

CHATHAM AREA TRANSIT
AUTHORITY

BOARD MEETING

OF

September 5, 2008

11:31 A.M.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Ah I call on the CAT secretary now to ah for the roll call please for our meeting for the Chatham Area Transit Authority.

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Liakakis

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: here

MRS. CLARK: Dr. Thomas

DR. THOMAS: here

MRS. CLARK: Ms. Stone

MRS. STONE: present

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Holmes

MR. HOLMES: here

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: present

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: Ah, next on the item minutes for the August 8, 2008. I'd like a motion on the floor for those approval they have been already disseminated.

MR. BROKER: I move it.

MR. KICKLIGHTER: second

MR. LIAKAKIS: We have a motion on the floor and a second all in favor signify by raising your hand. Motion passes. We have another, ah, need another motion for the approval of the minutes for the special called ah, special called Board meeting on August 22nd.

MR. RIVERS: Mr. Chairman. If I may, ah, my interim secretary was out for the last two weeks due to illness of her mother and subsequently passing of her mother and we had a temp in, ah, and the temp got in a wreck. And Jean Iaderosa took the last minutes at the special meeting and ah, there are some people that did not that second I think I – we sent you out an e-mail. Y'all catch that e-mail on the pages. We didn't catch some of the seconds on page 2, 16 and 17. But if you can look at page 2, 16 and 17 of those motions and tell us who second it, we appreciate it.

MR. LIAKAKIS: A motion on the floor please. Ah, whence ah, you look at that. It's under the ah the Chatham Area Transit.

MR. RIVERS: Mr. Chairman, I didn't look at these, on 2, ah when she calls ah, Commissioner Stone you said she's here. So that was the Chairman that said that on page on 2.

MR. SHAY: Mr. Rivers is what you looking for is a motion to adopt the minutes as amended?

MR. RIVERS: Yes sir.

MR. SHAY: Alright. Well I move that we adopt the minutes for the special called meeting as amended.

MR ODELL: Second.

MR. LIAKAKIS: All in favor signify by raising your hand. Motion passes. Under new business, ah, verbal follow-up report on bus schedule changes, Joe.

MR. RIVERS: Mr. T. T is gonna give you a report of the follow-up on those ah, concerns that you had reference to the changes.

MR. HAKIM: Ah, good morning. Timamu Hakim, Service Manager Scheduler Chatham Area Transit. Um, at our last meeting on August 22nd, um, we spoke about some the up coming changes to some of the routes that would be affected on October 13th. And there were some concerns expressed by two visually impaired passengers, one being Kim Harris and the other one being Teresa Brenner. Um it was asked that I talk with them and see if there can be some changes or arrangements made to a route that would service the Super Wal-mart in Sandfly. What I did is I spoke with ah, Kim Harris and Teresa Brenner and explained that one of the routes that would be servicing ah, the Super Wal-mart that presently does not, would be the 28 Waters Road. It would do it on its outbound trip. And it would make 6 initially it had 6 trips set up. And Ms. Brenner asked if we could add another trip and I did and that would be 7:45 trip. What the 28 Waters would do on a south bound trip it would turn left on Eisenhower, right on Sally Mood, left on Montgomery Crossroads, and take Montgomery Crossroads to the Super Wal-mart and service inside of the Wal-mart. We also spoke about there main concern which was one of their main concerns which was um traveling from the Super Wal-mart and arriving at Hodgson Memorial on the opposite side of the street and having to cross over ah, with there not being a traffic signal presently. What's there now is a, a flashing, a yellow caution light. And what I did was, I met with Mike Wiener and requested that a traffic signal that would be controlled by ah, pedestrians be installed and asked what the feasibility would be in order to get one, you know, installed there. He explained to me that there would have to be a, ah, pedestrian volume ah, if pedestrian ah, ah, volume that would count the amount of pedestrians that actually cross the street from east to west and west to east. And he also said that it would have to be, ah, no less than 100 pedestrians crossing per hour in order for it to be warranted to be a traffic signal placed there. He also recommended that we look at moving the present stops that we have there along with its shelters from its present location to further north closer to the existing traffic signal which is presently controlled by pedestrians. Umm, I told him that I would take his suggestion and the Passenger Amenities Project Manager, Russell Jennette and myself, we went to that location and look at it. Found that it was presently unsafe for ah, passengers with challenges such as those in wheelchairs and those that are also visually impaired. The reasons being the sidewalks are looks like they've been there for a while and they not even as I feel they should be. The curb cuts, ah, one of the curb cuts that lead from the east side to the west side, um is not really a curb cut. What its actually looks like it is, is a rain ah run off which possibly would not be wide enough for a wheelchair. Um the curb cuts that are present are not the upgraded curb cuts which have the ah, for lack of the proper terminology, the bubbles that would alert a visually impaired passenger that they are entering a curb cut and getting ready to cross the street. There's also not a crosswalk there so I took that information back to Mike Wiener and explained it to him and asked that he do the survey to determine if there are a 100 ah, pedestrians or not crossing Hodgson Memorial. Um, I spoke yesterday, with Audrey Archer who informed me that presently, within a 2 hour period, there has only been a count of 13 pedestrians crossing Hodgson Memorial. And she said that she will continue to ah, continue the study and get back to me with the results, you know, that she has. So I'm expecting, hopefully in the next few weeks that she'll finish that study and get back to me with the information.

MR. LIAKAKIS: What's the requirement on that about how many before you can put that crosswalk, how many?

MR. HAKIM: Based on um, it has to be warranted from the Manual of Uniform Traffic Count Devices or M.U.T.C.D. a count of 100 pedestrians, no less. A 100 pedestrians per hour crossing at any particular street would warrant a traffic signal ah, controlled by pedestrians. It would have to be a 100 per hour. Okay. And I got that from Audrey Archer who is also-she works with Mike Wiener at traffic and engineering. So as I stated the 28 Waters would be a route deviation to assist with getting passengers from the Super Wal-mart and the main thing is that it would ah, went it reaches Hodgson Memorial, it would be on the side of the Oglethorpe Mall. And um, Ms. Brenner nor Ms. Harrison would have to cross the street; they'd already be on the correct side. The problem would be if they have to cross back on the other side once they leave the mall and hopefully if there were a traffic signal there, that would you know, eliminate that ah, that problem. I'm also in contact with Buddy Bishop and ah, I wanna meet with him next week to look at possibility of upgrading the sidewalks ah, to be what they need to be. You know, he responded to me this morning via e-mail and I'll talk to him ah, you know, when I leave the meeting today. So umm, in finishing, I did contact Ms. Harrison as well as Ms. Brenner and also was in contact with Ms. Brenner via e-mail and sent her copies of the schedules that um, you know, that have the changes on it that would affect her in the area that she catches the bus.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Well, ah, you know one of the important things we have quite a number of people in our community that have disabilities. Those that physical disabilities those that that, you know, they might have some hearing impairment ah, visual impairment and all, and we gotta make sure ah, that we're able to assist them, you know, ah, there might not be a 100 disabled people going across a street at one time, ah, you know, within an hours period of time, but anyway, ah, before we approve I'll ask the Board, you know that we ah, ah, are you looking for approval for these things today Joe?

MR. RIVERS: No sir. That's, that's just information and I'll get with the city manager to let him know the urgency of, of the need of the – that it's a safety issue and, and that we need to take it into consideration cause we have ah, people with visual impairment that are crossing streets.

MR. LIAKAKIS: I, I know there are representatives today from the ah, ah, from the Savannah Association of the Blind here and I'd like for you, the 2 of yall to get with them because the main thing is we gotta make sure ah, that we ah, do what we can for those people that have some type of disability in our community and ah, and to go from there as opposed to making some decision right a way and just cutting ah, that off. Wayne.

MR. DAWSON: Yeah, I was just gonna say, Joe if we could send and T, if could send them some information on requesting a reasonable accommodation under the city, I mean given that their threshold is 100, and yet they only 13 that cross, but if a significant portion of those 13 are people with disabilities and they need that signal in order to be able to um, have equal access to both sides of the street, I think we should send them reasonable accommodation information, and I can forward that to T and then you can forwarded it to Ms. Brenner.

MR. RIVERS: We will do that in addition to me getting with the city manager let him know the urgency of that.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Patrick.

MR. SHAY: Ah, um, I would like to point out that while there are warrants in place under that Manual for Transportation Safety, that there also other laws that affect this including the Americans with Disabilities Act and the City of Savannah is also responsible for complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act and I should think that, that might be a factor in their consideration in what to do with this intersection.

MR. LIAKAKIS: So lets make sure ah as soon as possible you get ah, specially ah, with the ah, eh, the Blind Association and any of the others life or any of the others that have disabilities to ah, to come to some ah, effort that could be made that's safe for them and not put a negative out there that they are unable to ah make a movement from one side of the street to the other.

MR. HAKIM: When I meet with Buddy Bishop next week, ah, we'll also be looking at the suggestion that Mike Wiener made about moving the stops and the shelters closer to the traffic signal. Um, if we decide that that would work, it would have to be where the curb cuts are correct, the sidewalks are correct so we'll also be looking from that angle as well.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Well let's make sure to talk to them because they have made ah their concern to me and we want to make sure we follow-up on that okay.

MR. RIVERS: We will Mr. Chairman and I'm monitoring it.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Dean.

MR. KICKLIGHTER: Thank you Chairman. Um, I had the chance to speak with Mr. Rivers before hand. If you will, share the total expense with everyone of what that route's loosing on monies.

MR. RIVERS: I can- well I was gonna wait until after everybody ah, had they say and do that if that's alright. Cause the audience may have –

MR. KICKLIGHTER: Well I want, I wanna explain something to them and maybe they they will realize the hands everybody's hands may be tied.

MR. RIVERS: Okay. One of the reasons why we made modification on those routes is that we have been footing the bill so to speak. Ah in 2005, 2004 we received about \$991,000 for the operation of the ferry, Westside and the cross-town 6. 2005, if yall noticed we got a check for 1.9 million for the operation of those 2 free services in 2005. Those were earmarked and what happened with that 1.9 and its not new money, its money that we fronted that's why we are using our line of credit and everything to operate the system. We don't have a cash flow. And so now we got that 1.9 and eventually we'll pay off the line of credit ah, as soon as we get additional monies in. On yesterday we got 1.4 million dollars and that's not new money folks, that's money that we have already allocated for buses. They are old grants that I have put together to buy those 11 buses that we were talking about. Now the problem is that when we went from an earmark in 2005, where we received 1.9 million, 2006, for the total operation of those 3 services we received \$134,000 and we haven't received it yet, because we had to put the 2006, 2007, and 2008 grants together. So we are front ending all of this operation. Ah, in 2007, ah, for the cross-town 6 we'll get about

55,000. 2008 we'll get 60,000 and what it cost us to run that line in 2007, just the 6 alone was \$757,694.39. The revenue from that was \$118,979 which left a deficit of \$638,715.39 minus the \$55 or \$56,000. So roughly, we are footing over about a half million dollars just in subsidizing the 6 and keeping it going.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Dean. Do you wanna, ah-?

MR. KICKLIGHTER: Thank you Mr. Chairman, yeah, um, I feel obligated to speak to address the citizens out there but to also try to explain, because I personally don't like grand-standing in politics. I don't wanna look I was trying to be some hero and make all you guys up here I work with the bad guys. After seeing the numbers and everything, I want to try and explain to the people in the audience where that would be coming from and had you not already approved it I would feel pretty much forced to approve it now. Um, every now and then and this to the citizens that were here before, we elected bodies are appointed and elected in this case, we are pretty much asked to do whatever is in the best interest of the um entire county and you know we have to do what's best for the community as a whole. And sadly, sometimes actually actually it occurs more than any of us would actually like individuals or even several individuals are sometimes affective affected in a negative manner to try to do something that that benefits the entire county the county as a whole. And an example of this would be simply we we run in to this one, I would think, more than just about anything. One example is if an entire subdivision is like flooding and basically the subdivision has a major drainage canal and if it bottlenecks in between 2 homes that's causing the entire community to flood in trying to look out for the greater good of the entire community, those 2 home owners are impacted. They are asked to sell their property, they're asked to give where the others aren't asked to give at that point. They're asked to and if the refuse to sell their properties are condemned and the canals are widened and that's done for the greater good of the whole community. Same thing with roads and things, but in this case, because the state and federal government has cut so much monies in recent years basically this CAT Authority cannot afford to run that one route at a cost of \$638,000 per year and its its at a point because of the state and federal government that we're looking at everything possible to save CAT as a whole. And it will be an inconvenience and yes if I was ma-, if I were you, I would be mad, I would be upset. I'd be made and upset if my home ever had to be taken to help drainage. I'd be made if my home was taken for a road. I'd be mad if I were you. You are affected and I'm sorry and I believe we're all sorry.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I am not worried about myself sir. I'm worried about who's going to get hit.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Excuse. Excuse me. Ma'am, ah, eh- eh, the Commission is speaking now.

MR. KICKLIGHTER: And we are too ma'am. And I was the one that actually voted with you before. But now that the actual monies have, you know, we see that there's a \$638,000 loss per year. I'm not standing here sugarcoating saying that it's great; it's not. It it stinks for you, and it it pretty much stinks for any of us that has to make those type of decisions and its not fun, but that's one thing that yall, I guess, elect us to do is make tough decisions and at times sadly, its decisions that impact a few in a negative way to benefit the greater good of the entire community and I'm truly sorry. You will have a negative um impact and there's no way to sugarcoat it and I don't blame you for being upset, but hopefully that at least explains

at this point we're just trying to save the entire CAT system and at \$638,000 with the amount of monies that's constantly being cut, that's that's truly a a lot of money and um, you know I'm sorry, but it, but it is something that has to be done at this time.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Joe

MR. RIVERS: Mr. Chairman we're we're gonna mon- we're not cutting eliminating that route. That route is just being modified somewhat and I think one of her problems is gonna be that she would have to take 2 buses. But in the next 60 to 90 days we're gonna look at a fare increase and probably with a one transfer, so if she's paying .50 cent now she'll probably pay .75 cent and she'll have a transfer that would be free rather than her having to transfer and pay \$1.00 ah one way.

MR. KICKLIGHTER: And thank you for clarifying that.

MR. RIVERS: And so, so we are trying do make every effort we're not gonna eliminate the run, but we gonna make that run more efficient so that we don't loose as much out there and when we mentioned the other day about saving \$650,000 that only was a part of it and and and I can't say that we're gonna capture that much money. I don't know. Ah, but we are making every effort to make these routes more efficient and and we're gonna not-we're gonna service them some kind of way. And and in the future we'll service her needs as to a fare increase where she would only be paying ah, you know she'll get a transfer.

MR. KICKLIGHTER: Put it in perspective for everyone because we all live in a society of me. What affects me? We're all there. I'm there. There so many areas in this county that currently pays the CAT tax and they have no CAT service because we can't afford to get the service out to those people. That's sad. Um, altering your travel is is bad when you're use to something, but, you know, just keeping in mind the the entire community there's many areas that have no service that pay for the service so we're just at this point trying to do our best to provide the best service possible and ah with the monies that we have. Thank you that all I have.

MR. RIVERS: And we'll take care of those needs that she have about the crossing. We will get on that as you have directed. We will get on that immediately. Ah, in fact, T is already on it and we are moving as expeditiously as we can.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Okay. Ah, Joe next verbal update, ah for you.

MR. RIVERS: Okay Mr. Chairman, ah we have ah, been in contact with Greyhound. They will be meeting in Dallas on the 8th and hopefully after that 8th meeting we will probably have some conversation back from them. Also, ah, we'll be back in touch with FTA as to the finding of no significant ah, impact. Ah, and completing that agreement so that we can move ahead with this. Ah, and as I told you before that \$1.4 million that came in was for buses ah, that grant was pending awards and finally it its 2006 funding that we put together with another grant that's pending that will be probably, hopefully approved within maybe the next two weeks or so, and that would be the completion of the 2 grants to pay for the buses. That money would should be awarded. We'll execute- we executed the contract on that \$1.4 million that was a part of a \$951,000 grant plus, let me clear this up; Mr. Chairman I wanna clear this up. Ah, the state made an error. I found that error. And what I realized that that

\$495,000 was their money. They inadvertently gave it to us. But we had an identical grant right under their grant for the same amount of money. And ah, so we got that and that grant is a part of this 1.4 million. So we have another bus grant that we'll take to put- to offset the lease and take the difference between that short fall and 1.4 and make up payment for the lease and so we got that situation kinda cleared up. That would save us 117,000 a year once we pay off the bus lease and once we pay off the line of credit that'll save us some more interest money so I'm looking to save as much money and dump it back into the system as soon as I possibly can.

MR. LIAKAKIS: Okay, Thank you. Meeting adjourned.

Meeting recessed at 11:57 a.m.

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