

CHATHAM AREA TRANSIT
AUTHORITY

BOARD MEETING

OF

JULY 9, 2010

10:25 A.M.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: I call the Chatham Area Transit Authority to order and call Patricia Clark to have the roll call please.

MS. CLARK: Good morning. Chairman Mr. Liakakis

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Here

MS. CLARK: Dr. Thomas

DR. THOMAS: Here.

MS. CLARK: Ms. Stone

MS. STONE: Present

MS. CLARK: Mr. Holmes

MR. HOLMES: Present

MS. CLARK: Mr. Shay

MR. SHAY: Here.

MS. CLARK: Mr. Farrell

MR. SHAY: He is here.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: He is here; he just stepped out for a moment.

MS. CLARK: Mr. Odell

MR. ODELL: Here

MS. CLARK: Mr. Gellatly

MR. GELLATLY: Present

MS. CLARK: Mr. Kicklighter

MR. SHAY: He's here.

MRS. CLARK: Mr. Broker

MR. BROKER: Here

MS. CLARK: Mr. Russell

MS. CLARK: Mr. Dawson

MR. DAWSON: Here

MS. CLARK: And Mr. Oakley.

MR. OAKLEY: Here.

Also present at the meeting was Ty Butler, Charles I. Odingbe, and Patricia Clark.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Okay next, item III; the approval of the minutes of the Board meeting held on June 11th last month and all of those minutes have been distributed to all of the members of the Chatham Area Transit Authority. We need a motion on the floor to approve.

MS. STONE: So moved Mr. Chairman.

MR. BROKER: Second.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Have a motion on the floor and a second all in favor please raise your hand. Motion passes. We also have the minutes of the Special Called Board meeting held on June 22nd; need a motion on the floor for those approval.

MS. STONE: So moved Mr. Chairman.

MR. BROKER: Second.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Have a motion on the floor and second to approve the minutes for the June 22nd Special Called meeting. All in favor please raise hand. Motion passes. So the people in the audience might not know this; why we aren't voting on our board up there is because we have additional members with the Chatham Area Transit Authority and we do have that board. That's just for the County Commissioners and we have several other members of the Chatham Area Transit Authority and so that's why we raise our hands because the board would not cover that. New business, the Executive Director's report, Charles.

MR. ODIMGBE: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I'm really happy to report this morning on ridership. Ridership for the month of June performed very well. I think it went up about 18% when compared to the same month last year. Also our year-to-date ridership is also on the increase. Last month I did report that it was about .8, but because of this spike in June ridership we are back now to about 1.5% in year-to-date ridership so these are very good signs for us and we hope that that continues as

we make more improvements on the service on the street. There's nothing new to report on the Transit Terminal project we are waiting GDOT response regarding the funding issues. I know the last time we spoke about this I spoke to the Chairman about this and the Chairman was awaiting information coming from GDOT. So there's nothing new to report on that. We are still working on the project – especially on aspects of the project that do not require funding so nobody's sleeping on that particular project it's just that we still have some funding issues to resolve before we can effectively move forward. We will be coming back to this Board to continue the conversation regarding the bus stop benches. I know Mr. Mincey did a presentation to the Board. It was the legal opinion of our legal – of Ty that we actually bid this particular service so we are putting together a Request For Proposal and coming back to the Board to actually bid this service and see if we can get any other individuals to compete with Mr. Mincey on this particular project. As the Board is aware on the 22nd the Board affectively approved the Delegated Management contract. We have completed the transition of all employees from Chatham Area Transit Veolia. This was done prior to July 1. I'm here to report to you that all of that went very smoothly, there were no hick-ups or no major issues just some minor things that we – I don't believe that we are gonna have that much of a challenge of resolving and we are working through all of those with the County to make sure that everything is where it's suppose to be. Chatham Area Transit has been invaded by a slew of Veolia corporate employees who are helping us with the transition as of now I call it the bee hive because it's just lots of activity going on, but at the end of the day I think it's all for the better. I think we are gonna tremendously benefit from some of these services. We are transitioning all of our processes; they are now going electronic our Finance is going electronic. Our Maintenance is going electronic. We have computers for the technicians now, whereby before they start their jobs they log on to a computer and when they are finished they log out, that way we can effectively capture how much time that we spend doing some of these various functions. So you will see over time some very tremendous improvements. The second week of next month we will start working on transportation issues because that's gonna be electronic also and right now we are working with Veolia on bringing some new technologies into the Teleride area. So all aspects of public transit as we know it in Chatham County is being covered and will be affected by this transition. And again as I promised very early last year I will do my best to make sure that this Board will be proud of their decision to enter into a Delegated Management with Veolia and I think at the end of the day you will realize it was a very good move for this entire Community and that goes to show the level of understanding that this Board has in terms of grasping activities that happen within the County. That's all I have sir.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Any questions for Charles?

MR. ODELL: Just one. Charles the ridership for June up 18%?

MR. ODIMGBE: Correct sir.

MR. ODELL: What do you attribute that to?

MR. ODIMGBE: It's really hard to say, I'd have to go back and scrub the numbers and that might begin to tell me what happened. I really think for the most part I just think the news is getting out about the service. It's been more reliable; I'm not gonna sit here and tell you we don't get complaints, but what I can tell you is that we are being more responsive to those complaints once they come in. We never overlook them anymore and a lot of kudos to the drivers. They're stepping up and they're being very customer friendly which for most people that's the biggest turn off with public transportation. Once they get on that bus the response that they get from that person sitting on that chair goes along way to determine if they come back. A rider will ride on a filthy bus and a nice driver than ride on a clean bus with a very sultry driver so I really think we have to give them kudos because a majority of the drivers are stepping up their game making sure – understanding that we are here to provide transit services to our riders.

MR. ODELL: I road the Westlake bus downtown and made the loop just to get a feel for it. I had some time and I wanted to see and genuinely concerned about the service and I was personally moved by the fact that the driver knew most of the people who were getting on the bus and they chit-chatted. It was almost like a little social event and it was extremely pleasant and it was amazing and these were not people who were just taking the ride like I was doing so that I could review the services. They were going to their various jobs, coming downtown to shop, one lady was gonna be transferring downtown going to her daughter's home to babysit while her daughter went to work. So it really occurred to me that this is an essential service. I don't think we'll ever pave our out of the transportation crisis. Mass transportation has to be the answer to some of the dilemmas and Charles if all of the bus drivers were as cordial and as professional as the one that I saw in Westlake, I am really pleased with our system if that be the case and we had one of those new buses without the advertising: Your hurt, if your not hurt, we'll handle your law suit, it was a clean cut but that had the green and it was impressive and I tell you what, fellow members I was personally proud to be a Board member. I almost said hey, I'm a Board member and some time ago none of us would have made that statement for fear being literally torched on the bus. So congratulations I do think that the system is

improving. One last thing, we are continuing to work on the shelters is that true?

MR. ODIMGBE: That's correct. We haven't given up on the shelters yet. We do have a lot of shelters. I want the Board to understand it's not as easy as just placing a shelter out. Within the Savannah city we can do it because we have a good report with the City. However, when you start going to state right of ways it's a totally different ball game. Most of the delays are getting departments to go out there and install these shelters especially on state routes.

MR. ODELL: When we get the electronic monitoring so that we can determine statistically the number of people and what routes that they get on then at some point we develop a plan to construct shelters because I don't know if anybody else has notice this but it has been extremely hot and you see people standing near a pole and I must say they were in Commissioner Stones district. I mean it is almost unbearable and you know this person this is not a joy trip, this is a necessary trip for employment or family needs what have you and I think its essential that we keep the focus on the shelter.

MR. ODIMGBE: And that is not lost to me. Most of you are aware I do ride the bus very often and I have to stand out in that heat. And I'll tell you it's not a good feel at all to stand out there waiting for the bus especially for those weeks that it gets to warm, but we do have funding constraints and then permitting process. However, having said that, we will continue to work aggressively. Savannah Chatham County reminds me of what use to happen in Canton. Because in Ohio it's the other end of it, it's the extreme cold weather and you have somebody standing there in -10° weather waiting for the bus. You gonna have to provide them something regardless of how many people ride from that particular spot, because you do understand that having a person standing outside for 25 minutes at a -10° weather is not the best thing for that individual. Conversely for Savannah it's about the same thing, standing out there in a 100° temperature with a 114 index that's not very good for the individuals. So we will continue to push the shelter program. We have a lot of shelters that are currently not installed. I mean that we do have and we've identified the locations it's just getting through the bureaucracy within DOT to get the permits to install these shelters part of the delay, because the more we get out there, the more we can get out there to install but we are fully aware of those consequences. And I will also transfer the kudos to the bus operators because they are the face out there. I'm not the face out there; they are the ones doing the work; they are the ones whose attitudes are getting these people to ride so I will make sure I transfer that kudos to them because that's where it belongs.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Pat Shay.

MR. SHAY: Charles following along Commissioner Odell's sentiments, 18% increase very encouraging. I'd like to see us double that before to long just so we keep the pressure on you Charles. We don't have any control over the weather. We can't make it cooler. One thing we can control is that person knows when they go out to stand at that bus stop that that bus is gonna come within 10 minutes or come within 15 minutes. That will have a big effect on our ridership when people know that that bus is gonna be there at that corner at 15 minutes after the hour or within a couple of minutes after that and I can depend on it so that I don't have to go out there and stand there for 25 minutes. I can actually go out there 5 minutes in advance and only stand there 5 minutes. I know the new signs are out there, not everybody loves the new signs. But I'm looking forward to the day when the new signs are gonna be to have again published on there the times that somebody can expect for that bus to be at that location and have them be able to believe in it. That will have an enormous impact on our overall ridership because once people believe that the bus is gonna be there at exactly that time, and that that rider as you say and as Commissioner Odell points out, its courteous to them and concerned about them and their experience on the bus, I think we're gonna see a big increase in ridership.

MR. ODIMGBE: And think those days are almost here. You are aware of the three major projects that are forthcoming for us. The first one being the Comprehensive Operation Analysis for which Veolia is gonna conduct this analysis on their own dime to help us with the origin destination issues. Which are huge for this community because the system hadn't changed in the last 30 years at least but the demographics have changed and after that comes this purported service change that will follow the company's operation analysis and with that also the AVL system. But when I talk about all of this electronic equipment that are being deployed now at CAT, the importance of it is that it will give us most of what you are talking about, the predictability. I mean somebody can call the dispatch and the dispatch can tell them within minutes how far away the bus is to them. We don't have that capability right now but with all of this new equipment in August we are gonna begin to deploy the VDS for transportation. We will have those capabilities and you will see things get a whole lot more seamless and information going back to the riders a whole lot more for them to be able to make it out there and not even 5 minutes maybe 3 minutes before instead of going to anticipate and stand out there for 15 and 20 minutes.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Item 2; request Board approval to dispose of surplus revenue and non-revenue vehicles in the CAT fleet that have exhausted their use for life, Charles.

MR. ODIMGBE: Just to let the Board know we have 7 Gillig buses currently – have currently extended their useful life. 1 Teleride bus and 1 support service vehicle. The 7 Gillig buses have over a million miles on them and we've really run these buses into the ground and right with the 9 buses coming in the 9 hybrid buses coming in and the 11 that is on order, we have enough vehicles that even if we dispose of these vehicles we will not be affected at all. In fact, most of the Board members received the FTA Triennial Review which actually looked at CAT as having too many buses as we stand. The reason we have that many buses is our buses are old and they don't stay out there as long as they suppose to so we need a lot of buses to cycle them in and out. Those are not gonna be a requirement anymore so we feel confident surplusung these vehicles right now will not affect our ability to make the board every morning. The Teleride vehicle we don't use it at all; it's just taking up space and we thought we should get rid of them. We have 25 Teleride vehicles right now. Our board every morning we need 18 buses to make our board every morning and I was just talking to Jeff who's with Veolia and he told me that his new numbers are revealing that we can actually do this service with about 14 or 15 buses with some tweaks within the scheduling and having more bodies on each bus. The support service vehicle was a vehicle that was donated by the County. We just have no use for that vehicle right now and it required a new engine which we felt is valued more than the vehicle. So we are asking the Board to authorize us at this point to dispose of these vehicles according to FTA rules and regulations. After I did this report I did meet with Michael Kaigler who also informed me that if I wanted to take advantage of the County's auctioning capabilities in terms of disposing these vehicles then I am welcome to do that.

MR. ODELL: Move for approval.

DR. THOMAS: Second.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Have a motion on the floor and a second to dispose of the surplus revenue and non-revenue vehicles. All in favor raise your hand. Motion passes. Item 3; request Board approve the Chatham Area Transit Authority Disadvantage Business Enterprise Policy in accordance with the regulations of the United States Department of Transportation, Charles explain that please.

MR. ODIMGBE: Every year we are require by FTA to set a DBE goal, the Disadvantage and Women's Business Enterprise goals for the agency.

This is required for all agencies that receive federal funding. CAT is consistently done this in the past and I believe we missed – the last one was done in 2008 for the 2009 fiscal year. We missed one last year and I believe it was partially due to the transition. FTA picked up on this so I'm asking the Board at this point to set a DBE goal of 3.37%. Let me explain the 3.37%. This was just – it is based on a formula and the formula that was used to set the 2009 DBE goal is what I copied and set the goal for this year. However, in the alternative section I'm leaving it open. The Board can change that goal or make it a higher goal. I do not—it is not my expectation to do just 3.37%, I do believe in getting a lot of disadvantaged business involved in what we do. We will push as much as we could to get as many of them to participate, but the Board does have the option to change that goal from a 3.37% we just put that number in there because that was the last calculation that was done. It wasn't because it was the right thing to do or what have you, so we are asking the Board to either approve the 3.37%, change the goal for us and/or give us some other directive if it's the wish of the Board.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Okay, Patrick Shay.

MR. SHAY: Charles what I'd like to suggest is that – I believe you that you're gonna be aggressive in reaching into the disadvantage business community in Chatham County in recruiting or encouraging people to bid or provide pricing for services and goods, but I think 3% or 5% my book says 5% I think is a pretty modest goal overall. What I'd like to say is do your very best on a voluntary basis this year to make that number be as much as you can insuring that we get the quality that we need from these vendors. But there are a lot of high quality vendors in our community that qualify as DBE's under federal guidelines and let's see where we are next year that's my recommendation to the Board and see if we can't continue to be aggressive in moving up that target year after year or at least a level you think is sustainable after having a year of experience. I know that this is another transition year, new management contract, but I'm confident that we can do better than 3 or 5% if we work on it.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Okay thank you, need approval for this item. Need a motion on the floor.

MR. ODELL: I'll make the motion if – unless Pat wants to make it. I'll make the motion.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Alright we need a second.

MS. STONE: Second.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Have a motion on the floor and a second for this approval. All in favor raise your hand. Motion carries. The meeting is now adjourned for the Chatham Area Transit Authority.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

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