



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BOARD MINUTES

April 28, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Sharonlee Vogel, Chair
Ron Hartman, Vice-Chair
Astamay Curtis
Jason Quan
Larry Schoen
Hector Garcia

Staff Present: John Powell, Executive Secretary
John Ainsley, Recording Secretary

Sharonlee Vogel opened the Public Transportation Board Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

1. Approval of the February 24, 2015, Minutes

The Minutes of the February 24, 2015, meeting was passed by a vote of 5-0. Mr. Garcia abstained from the vote.

2. Announcements

- ◆ Mr. Powell introduced Mr. David Smith of First Transit. He has been assigned as the new Interim General Manager until a permanent GM is hired. Mr. Pumphrey has transitioned to another First Transit location. Mr. Smith will now oversee the Operations and Administration of the RTA. Mr. Smith will be focusing on the administrative side of the RTA which would include reviewing the finances and budget. Mr. Smith's vast experience and background as a General Manager will be welcomed.
- ◆ Mr. Powell has made the Board aware that the new County Administration has recently approved the release of the Bridge Columbia Project Feasibility Study. The Office of Transportation will be forward copies of the study to the Board members now that it has been approved.
- ◆ Mr. Powell advised a letter has been sent to the Passenger Advisory Group which would outline and redefine their future role involving the RTA. The PAG would now encompass areas outside of Howard County including the counties of Anne Arundel, Prince Georges and the City of Laurel. It is the intent to include two PAG non-voting members to be added to the RTA Board Commission. Once established, the PAG members would represent the Fixed Route and Paratransit services on the board.
- ◆ Mr. Powell advised that service changes to the 301/A, 302/G and the 503/E Routes (which became effective on April 1, 2015) have received few complainants. Even though the changes were posted, a few riders were unaware of the service changes. It was anticipated that ridership would drop during initial changes. Later, ridership would increase as the customers grew accustom to the changes. Mr. Farber agreed that this should be expected and has observed increased ridership during the past few weeks.

3. Public Comments

- ◆ Mr. Slater asked when the Bridge Columbia Feasibility Study would be available for public review and if the bus routes were being reviewed for efficiency. Mr. Slater was advised that the routes are currently under review. Changes would not be made until future funding becomes available. There are alternative service changes currently under consideration that would not incur additional costs. Mr. Powell assured Mr. Slater that he would forward him a copy of the study after the meeting.

4. Board Discussion

- ◆ Ms. Vogel questioned if there were Bike Racks at the new Park and Ride garage at the Savage MARC station. She suggested the MTA install bike lockers and racks at all new facilities. Mr. Powell stated the OoT would investigate and forward the information to Ms. Vogel regarding the bicycle racks.

- ◆ Mr. Schoen asked why the Bridge report has taken longer to be released than anticipated. Mr. Powell stated the report was completed in October but no decisions were made until the new administration arrived in December. He assumed that the new administration was focusing on balancing the current budget and working on the FY2016 budget. Discussions will now begin to determine the next step to be taken with the bridge project. Mr. Powell advised that Howard Hughes Co. has secured \$500,000 in funding which is earmarked for the project. Mr. Powell stated that County Executive Allan Kittleman suggested these funds could be used to fix up the bridge in the short term. The next step in the bridge study project will be to determine which option would be feasible. Ms. Vogel stated that part of the discussion will also encompass securing matching funding outside of Howard County. It would be necessary to determine other sources of funding from the Federal Government and the state of Maryland to pay for a project of this proportion.

5. Regional Transit Agency Updates

- ◆ Mr. Powell advised most of the RTA updates were covered in the Announcements. The only item Mr. Powell added was that the RTA Operations would be moving into the new maintenance facility in Savage, MD on May 9, 2015. The move is running on schedule and there are no anticipated pending issues. Mr. Powell invited board members to the RTA employees open house at the new facility on May 3, 2015.
- ◆ Mr. Hartman observed some new RTA bus route signs on Brokenland Parkway which did not have the route numbers on the signs. Mr. Johnson of the RTA advised new poles and signs are currently being installed and the “flag signs” will be added to include the route numbers.

6. PTB Nominations

- ◆ Both Ms. Vogel and Ms. Curtis nominated Ron Hartman for Chairperson and Jason Quan as Vice Chair. Ms. Vogel advised that members could make other nomination and the vote would be held at the next PTB meeting on May 26, 2015.

7. New Business

- ◆ Ms. Curtis mentioned the letter received by the PAG from the Office of Transportation outlining their future role involving the RTA. She also stated she would confer with the PAG members regarding appointments of PAG members to the RTA Commission. Mr. Powell suggested that she (Ms. Curtis) might represent the Paratransit position and determine a second member to represent the Fixed Routes on the RTA Board.

8. Adjournment

- ◆ Ms. Vogel adjourned the meeting at 7:30 pm. The next Public Transportation Board meeting is scheduled for **May 26, 2015 at 7:00 pm.**



5/4/15

John Powell
Executive Secretary

Date



5/4/15

John Ainsley
Recording Secretary

Date