

CHATHAM AREA TRANSIT
AUTHORITY

BOARD MEETING

OF

August 8, 2008

9:48 A.M.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: I would like to call to order the Chatham Area Transit Authority and I call upon the secretary for roll call please.

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Liakakis

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: here

MRS. CLARK: Dr. Thomas

DR. THOMAS: here

MRS. CLARK: Ms. Stone present

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Holmes present

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Shay

MR. SHAY: here

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Farrell

MR. FARRELL: here

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Odell here

MR. ODELL: here

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Gellatly

MR. GELLATLY: here

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Kicklighter

MR. KICKLIGHTER: here

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Broker

MR. BROKER: here

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Russell

MR. RUSSELL: here

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Dawson

MR. DAWSON: here

MRS. CLARK: And Mr. Oakley

MR. OAKLEY: here

Also present at the meeting was Russ Abolt, M. Tyus Butler, Joe M. Rivers, and Patricia Clark.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Okay. Huh thank you for the roll call. Now all of the members of the Transit Area Authority were distributed the minutes. Do we have any additions or corrections. If not, I'll entertain a motion for approval.

I move for their approval.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Have a motion on the floor for approval and a second. All in favor signify by raising your hand. Motion passes. Under Item IV, New Business, request authorization for Chairman to sign a contract with HayGroup for GASB 45 OPEB Actuarial Valuations of CAT's other post employment benefits. Joe,

MR. RIVERS: Yes sir, Mr. Chairman, we asking that you sign that the Board authorize you to sign a contract for the Hay Group which is, we are piggybacking on the County. They do the County GASB 45 actuarial and other post employment benefits. So we are asking the Board to approve that, uh, we'll hopefully will start a wall maybe on this side for Chatham Area Transit in getting all of our GASB actuarial, getting us into conformance with GASB 45.

MR. ODELL: Move for approval.

MR. DAWSON: Second

MR. LIAKAKIS: Have a motion on the floor and a second to approve this contract with Hay Group. All in favor, signify by raising your hand. Motion passes.

MR. LIAKASKIS: Next Item II Information on transit bus size advantages and disadvantages, Joe.

MR. RIVERS: Yes, huh, Mr. Chairman we huh, you wanted that report and we are supplying the Board with that report. In our opinion right now, huh, we're encompassing almost through this past month, a four plus percent growth in ridership. Our ridership is beginning to increase, unfortunately, our equipment is failing. Huh, so, we'll just giving you that for information. The capacity of the buses and what they can do. We'll planning to try to replace our fleet and try to get that fleet into a rotation and it's essential that we start off that acquisition with larger buses because they are conducive and more interchangeable to our routes. As we go on, we'll intergrate that between 30' and 35' but on additional run, huh, hopefully, we'll do that. There's one other thing I will not bring it to you until next week probably I will ask you to have a special meeting approve the purchase of buses but I want to make sure that the funding is in place. As you all know, you'll deal with Georgia DOT but I going to tell you they are something else. So, I just

gotta deal with what I've gotta deal with. I thought money was in place for something and it's not, so I gotta have the assurance that we have a contract before I step out.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Joe, huh, oh excuse me, Dave.

MR. GELLATLY: Joe, huh, I understand what you're going through on that when we'll taking about when the buses can be ordered and the money has to be in place, matching funds, I totally understand that. If there's anything that we can do to help you move that forward, why we'll be glad to do it. And do you have any guestamics, huh, I know it's kinda fuzzy as to when you could actually order, order the buses because the money has to be in place but after, huh, when that date is established, how long would it take from the time you place an order to have the first buses delivered?

MR. RIVERS: Huh, it would take about 12 – 18 months if we go out on an option, huh, hopefully, sometimes you can shorten that time all depending upon the availability of the options out there and at what point those option are within the manufacturer.

MR. GELLATLY: Okay. I understand the condition of the fleet and I think that it's something that we really take huh, take it seriously and if there's anything we could do as a Board, why I'm sure I speak for the other members, we'll do whatever it takes to push it forward. Thank you.

MR. RIVERS: We're going up to Atlanta on next Thursday to meet with Steve Kish, Georgia DOT and hopefully we will kind of solidify that. Huh.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Helen.

MRS. STONE: Just real quickly, I was talking to Mr. Dawson, these buses have to be custom-made. Is that correct?

MR. RIVERS: Yeah.

MRS. STONE: That's odd to me, I mean I'm, because you see so many buses that look the same. I was in Atlanta yesterday and rode a bus and looks just like our buses. So that's interesting that they have to be custom-made.

MR. RIVERS: Well, they're custom in the sense that you, from the engine parts that you're going to use, the seating, where's it's going to be, whether you going to have the capacity like on a 35' ft. bus or on a smaller bus. If you're going to have the capacity of 23 people to 25 people, you have to make that adjustment of building over your seat well, in order to accommodate that seat. There's a number of things and as we are looking at hybrids, we're looking at totally, a whole different animal altogether.

MRS. STONE: I certainly understand that I was just curious about the length of time that it takes to get a bus, when you look at the structure of bus in many communities they all look the same.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Wayne.

MR. DAWSON: Uh, I just wanted to confirm, these are going to be Gilleg's like our current fleet?

MR. RIVERS: We'll probably go out, maybe with an option of Gilleg. I'll probably look at some other companies with some options out there. But all the research that I've done thus far has been with the Gilleg bus. I haven't looked at the Orion which New York is running the Orion bus and they also run some Gilleg. But, huh, we'll make that determination which is best suited for us.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Patrick.

MR. SHAY: I don't know if this is possible, a lot of times on a long lead item like something that takes 12 – 18 months to in order to manufacture and I understand there's probably a backlog in orders right now. If there's anyway we can help you by offering some of kind of modest guarantee to go ahead and place an order so that we can make sure that we are in the cue, in the line, to get our buses sooner rather than later, I think that's something that's something we might be willing to consider.

MR. RIVERS: Understand that there's no – you know the good about this thing whole thing is there's no money down.

MR. SHAY: Okay.

MR. RIVERS: We can order it but my thing is that I want to have the assurance that I got, if I'm looking at the State part of it, I got pretty close to a million dollars that would be in place in order for me to go on. To give you an example, we just closed out, I just got a check for \$3.7 million dollars to close out the lease on those lease buses and I thought that, that deal was already consummated when I signed in May, it isn't. There's a shortfall in there. So, that's why I'm going to Atlanta to make sure that what we did then commutate that total deal. So, I'll go ahead and pay down that money because once we get a check from the Feds, we got to get rid of it, we got to pay that bill within three days. So, we gotta, we gonna pay down on the down payment on those lease buses – get rid of it. But, huh, we don't need any money down, it's just the assurance that I would like to have going in.

MR. SHAY: You obviously know more about this than I or we do but I would just concur with Commissioner Gellatly that whatever we could do to help because if we are short on equipment today and the earliest we can get relief is 12-18months away then, you know, whatever we could do to help.

MR. RIVERS: If there is anything possible, gentlemen, ladies and gentlemen, I'm out there on it if I could get some buses tomorrow that would be done. I will probably be back at you as soon as I can get the Federal money in place for another order of buses. I

got to get this fleet in it's proper rotation, where we'll replacing – I've got 11 buses with half of that 11 is almost over a million miles. I mean, yesterday and day before yesterday, I mean I went in yesterday morning at five. We had 46 buses that we got out and those guys worked around the clock. I was there the night before to make sure that those mechanics were working and getting those buses out. We got 46 with one spare and when they went out 7:15, the spare had to go out and pick up one, okay. And, it's unreal. We had one that broke with a fuel leak at Memorial. We had one that broke down at 204, we had one that broke down at east Savannah with passengers on it. The bus that I was sending to Memorial, we decided that we had to divert that one to east Savannah because it was a load of people over there and that bus runs so infrequently going all the way out to the Island. So, I had to cut down on the mobility buses because one of those broke down and it was under warranty, I had to send it in the shop. Hopefully, we'll get that bus back this morning. But, hey, it's going to be alright, it's going to be alright. We're going to make it.

??When we order.

MR. RIVERS: I'll tell you one other thing that's going to probably help relieve my situation and I'm looking at it right now. On yesterday, we were looking at a webinar on preventative maintenance. And, we looked at that software and if we're able to afford that software I'll be able to bring that software in where we can give that mechanic a work order and we can tell how much time he spent on that order, we will be able to tell how much life expectancy that that part has and if it has a 12 month expectancy and if it's down to 11 months, we can pull it out but those are kinds of things that we are doing and we just got a whole lot going on. It's improving but it's not going to happen overnight.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Dave.

MR. GELLATLY: Joe, huh, I don't know anything about ordering buses but I do know a lot about ordering other types of vehicles, police vehicles and equipment and what have you, if there is anyway that we as the commission can approve the type of buses that you want with a commitment that we intend to pay our share of it and if there's a high likelihood that you're going to get federal funding, which I think there is, is there a way that you can, huh, place an order and huh, if you, huh, what I've done in the past is to order one vehicle with an option for 30 more, something like that. All I'm asking is maybe we can take a look at it that, huh, if the commission can help you by tentatively saying that we support X number of buses that are going to look like this. There's a high likelihood that you're going to get federal funding and then, if this company would accept an order, a tentative order like that, even if maybe we had to buy one of them that this might be a good way to get our foot solidly in the door and another thing I think is on our side, the type of bus that we are looking at now, I'm sure is in high demand all over this country, so I think a company would be receptive in taking this kind of an order because its not like if the bottom fell out for us tomorrow, someone else would move up rapidly. I'm concerned about us waiting for federal funding, you know months and then find out that we're way, way at the back of the line for the type of bus that's needed for this community. That's all I'm saying.

MR. RIVERS: Huh, Mr. Gellatly, I have when I put in this request for 11 buses, I have federal funding for it. I have made a way that I'm assured that I'm going to have local match for it. The piece that I'm missing is the State match which is 15% of the total order which amounts to about \$750,000.

MR. GELLATLY: That being the case, it would seem like you've got most of the funding lined up. What would prevent us from giving you approval and just get on with it and order it? Then if the 15% of the State falls out, why we could re-examine it and figure out how we're going to pay for it or not pay for it but we're talking about 15% and huh, what I want us to be is at the front of the line.

MR. RIVERS: I'll entertain that sir and I'll, rest assure that I'm going up there next week and we should be able to pull that shortage but I have to know that the State, the State is going through so much and believe me they are kind of fouled up, up there, computer wise and everything else, so I just have to take my time.

MR. GELLATLY: But time might not necessarily be on our side. What I'm asking, Joe is if there's anyway that with our assistance and we have our federal money, let's get our order in and then let's hope for the best from the State.

MR. RIVERS: Whatever my Board said, that's what I'll do sir.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Harris.

MR. ODELL: Joe, I think the word is, order the buses. Our biggest problem has been that the buses have a life expectancy of how many miles and we're twice that number. Rotation only works if you're within the manufacturer limit. This is a wonderful thing. We have a Commission that saying, order the buses.

MR. RIVERS: Yes, sir.

MR. ODELL: And, do

??Do what you're told, Joe.

MR. RIVERS: Can I just get a firmation of that by a motion and a vote please?

MR. GELLATLY: I make a motion what I just got through saying.

MR. ODELL: And I'll second whatever he just got through saying.

?? I heard it, second.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Alright, James.

MR. HOLMES: Everything was the same as what I was saying, I think Joe talking too much because the census up here was to order the buses, I think you was trying to talking yourself out of ordering the buses.

MR. RIVERS: Appreciate that.

MR. LIAKAKIS: So we have a motion on the floor and a second for the Authority to give to Joe to order the buses immediately. Any other discussion? Alright.

MR. ODELL: Just a clarification, that motion doesn't specify the number of buses however, it relates back to our earlier discussions of the numbers of buses to be ordered.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Okay. All in favor signify by raising your hand. Motion passes/

MR. RIVERS: Thank you.

MR. KICKLIGHTER: May I add an item to the agenda items, please?

MR. LIAKAKIS: On here?

MR. KICKLIGHTER: Yes, sir.

MR. LIAKAKIS: For this item?

MR. KICKLIGHTER: For #3, was that 2?

MR. LIAKAKIS: Make the motion.

MR. KICKLIGHTER: Huh, I'll make a motion to add Westside transportation to the agenda.

?? Second.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Joe you want to explain that, what he's talking about.

MR. ODELL: We have to vote on it.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Oh, you don't know.

MR. ODELL: We have to vote on adding it to the agenda.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Okay. All in favor of adding the Westside transportation matter on the agenda, please raise your hand. Motion passes.

MR. KICKLIGHTER: Thank you. Mr. Chairman and Board Members. Huh, I'd like to take this opportunity to basically address two issues and hopefully clear up some rumors.

I've been receiving a lot of calls lately from people throughout the County asking for reasons, wondering if this particular body is going to try and force unwanted taxes on their areas and unwanted services on their areas. And huh, basically, it's pretty much come to our attention that – I just want to assure the public that I've been here now awhile and I've heard nothing this body and board as far as a desire as a to force taxes and services on any area. In researching, to lay it out there bluntly, in researching I have and I know where it's coming from, there's, there's – there's, to let the public know, the citizens that's calling, there's candidates out there for office who in various ways, shapes or forms, in my opinion are relaying the message that they want to put a forced tax on the area, the areas that opted out of the CAT service when created but I want to assure you that I've heard nothing of that and received no indication that anyone on this particular Board wants to force taxes and services if you live in a City that opted out of it when CAT was initially created. Number two, too clear up further rumors on that, when you, if and when you ever hear of grumblings of forced taxes from anyone from anyone on this Board or anyone seeking a position on this Board or the County Commission which puts you here as Chairman or a Commissioner, that's huh, pretty much, well again bluntly, there's no authority for anyone of us as well as anyone else who seeks office to actually force unwanted services on the area. When the CAT Authority was formed, it was chartered in a way where only the State Representatives could impose or enforce such actions. So, please rest assured everyone that that as far as I know, no one on this particular Board has requested or even insinuated anything, as far as forced taxes. What we are doing on this Board in my opinion, and what we, what we all strive to do is rather than forcing any service on any area is we're striving to improve the services we are providing to the services we provide to the areas. Now, with my being the representative, with me being the representative for Pooler, Bloomingdale, Port Wentworth which totally opted out and Garden City which has approximately, probably 3/4th of Garden City is actually served. And, Dr. Thomas represents Garden City and we have about half, both of us. I feel compelled to respond as far as Tybee Island also. But on the Westside area, we definitely, I know we've received the support and everyone up here, we need to concentrate on providing that better service for the area. There was recently a report done where it showed that it took an unbelievable amount of time to be transported from one certain area on the Westside where there is service because again, Savannah is out there, too and people seem to forget that and it's growing quickly in that district out there, the 7th district. Savannah is a major player in now, in there and they have the CAT service. So we service many, many, many, many areas as well as all the unincorporated areas on the Westside and I just want the public to know that it is our intent with talking with Board members to constantly improve that area and huh, I just want to clear up those rumors and hopefully you're - hopefully, I know you're working on a plan to help that process be a little faster but again the realization that we need buses to do that and everything, I just want everyone to know we're working with what we have and striving to do better, so.

signify by raising your hand. Motion passes. Okay, ah meeting adjourned.

Meeting recessed at 9:41 a.m.

Patricia R. Clark, Secretary, Treasurer
Chatham Area Transit Authority