



It is the mission of the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority to provide useful, reliable, safe, environmentally responsible, and cost-effective public transportation options for the benefit of the Greater Ann Arbor Community.

Approved Minutes

January 19, 2012

Ann Arbor Transportation Authority

Board of Directors Meeting

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

Board Members Present: Eli Cooper, Anya Dale, Charles Griffith (Acting Chair), Roger Kerson, David Nacht, Rich Robben

Absent with Notice: Jesse Bernstein

Staff Present: Michael Benham, Terry Black, Ron Copeland, Dawn Gabay, Michael Ford, Jan Hallberg, Don Kline, Ed Robertson, Nancy Shore, Mary Stasiak, Phil Webb, Chris White

Guests: Dusty Francher (Midwest Strategy Group) and Clark Harder (Michigan Public Transit Association)

Recording Secretary: Karen Wheeler

Acting Chair Charles Griffith declared that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

### 1.0 *Public Hearing*

There was no public hearing.

### 2.0 *Communications and Announcements*

Charles Griffith welcomed Eli Cooper back to the AATA Board. Mr. Griffith announced that the meeting was the last for Rich Robben and thanked Mr. Robben for his service.

#### 2.1 *Appoint Acting Secretary*

Charles Griffith appointed Rich Robben Acting Secretary.

### 3.0 *Presentations*

3.1 *State Legislation by Dusty Francher (Midwest Strategy Group) and Clark Harder (Michigan Public Transit Association)*

Clark Harder presented an overview of the Michigan Public Transit Association (MPTA), which was formed in 1974 and became incorporated as a 501c6 organization in 1977 to provide education and training for transit systems. Mr. Harder noted that AATA has been a member of the association continuously for many years and acknowledged members of the AATA staff who serve on the MPTA Board and committees.

Mr. Harder provided a brief history of MPTA's lobbying efforts on behalf of its 50 members. Mr. Harder introduced Dusty Francher, MPTA's Legislative Relations Coordinator, highlighting Ms. Francher's 15 years of experience in transit.

Dusty Francher, principal partner at the Midwest Strategy Group, provided an overview of her background. Ms. Francher described the Governor's support of discussions around Regional Transit Authority (RTA) legislation noting that the bills detailing an RTA have yet to come forward. Ms. Francher reported on the Governor's discussions about transportation infrastructure and acknowledgement that the transportation system has been woefully underfunded for years at the state and federal level. A multiple bill package is expected to be introduced to increase funding overall for roads and transit and consideration is being given to modify the revenue distribution at the state level, if more funds are received, and to changing the formula on how roads are funded. Options being considered for additional funding include increasing the gas tax, a sales tax on gasoline, changes to registration fees on vehicles, and increasing the state sales tax (which would require a statewide vote). Ms. Francher reported on the work of Representative Rick Olson who is studying transit funding and will release a report.

Ms. Francher reported on her work investigating how changes in property taxes could impact millages, Public Act 152 regarding thresholds for how much employers can pay for employee health benefits, and statewide legislation regarding idling diesel powered vehicles to ward against pollution. Ms. Francher reported on an upcoming presentation to the House Transportation Committee on urban versus rural transportation and how funds are distributed in Michigan compared to how funds are distributed in other states. A future presentation will be made on Bus Rapid Transit and the House Transportation Committee is scheduled to discuss public transportation in January. Ms. Francher indicated that transportation is getting a lot of traction.

Mr. Harder announced that MPTA will not take a position on the RTA legislation until such time as the association knows the feelings of AATA and MPTA's other

southeast Michigan membership. If there is a conflict between members, MPTA would not take a position formally.

David Nacht detailed five areas where AATA has made progress and asked Ms. Francher to take the information back to the Governor and Legislature:

1. Worked cooperatively with the labor union to reduce legacy costs of retiree health care and implemented a program that is fiscally sound.
2. Worked as a board with staff to improve operating efficiencies by implementing private sector techniques into the public agency (a union environment) while delivering the same level of service at a lower cost to the taxpayer; an endemic part of culture.
3. Successfully negotiated cooperative agreements with the City of Ann Arbor, University of Michigan and Washtenaw County to maximize the use of taxpayer dollars by working together.
4. Successfully implemented regional commuter bus service and stand ready to replicate the model in future regional approaches.
5. Worked cooperatively with private sector providers to offer service under the AATA brand, or that of private providers, whichever makes the most sense.

Mr. Nacht classified the agency as being responsive to public initiatives from private and public agendas, and emphasized the efforts of the Transit Master Plan to put forth the best approach for regional transit that improves movement and is environmentally and fiscally sound.

Ms. Francher complimented the Board and staff for a well run organization noting the percentage of farebox revenue yielded. Mr. Harder agreed that AATA is an outstanding agency and often used as an example in discussions with legislators.

Ms. Francher and Mr. Harder responded to questions on how additional funding from an RTA might impact the transition from a city to county authority and a possible collision between initiatives. Mr. Harder noted that the preliminary indication is that an RTA would not replace or duplicate existing systems. Mr. Harder indicated that that more would be known once actual language in the legislation is available. Ms. Francher reported on details in the state constitution regarding designation of funds.

In response to other inquiries Mr. Harder indicated that creative thinking is required, both by transit systems and the government, to determine how to accomplish the many possible transit initiatives. Ms. Francher added that the multiple bills being considered could potentially change the Act 51 formula. Mr. Harder restated the Governor's strong stand and focus on transportation,

including public transportation.

Mr. Griffith thanked Ms. Francher and Mr. Harder for their presentation.

### 3.2 *getDowntown by Nancy Shore*

Nancy Shore, getDowntown Director, made a presentation on key findings from the 2011 getDowntown Program Evaluation, a survey conducted every two years to get a snapshot of the commuting habits of downtown Ann Arbor employees and gauge employer and employee attitudes and awareness of the getDowntown Program. Ms. Shore reported on the general awareness of the getDowntown program which is high among employers and employees (70%).

Ms. Shore reported that the survey (compared to the 2009 survey) showed an increase in the percentage of employees using public transportation to get to work. Ms. Shore reviewed results on the importance of public transportation for attracting a quality workforce and customers and how employees get to work. People who drive alone do so first for convenience and second due to a lack of alternative commuting options which speaks to why the TMP so important.

Ms. Shore reported on how modes of transportation to work vary with distance to work and displayed a map of the area with an overlay of a four mile radius, essentially the distance around the City of Ann Arbor (which has convenient transportation). Ms. Shore reported on the use of AATA to commute, and factors that would encourage more people to commute with express, more direct service and service closer to respondent residences receiving the highest ranking. Ms. Shore detailed how commuting modes changed in the last year and reasons for changes of mode with a high number of respondents indicating the availability of the go!pass.

A suggestion was made for additional questions in the next survey regarding whether additional park and ride lots, express service and additional service discounts might attract more riders. Ms. Shore responded to questions and agreed to investigate the availability of zip code information from survey respondents. Mr. Griffith thanked Ms. Shore for her presentation.

### 4.0 *Public Time – Comment on Agenda Items*

Ethel Potts appeared before the Board and commented on planning for a five year transportation plan. She noted her long-term interest in AATA plans over many years citing a 1990 transportation some of the elements of which were completed. Ms. Potts suggested that line bus service was removed to accommodate service to the Plymouth Road park and ride lot and stated that good transportation takes you where you want to

go. Ms. Potts suggested that the current system is good, but needs to be shaped up prior to considering a 4-party agreement for an expanded system.

Vivienne Armentrout appeared before the Board. Ms. Armentrout commented on a Planning and Development Committee discussion about plans for a millage vote. Ms. Armentrout displayed a diagram showing progress of the countywide program which has the u196 board assigned the responsibility to plan for a millage. Ms. Armentrout noted that the u196 board has only three AATA board members, and would lose one with Mr. Robben's departure. Ms. Armentrout encouraged the Board to be more involved, especially in the early stages of planning and discussions about finances, millage votes and specific services.

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

## 5.0 *Review and Approval of Minutes*

### 5.1 *Review and Approval of Minutes of December 15, 2011*

Anya Dale moved approval of the minutes as written with support from Roger Kerson. The motion carried; Eli Cooper abstained.

## 6.0 *Board and Staff Reports*

### 6.1 *Chief Executive Officer*

Michael Ford reported on the countywide meetings that had taken place since the last Board meeting. Mr. Ford welcomed Eli Cooper to the Board. Mr. Ford thanked Rich Robben for his service on the Board; for his tireless efforts, his support and guidance. Mr. Ford presented Mr. Robben with an AATA mailbox.

Mr. Ford reported on the status of the A-Ride Carry on Policy which is being studied by a subcommittee of the Local Advisory Council. Mr. Ford reported on his investigation into the status of high mileage vehicles being used to provide paratransit service noting that he personally rode in high mileage vehicles used for door-to-door service. No safety concerns or performance issues were found and Mr. Ford indicated that he was satisfied with the investigation.

Mr. Ford reported on the PDC meeting chaired by David Nacht. The committee moved forward a resolution to approve submission of the Capital and Categorical Grant Program. The committee discussed passenger safety near the Washtenaw Avenue transfer location. Staff was directed to place a sign instructing people to cross only in crosswalks, and staff was tasked with conducting a safety assessment of how pedestrians and cars are interacting near the transfer location.

Mr. Ford noted that the committee requested a report on how the WALLY Project could be sustainable. A report will be presented to PDC in March, and the work will not move forward without the Board's concurrence.

Mr. Ford reported that PMER did not meet and referred to two action items under new business which staff could present.

Mr. Ford provided an update on the Transit Master Plan reporting on a presentation on the 4-Party Agreement to Ann Arbor City Council and individual meetings with u196 Board members regarding governing structure and organizing outreach in each district.

Mr. Ford reported on internal efforts including Airport Service, Van Pool Service, a new Marketing Plan, the Blake Transit Center Reconstruction and facility improvements at AATA Headquarters. Mr. Ford reported on the recent audit of the financial statements of last fiscal year by a new contractor, Plante Moran. Mr. Ford noted that he had held numerous meetings with business and community partners, the details of which were included in his written report.

#### 6.1.1 *Website Redevelopment*

Mary Stasiak reported on the design phase of the website redevelopment project noting the importance of making sure that design will be sustainable. Ms. Stasiak reported on feedback sought from several hundred riders and people in the community, as well as the review of best practices. Once the final design template is complete, the project team will begin to populate the site and build each page. Following that, further user testing will be conducted.

#### 6.1.2 *Financial/Operating Data and Analysis*

Phil Webb reported on the financial operating data for the three months ended January 31, 2012. Mr. Webb indicated that the budget is tracking as projected and listed a few of the line items under budget: wages (due to open positions), contracted maintenance (due to less snowfall so far this winter), and agency and media fees (a timing difference expected to even out through the rest of the fiscal year).

Chris White noted that PMER Committee members did not have an opportunity to review the operating statistics since the committee did not meet. Mr. White reported that there were no particular issues, and essentially a continuation of existing trends. Mr. White indicated that a detailed report would be made at the February PMER meeting. Mr.

White referred to the Quarterly Service Standards Report.

#### 6.1.3 *Effect of Stadium Bridge Detours on On-Time Performance*

Chris White reported that the first two weeks of the closure of the Stadium Bridges (at which time State Street was also closed) had an impact on on-time performance for routes 5, 6 and 36. Mr. White noted that the City made several intersection improvements prior to the construction and indicated that since the reopening of State Street the difficulty was reduced. Mr. White added that in the summer State Street is scheduled to be closed in one direction but less of an impact is expected.

#### 6.2 *Planning and Development Committee*

David Nacht reported that staff had previously undergone tough questioning from Rich Robben about the project financing for reconstruction of the Blake Transit Center. Mr. Nacht indicated that during the committee's January meeting staff was well prepared and gave a detailed presentation on the status of the project. The committee was satisfied that Mr. Robben's concerns had been fully addressed and gave their endorsement to move forward with the Capital and Categorical Grant Program as presented.

#### 6.3 *Performance Monitoring and External Relations Committee*

There was no report.

#### 6.4 *Local Advisory Council*

Cheryl Weber reported that the LAC had a major discussion about the Carry on Policy noting that the number of packages allowed to be carried compares with the number allowed on buses, and is similar to policies of other transit providers.

Ms. Weber reported on a letter approved and sent to the CEO of the University of Michigan Hospitals and Health Centers. The letter notes that access to the medical facility for people who use public transportation is not anywhere near equal to access for drivers. A prior plan to provide protection from the weather for public transportation users was abandoned. The LAC felt compelled to bring that back to their attention.

#### 7.0 *Question Time*

There were no questions from Board members.

#### 8.0 *Old Business*

There was no Old Business for the Board to consider.

9.0 *New Business*

Rich Robben moved the following resolution with support from Anya Dale.

9.1 *Consideration of Resolution Adopting 2012-2015 Capital and Categorical Grant Program*

WHEREAS, the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) adopted a revised 2011-2015 Capital and Categorical Grant Program in August, 2011, and

WHEREAS, the program for FY 2011 is complete, and a program for FY 2016 has been developed, and

WHEREAS, expansion projects have been developed as part of the development of the Transit Master Plan which have been added to the FY 2012 and FY 2013 elements, and

WHEREAS, the attached FY 2012 – FY 2016 Capital and Categorical Grant Program is the result of these changes, and

WHEREAS, the attached program continues to be consistent with potential funding and to comply with various federal and state requirements,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority Board of Directors hereby adopts the attached FY2012 -2016 Capital and Categorical Grant Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the \$1.5 million in the FY 2013 Expansion Program for final funds for the Blake Transit Center reconstruction is a maximum amount. Staff will continue design and value engineering activities to complete the scope and provide a final cost estimate to the Board by March, 2012.

David Nacht announced that this is an annual, established procedure followed by transit boards nationally. Mr. Nacht noted that there is some flexibility to reprogram funds but the expected expenditure of funds is consistent with the planning process.

The motion passed unanimously.

Rich Robben moved the following resolution with support from David Nacht.

9.2 *Consideration of Resolution Approving the Purchase of Vans for Vanpool Service*



WHEREAS, the AATA Board of Directors authorized its Chief Executive Officer to enter into a contract with VPSI for vanpool services in the Ann Arbor area, and

WHEREAS, the purchase of vans are required to provide the service, and

WHEREAS, The State of Michigan currently has a five year contract which is extended to local units of Government and Michigan Department of Transportation authorizing transit agencies to purchase vans from Bill Snethkamp's Lansing, Inc., and

WHEREAS, funds for these purchases are included in approved federal and state grants,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the AATA Board of Directors hereby authorizes AATA to purchase seven (7) 2012 Dodge Caravans at a base price of \$21,272.00 each with an option to purchase up to a total of twenty-five (25) vans for vanpool services.

Charles Griffith announced that there was funding in the budget to move forward with the purchase of seven initial vans for new vanpools and authorization for up to 25 total vehicles.

David Nacht indicated that while he was in favor of purchasing from the state contract, the vendor, while a state of Michigan vendor, is not located in Washtenaw County. Mr. Nacht suggested exploring the option of purchasing the first seven vehicles from the proposed vendor and exploring a Washtenaw County company for the purchase of the remaining 18 vehicles to see how local business pricing compares to the state contract.

Chris White responded that there would have to be a separate procurement and noted that Washtenaw County dealers had the opportunity to bid on the state contract. Mr. White added that purchasing from the state contract fulfills federal requirements and there is no allowance for geographic preference.

David Nacht suggested moving ahead with the purchase of seven vans, and prior to the next round of purchases, conducting an informal exploration without a competitive bid process to determine if a local provider could give a lower price than the state contract. Michael Ford indicated that the agency usually receives better pricing going through the state bid. Mary Stasiak added that included in the contract with the recommended dealer is storage at no cost. Ms. Stasiak indicated that it would be important to seek the same terms, if an alternate vendor were pursued.

Ms. Stasiak was asked to report back to PMER for further discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

David Nacht moved the following resolution with support from Eli Cooper.

9.3 *Consideration of Resolution Authorizing Submission of Federal Grant Applications and Associated Documents*

Resolution authorizing the filing of applications with the Federal Transit Administration, an operating administration of the United States Department of Transportation, for Federal transportation assistance authorized by 49 U.S.C.

Whereas, the Federal Transportation Administrator has been delegated authority to award Federal financial assistance for a transportation project; and

Whereas, the grant or cooperative agreement for Federal Financial assistance will impose certain obligations upon the Applicant, and may require the Applicant to provide the local share of the project cost; and

Whereas, the Applicant has or will provide all annual certifications and assurances to the Federal Transit Administration required for the project;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by the Board of Directors of the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority:

1. The Chief Executive Officer or his designee is authorized to execute and file application for Federal assistance on behalf of the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority with the Federal Transit Administration. The Ann Arbor Transportation Authority is the designated recipient requesting Urbanized Area Formula Program assistance authorized by 49 U.S.C. §5307 for the Ann Arbor urbanized area.
2. The Chief Executive Officer or his designee is authorized to execute and file with its application the annual certification and assurances and other documents the Federal Transit Administration requires before awarding a Federal assistance grant or cooperative agreement.
3. The Chief Executive Officer or his designee is authorized to execute grant and cooperative agreements with the Federal Transit Administration on behalf of the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned duly qualified Secretary, acting on behalf of the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted at a legally convened meeting of the Board of Directors of the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority held on January 19, 2012.

Charles Griffith indicated that the resolution was pro forma. It was noted that the resolution was an update of a prior resolution and exactly the same, with the exception of changing the title of Michael Ford's position from Executive Director to Chief Executive Officer.

The motion passed unanimously.

- 9.4 David Nacht moved that the Board thank Rich Robben for years of outstanding service to the Board. Roger Kerson supported the motion.

David Nacht described Mr. Robben's professional career including a vast wealth of knowledge and expertise in several areas that have benefited the agency. Mr. Nacht outlined Mr. Robben's active committee service including chairing the Planning and Development Committee and spending tireless hours fulfilling that commitment. Board members showered Mr. Robben with praise characterizing his service and their experience working with him as incalculable, delightful and enjoyable.

The motion passed unanimously.

Rich Robben thanked Board members for their kind words indicating that he greatly enjoyed his term serving on the Board. Mr. Robben complimented the Board for their excellent work and applauded Michael Ford and the senior staff for running an outstanding organization.

#### 10.0 *Public Time*

Nancy Kaplan appeared before the Board and read an excerpt from a "transportation agreement". Ms. Kaplan requested clarification of specific language in the agreement.

Michael Ford agreed to provide follow-up and clarification.

Clark Charnetski, LAC co-chair, appeared before the Board. Mr. Charnetski commented on the SMART Local Advisory Council meetings in Detroit noting that the committee meets only four times per year due to infrequent bus service outside of peak hours from the suburbs to downtown. Mr. Charnetski voiced his support for the countywide regional plan indicating that some LAC participants have trouble getting to critical destinations outside of the normal service areas.

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

11.0 *Adjourn*

Rich Robben moved to adjourn the meeting with support from Roger Kerson. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rich Robben, Acting Secretary