

CHATHAM AREA TRANSIT
AUTHORITY

BOARD MEETING

OF

March 11, 2011

10:00 A.M.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: I now call the Chatham Area Transit Authority to order now and ask Patricia to give us the roll call.

MS. HAWKINS: Good morning. Chairman Liakakis

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Here

MS. HAWKINS: Dr. Thomas

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: She's here, she just stepped out. She'll be back in a moment.

MS. HAWKINS: Ms. Stone

MS. STONE: Present

MS. HAWKINS: Mr. Holmes

MR. HOLMES: Here

MS. HAWKINS: Mr. Shay

MR. FARRELL: He's here

MS. HAWKINS: Mr. Farrell

MR. FARRELL: Here

MS. HAWKINS: Mr. Odell

MR. ODELL: Here

MS. HAWKINS: Mr. Gellatly

MR. GELLATLY: Here

MS. HAWKINS: Mr. Kicklighter

MR. KICKLIGHTER: Here

MS. HAWKINS: Mr. Broker

MR. BROKER: Here

MS. HAWKINS: Dawson

Also present at the meeting was Ty Butler, Chad Reese, and Patricia Hawkins.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Okay all of the members of the Authority were distributed the approval of the minutes of the last meeting. We need a motion to approve the minutes.

MS. STONE and MR. BROKER: So moved.

MR. HOLMES: Second.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Have a motion on the floor and a second to approve the minutes. All in favor signify by raising your hand. Motion passes. Item IV; New Business, Request Board approval to allow a change of vendor and source of funding for the purchase of fourteen (14) Paratransit buses.

MR. KICKLIGHTER: Move for approval.

MR. BROKER: Second.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Okay, we have a motion on the floor and a second for the purchase— ah, Helen.

MS. STONE: Quick question. So that I understand this, we're gonna have to make up some of the lack of funds here?

MR. REESE: No ma'am. It's actually the opposite. The Board approved for the purchase of 14 paratransit vehicles.

MS. STONE: Right.

MR. REESE: Of which a 100% of that money for the 9 additional—9 of those vehicles a 100% was being funded through the SPLOST fund which are local funds. So we identified a federal grant by which to pay for 80% of the vehicles as a result we're gonna retain \$600,000 local funds to leverage against additional federal funds.

MS. STONE: But in the original request was it 80% as well?

MR. REESE: No ma'am it was a 100% local.

MS. STONE: Okay so we did better the second time around.

MR. REESE: Yes Ma'am.

MS. STONE: Okay I wanted to make sure.

MR. REESE: It's an additional \$600,000 in local funds that we'll retain here that we'll use to leverage against additional federal funds.

MS. STONE: Okay thank you.

MR. FARRELL: Keep doing that, you'll have a long future here.

MS. STONE: I know (laughing).

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Okay all in favor of this allowing the change for the purchase of those 14 buses please raise your hand. Motion passes. To some of the people in the audience why we're not using this board up here, we have more members. We have actually 13 members of the Board of the Chatham Area Transit Authority and we don't have all of the names up there that's just for 9 people so that's the reason why we raised our hand so everybody will understand that. On item 2: Request Board approval of the updated CAT Procurement Policy and Procedure Manual it's not quite ready yet so I need a motion on the floor to take it off.

MR. FARRELL: Motion to table.

MS. STONE: Second.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: I have a motion on the floor and a second to take item 2 off of the agenda. All in favor signify by raising your hands. Motion passes. Item 3: Request approval of proposal for a discounted fare media program which represents a 3% savings on the purchase of 100 or more bus cards and passes. Chad.

MR. REESE: Thank you Mr. Chairman. What staff is recommending is that we are entering into a new approach by which we are able to distribute and sale passes at more locations around town through commercial vendors. As an incentive to that, we would like to offer them a 3% discount on the purchase of a 100 or more passes or bulk sale.

MR. ODELL: 3%?

MR. REESE: Yes sir, 3%. In addition to that we are also looking to partner with several non-profit agencies by which to distribute passes for those non-profit agencies also as a 3% discount. Currently what's in effect is that you can buy passes at 3 locations here in Chatham County which is here at CAT Central in the courthouse the County building, at our offices at 900 E. Gwinnett and at 1 Wal-Mart location. And one of the ideas behind the new farebox program and the new fare structure was to – the additional sale of passes to reduce the amount of cash that comes through on the farebox so we're looking to have more locations throughout the County by which to sale passes.

MR. ODELL: I move for approval.

MS. STONE: Second.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: We have a motion on the floor and a second, Bill you want to ask a question?

MR. BROKER: I did have a question but, just a comment. I think this is incredibly good for the way we distribute our passes. I mean for the longest time we only had 3 or 4 place at which people could purchase these passes and now making it so much more available in the community cannot help but make more people participate.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Okay.

MR. ODELL: Oh I agree. Will we also contact some of the neighborhood associations?

MR. REESE: Yes sir.

MR. ODELL: Presidents?

MR. REESE: Yes sir we're gonna do it in combination. One of the things that we'll look to kick off some time later this year is a corporate connections program that companies will be allowed to buy passes at the same 3% discount to distribute to their employees through some form of payroll deduction as well as neighborhood associations, housing authorities various community organizations. We're in talks now with women's shelters and things of that nature so if they buy passes in bulk in excess of a 100 we'll allow them to purchase at a discount, but the idea is that we want a pass in everyone's hand at the beginning of the month and then they can use the buses as much as they want.

MR. ODELL: I think it's a good idea.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Okay, all in favor signify by raising your hand. Motion passes. Updates we have 5 item on updates and the first one is schedule CAT Board budget retreat. On that what we'll do is the secretary will be calling from our office here to each one of the members those that are appointed in addition to the County Commissioners to set that and we will have that set as we can get the majority of members for this retreat, because Chad has put a lot of information in on a number of things that he wants the bus system to progress with and some really good ideas so on Monday you will be getting a call. They'll have 3 dates there for you and to see about which one is best for the members of the Authority.

MR. ODELL: Mr. Chairman may I ask that if we can give as much notice as possible. Giving me a weeks notice really kinda puts me in an awkward position in that I'm scheduled sometimes 3 months out and if I just get a few days notice it really puts me in a conflict whereas I have to make a determination as to whether or not to follow some clients needs and obligation to do this and I don't understand why we cannot plan it at least 30 days out because it—for those of us who are employed- and this is not a full-time job for me. I don't know maybe for some of y'all, but it's not for me. My full-time job needs us to give as notice as possible and I know that'd be true with Pat, Pat and Pat, Stone and James and Pete and Bill so if we can get as much notice.

MR. REESE: Yes sir.

MR. ODELL: Is my only point.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: I'll take care of that because Chad I was getting it set up so that will be taken care of right a way. Item B; to provide information to the CAT Board concerning CAT's activities on St. Patrick's Day parade.

MR. REESE: Yes sir thank you Mr. Chairman again this year we will be providing express shuttle service to and from the parade. Unlike previous years where we reduce our regular fixed route service to a Saturday schedule, we will operate our regularly schedule service in addition to providing service to the parade. We've reached an agreement with the City to compensate us for any losses or any difference in terms of breaking even on this program.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Yeah and it worked well last year. And a number of people did take that service that helped out a lot in a lot of problems that they had where bumper-to-bumper traffic and it was much more convenient and less costly to the citizens that road the bus on St. Patrick's Day. Item C; Key Performance Indicators update.

MR. REESE: Thank you Mr. Chairman. The report is provided in your packet for review. The most significant news there is for the month of February and comparing February 2010 to February 2011 we had approximately 20% increase in ridership. Ontime performance as I stated in the last meeting we're continuing to examine it. We're doing the test pilot on the AVL system currently as we receive more information on the AVL system and the time frames we'll begin to look more closely at the ontime performance. The other issue is the preventable accident ratio is still at an unacceptable level and I've decided to put in this month's packet an update on the safety measures that we're taking. We have moved from a quarterly safety meeting with all employees to a monthly safety meeting. We'll be providing that information to the Board on an ongoing basis.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Any questions? Helen.

MS. STONE: Yes Mr. Chairman. Mr. Reese I realize that you haven't been here that long, but in looking at the last 3 indicators obviously they don't look good. The accidents being up significantly and I don't know what you have in place to address that. The customer complaints are up and the ontime performance is down so these are concerns and I – since you've only been here a short amount of time I don't expect you to have the answers today, but these are glaring indicators that present problems that I hope that you will look at some time of a formula to address these going forward.

MR. REESE: Yes ma'am.

MR. BROKER: Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Yes.

MR. BROKER: I just have one question. I was curious about the new system you're putting in for customer complaints. I think that's a great development I was just curious as to what it was gonna look like.

MR. REESE: Well actually that number's probably going to rise. In the transit industry there is a ratio that says for every complaint that's called in there are actually 25 complaints that are not. So if a person's on the bus and the bus is late, one person may call in but there may be several complaints. So what you're going to see more than likely is a spike in complaints because what we have now is a passive complaint system where we depend upon the citizens to contact us. Our approach going forward is we gonna have an active one so you'll see us more out riding buses, interacting with customers trying to find out what your issues are, what can we do to improve them. So hopefully while it may not show in the numbers right away, hopefully the net result is that we'll have a better system because we're gonna be more actively engaged with our customers to find out what's going on and not rely upon them to call us.

MR. BROKER: Will the new system have a mechanism by which you keep a record of complaints that are received and how quickly they are responded to and what they actually are?

MR. REESE: We have a programmer coming on board – will be visiting us on Monday to begin that process tracking all complaints. And listing complaints phone calls so that we can begin to do some type of trend analysis to zero in on what the problems are and what we need to fix.

MR. BROKER: Okay, thank you.

MR. ODELL: But the bottom line is just because the complaints are going to go up has no significance as to whether or not our service has gone down. What we're doing is now we're capturing the information as oppose to in the past we had not been capturing.

MR. REESE: That's correct.

MR. ODELL: And in order for us to improve the service, the more of the complaints we can capture then the quality of service will improve.

MR. REESE: And that will be a short term.

MR. ODELL: Right. Absolutely.

MR. REESE: Over the long term we'll see a spike but hopefully the number will begin to go down and that way you will know that your service is improving.

MR. ODELL: Good idea.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: You have something? Did you have something?

DR. THOMAS: No.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Alright next item. Information concerning the governmental affairs.

MR. REESE: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Basically this is a report that will be coming to the Board on a monthly basis that will keep you apprised of any activities that are going on with CAT that are going on at the local, state and federal level. At the local level the MPO. Went to the MPO – excuse me let me start over. There’s a pending House Bill 277 that required an earmark a placeholder for projects. Listed in this program you’ll see a placeholder for both capitol and operating projects to the tune of about \$248 million. What’s not present there is an addition \$4.5 million that are being requested for passenger amenities and sidewalks to bring a total in excess of \$250 million that we’re requesting as part of House Bill 277. With that these are just placeholders the Board would actually have to take some formal action before we are able to move forward with any of these, but what is there is a placeholder for the potential of funding for streetcar service, improve facilities, the regionalization of the transit system for both capitol and operating cost.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Patrick.

MR. SHAY: This is the House Bill 277 has to do with what is generally referred to as the T-SPLOST? Is not right?

MR. REESE: Yes sir, right.

MR. SHAY: And we’re very fortune to have great leadership not only as a Commission and as a CAT Board here, but our Chairman is also one of the Executive Committee leaders for our regional T-SPLOST Board.

MR. REESE: Roundtable.

MR. SHAY: Roundtable, thank you. It’s not a Board it’s a Roundtable. So Mr. Chairman I think it’s a great opportunity for us to help make the kinds of investments that we haven’t been able to make over the last 20 or 30 years in our transit system and do it without having to rely on additional property tax in order to be able to do that. So if the T-SPLOST moves forward and the people see fit to pass a T-SPLOST referendum in the future this will be a great opportunity to do this. And also if I’m not mistaken for the first time ever the T-SPLOST is allowed to consider having funding for operations as well as capitol.

MR. REESE: That is correct and the capitol is also would be local funds so we’d be able to leverage against additional federal funding.

MR. SHAY: So they are a lot of wonderful opportunities in front of us. I know we have to compete with all the other transportation needs in the community and the region, but the goals that you set forward and have been identified and ratified by the MPO the CORE MPO are very worthy and I hope that we all will be able to continue to track that process and support it and rely on our fearless leader over here to help us get things done. That's it.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Well we've had a couple of meetings now and the Roundtable for the 10 cities – I mean the 35 cities and 10 county is put into place. We have all the members of that and by the state law also we had to have a 5 member from the elected officials appointed members to that Board also for the executive and I've been blessed with also being on the 5 member Executive Board also. So we're gonna be pushing hard for a number of these particular issues and items that desperately need it here. So I'll be keeping all of the Commissioners informed about what is happening in that area because it's really important because adding a \$.01 sales tax for transportation is being pushed by the state because they have the money that's really needed to help specially our transit system much less all of our road programs. Next item, the update on safety measures pedestrian awareness training.

MR. REESE: This item is included as information for the Board in terms of our new approach and our new methodology for addressing our transit system safety. We have just completed our first month where we completed trend analysis to see what the major issues are associated with accidents and being able to reduce accidents. As part of this pedestrian awareness has become a big issue throughout the country. There have been several pedestrian incidents that resulted in fatality so we are trying to take a proactive measure in how we address that. The primarily attributed to the use of smart phone technology, iPods so-on and so-forth. We pulled a TRV study that show 60% of accidents occurred while vehicles were turning, while they were out of the view of operators and 40% occurred as they were approaching and departing stops. This pedestrian awareness training program helps us to address that issue particularly with the interaction of traffic and vehicles and pedestrians in the Savannah area. So we're also gonna try and leverage it terms of a public awareness tool. I don't know if you've seen the video of a person walking through the mall and fell into the fountain while texting, well that's become a major issue as we move forward in the transit system. We will be trying out a new system Veolia will be. And we were selected as the location to do the test throughout the country where we will be installing a pedestrian awareness system on 5 of our vehicles to test. Its part of a TRV project Research project to improve the whole issue of pedestrian awareness and safety.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Chad utilize our channel 16, our government channel on this pedestrian awareness training that you have because they're a number of things – there's quite a number of people that watch our particular government channel 16 so I think that will help you also to put out the message.

MR. REESE: Thank you sir.

CHAIRMAN LIAKAKIS: Okay, that's it for the Chatham Area Transit Authority. We will now reconvene as the County Commission.

Meeting adjourned at 10:19 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

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