued Request for Proposals (RFP) #2016-08 for Media Planning and Placement Services to identify a vendor to develop integrated media plans, place cost-effective advertising, and to handle billing for media placements, and

WHEREAS, the Proposal from Berline of Royal Oak, MI has been determined to be the most advantageous to AAATA, and

WHEREAS, the cost of media planning and placement services is expected to exceed \$100,000, and Board policy requires advance authorization to incur products or services over \$100,000,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority Board of Directors hereby authorizes execution of a contract with Berline to provide media planning and placement services for a one-year term, with no renewal options. The total contract term shall not exceed one year.

The motion passed unanimously.

9.0 Public Time

Jim Mogensen appeared before the Board. Mr. Mogensen commented on his experience writing articles about local events. Mr. Mogensen commented on the procedure for third-party fares, thinking ahead about the RTA millage, paying for the Connector, and another AAATA millage. Mr. Mogensen suggested that there could be a political problem, if information is not available publically. Mr. Mogensen suggested that from a policy perspective there is a difference between people who use the bus to get around; the national description of “transit dependent”, and people who use it because there is not enough parking where they work, “choice riders”. Mr. Mogensen suggested that in the end people who use the bus because they have to oftentimes are disadvantaged because in those conversations whatever happens they have to put up with. Mr. Mogensen suggested that people who have more agency in the community are likely to do better than people who don’t.

Carolyn Grawi from the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living appeared before the Board. Ms. Grawi commented on waiting 2.5 hours for a ride and she did not get picked up. Ms. Grawi acknowledged that there was a problem with the phone system and indicated that emergency practices need to be in place at all times. Ms. Grawi noted that although the A-Ride satisfaction survey is better, there is still room for improvement. Ms. Grawi invited board members to shadow her on A-Ride service. Ms. Grawi suggested that improvements are needed to the NightRide program indicating consumers are required to confirm NightRide reservations, and many people don’t have that option, and reservations should be confirmed to the consumer. Ms. Grawi indicated that AirRide having a segregated stop is not legal. Ms. Grawi commented on the longstanding relationship between people in the disability community and TheRide.

Michelle Barney appeared before the Board. Ms. Barney raised a concern that a recording comes on after the A-Ride reservation line is closed indicating that the line is still open. Ms. Barney requested that the problem be resolved so that callers are not waiting on hold when no one will come to the line. Ms. Barney requested that call-takers are taught etiquette for answering the phone. Ms. Barney commented on the Carver policy suggesting that the policy may be an answer to a problem to reduce short-term thinking and an emphasis on strategy and long-term focus.

No one further appearing, Mr. Mahler declared Public Time closed.

10.0 Adjourn

Charles Griffith moved to adjourn the meeting with support from Eli Cooper. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gillian Ream Gainsley, Acting Secretary