

Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Of the Lima/Allen County Regional Transit Authority Board of Trustees
Held at the RTA Administration Building
200 East High St., Lima, Ohio
January 9, 2018 @ 12:00 Noon

Present were Brad Taylor, Board President; Michael Hayden, Board Vice-President, Dick Accountius, Holly Rex and Joan Davis, Board Members; Shelia Haney, Executive Director; Patricia Stein, Finance Director, Brian Wildermuth, Operations Director, Marlene Shumaker, LACRPC; WLIO TV; and Teresa Brown, Administrative Assistant.

First Item of Business – Roll Call: Roll Call was taken and noted for the minutes. Mr. Schroeder was not present.

Second Item of Business – Approval of Previous Minutes: Mr. Accountius made a motion to approve the previous minutes and Ms. Davis seconded the motion. All members voted in favor thereof.

Third Item of Business – Board President Comments: Mr. Taylor said that on December 19th Shelia, Mr. Accountius and himself met with the County Commissioners and went over everything that has happened with our levy effort and grant reductions. They specifically asked for the County to return some funding to the RTA. While the meeting went well and they were receptive to the discussion, the Commissioners said next year's budget was spoken for and there was no money for the RTA. Mr. Accountius added that while they may have lent an ear, they didn't hear us and he doesn't personally believe they will help us out again.

Shelia said they have this meeting with the Commissioners every year because the Current Resolution creating the Authority, the Commissioners are in charge of appointing the Board Members and paying the expenditures of the Board Members which is approximately \$2,500 per year. The Commissioners set the rate and it is currently at \$30 per Board Member per meeting. Shelia asks them every year due to yearly audits, to cover this cost and every year they decline, saying they do not have \$2500 in their budget. Due to the burden of cost and appointments of the Board, Shelia requested at this meeting that they consider redoing the Resolution so the City of Lima had 49% control of the Board with the County Commissioners retaining 51% so we could possibly receive some of the expenses from the City, but they did not seem to like that idea. The reasoning for this was it is a burden on the Commissioners to find new Board Members when needed, and the City does support us every year, with \$95,000 when the County does not support any financial assistance to RTA. Shelia has asked the County in the past if they could match the money the City gives us, as it can be used for local match Grant money but they always decline.

Shelia also asked to move yearly meetings to a quarterly basis and keep looking for a solution for them to be able to assist RTA. One of the things to look ask them to consider is the money they budget to Job & Family Services for transportation. JFS uses the money to provide transportation for job seekers and JFS will contract with several transit providers which include for profit companies along with RTA. It is my opinion that JFS should be using more of budget for transportation for the Transit Authority and not the for profit companies, I have documents here that show RTA charges less than the for profit companies yet JFS continues to fund other companies instead of RTA for doing the same service. The past Board President wanted us to work on visiting with the Commissioners. He was not in support of the levy as he wanted us to partner with the County Commissioners more. We are following his suggestion but due to their budget constraints they still decline any funding for RTA. We will just have to keep asking for support and try to convince the County Commissioners the importance RTA is to the community and hope they will consider assistance in the future.

Mr. Taylor said he agreed with Mr. Accountius that the meeting was cordial and a step in the right direction. He also agreed that we would not see any County funding in the near future.

Fourth Item of Business – Operations Report – November: This will be the last month that shows full services as December was when we discontinued Saturdays. Ridership numbers will start to go down. As I mentioned before, our only Operating Grant we receive from FTA is formulated on our ridership and mileage, so as we continue to reduce services, I expect our Operating Grant to reduce and we will again be forced to reduce service again, and the Operating Grant will again be reduced like a domino effect until we will not have any funds for Operating.

We are continuing with the advertising trade with I Heart Radio. They have their wrap on one of our buses and we get radio advertising space in return.

With the Bus Stops, we have all of the signs down on the discontinued routes and along the part of Eastgate that has been rerouted.

The only presentation Shelia has done lately was the one with the Commissioners.

Our ridership stayed steady in November. We had 386,000 riders in 2016 and it should be about the same for 2017. If we had not stopped the Saturdays in December it would have surpassed that. We are showing about an 8,000 passenger difference in December from 2016 to 2017. In 2016 we had 350,000 fixed route riders and this year with Saturdays gone we had 343,000 fixed route riders. In December we also noticed the wheelchair and bike riders were also reduced to about half compared to 2016.

On Capital Projects, we have the two 35' buses coming in next month that we received that Capital Grant for them about a year and a half ago for 100%. The electronic fare boxes also on a Capital Grant for 100% will be installed in February. Shelia had predicted a 10% increase in revenue with the new electronic boxes just from the fact some people are not paying the full amount, using fake coins and torn bills in half and folded due to the current honor system box we have on the buses. But now it will be hard to measure the difference due to the service reductions.

We have had some issues with our 5310 state grants through ODOT. They just allowed Small Urban Transit to apply for these grants when they did away with the JARC and New Freedom grants in 2016. They have changed the structure on the grant applications several times, they first used Black Cat, then an online process, and now a different structure and process on how to apply. We were excluded in the changes this past year, there were meetings on the changes, workshops, and notices were sent to the Mobility Manager with AAA3 back in July of 2017 but they did not to notify or include us so we missed the meetings and mandatory workshop in November, letter of intent deadline in September, and application itself deadline. After several conversations with ODOT they allowed us to apply for the grant. We are applying for \$500,000 in Operational money for 2018 and \$500,000 for 2019. We have never been allowed to ask them for that much operating before it was only allowed for Capital in the past and that is how we received the vans, and now it is open for Operational we are going to make the attempt, they can always just say no which I expect they will. We now compete for this same grant with AAA3 and they use the transportation money for other companies to assist in Elderly and Disabled services which is also what we use the money for.... Again as I mentioned before, we continue to compete with for profit services when we depend on operating with Grant Monies.

AAA3 appears to be pushing us out. Shelia is disappointed ODOT has given AAA3 control of the Coordination Plan and removed it away from Regional Planning Commission. AAA3 is in charge of the FACTS Coalition and has moved the meeting from our building and excluded us from the agenda of the meetings. RPC told them they were sending someone even though they were not invited. It feels like this has been planned for over 9 months. Erica as the Mobility Manager was there at the meetings and the workshops and never informed RTA. Shelia asked ODOT did no one think to ask why RTA was not there. RPC was not notified of these meetings either. Area Agency on Aging has taken complete control of the Mobility Management, the Coordination Plan, and transportation. They are phasing the Transit Authority out. They had 13,000 rides in 2016 and less than 1,000 were given to RTA. Shelia has asked for the same report from the Find A Ride system for 2017 and they have refused to give it to us. It was our understanding we were all coordinating transportation but going forward this has changed. We even gave them \$11,500 for the Assisted Rides program from our grant to help coordinate the services which should have included RTA.

We have applied for the 2018 money and the 2019 application is due by March. It isn't open for us since we haven't attended the workshop yet but is open for everybody else..

Our Uplift Service is our largest source of revenue with the contracts with the schools, Find A Ride through AAA3, Job and Family Services, Marimor and Medicaid. JFS and AAA3 were our two biggest contracts so we had a revenue source to use as local match money to apply for the operating grants. JFS and AAA3 have cut us tremendously which also reduces our ability to continue services. We have quarterly meetings with JFS and was told that they give the service to the lowest cost companies and since Black & White Cab bid a dollar lower than us, most of the service is going to them even though they also charge a \$2.50 additional fee. Now there is another for profit provider called Easy Transit that sits at dialysis and tells our passengers they are cheaper and should call them. Also, JFS pulled all of our dialysis patients that we have had for years and their excuse when we called them is it is because we lost the levy. The levy should not have anything to

with the services we provide for them. AAA3 trips have also decreased tremendously. They are using grant money and giving trips to for profit companies that charge more than we do. This is probably why they don't want to give us that report.

We have facts to prove from last years' report that both agencies are giving more money to the for profit companies than RTA who provides the same service. Shelia wonders if they are collaborating to put RTA out of business altogether. She has sent two emails to Becca at AAA3 and to Marilyn at JFS explaining the amount of services they have cut and what we have heard from the case managers and asking if they are trying to cut us out altogether. If they are and we lose drivers, we won't be able to pick their trips back up later. Marilyn is looking into it as she says we are the lowest cost provider. The case managers did give the trips to Easy Transit but she was going to get it resolved. Becca thought we didn't get any trips so far in January because our contract had expired, but it doesn't start until February 1st. They did their contract electronically this year and we didn't get it until Shelia questioned it.

We have to fight for what service they do give us. We have already begun to lose drivers. Our part time drivers are only getting 5 – 7 hours per week so it is a matter of time before they start to leave too. If they try to come back in a month and say here are the trips, we won't be able to because we will have already lost the drivers.

We are still training all of our drivers like we always do. We have hired local residents and trained them for a CDL then we continue to train for Defensive Driving, ADA, CRP, we random do drug and alcohol testing and We are currently putting them all through a MUI training that Teresa put together since we do transport a lot of disabled passengers. It covers Major Unusual Incidents for Special Needs.

With the building damages left from AAA3, instead of paying for the damages they have chosen to get an attorney so we have had to do the same and are going back and forth on that. We made every effort to keep the repair costs low, but they still have refused to work with us on this so now since we already had to refer it all to an attorney we will let them work it out. I will now be required to report this to the FTA.

The parking project that we got the 5339 Capital grant for in 2015 has been completed at this time. The building was torn down and due to environmental issues we now only had enough money left from the grant to gravel the lot. I will continue to search for another grant to complete the lot with asphalt, fencing, lights and security. It is now available for all employee parking, LTV parking throughout the day and we also offered additional parking for Council of Aging.

The FTA Triennial audit response is close to being done, Shelia is finishing up the policies they wanted updated. The State Financial audit for 2016 is ongoing, Patty said as of today they are very close to being done. The NTD report will be due in May of this year. Ken from OTRP will be here this month for our Risk Management audit.

We had four accidents in December and two in November. Most of them were small accidents except for one our driver pulled out in front of someone.

The Union contract expires at the end of this year so we will be going into negotiations for that.

The new Drug & Alcohol information was presented to FTA but our representative has been on vacation so we haven't heard back about it.

Ms. Davis made a motion to accept the Operations report and Mr. Hayden seconded the motion.

Mr. Taylor asked what the FACTS Coalition was. (Future of Accessible/Coordinated Transportation) It was intended for all of the transportation providers in the community to work together to meet the needs of the community and since RTA did not have the funding to hire a Mobility Manager at the time, AAA3 took the responsibility. Most states do this as they have offered a Mobility Management position they pay with a grant. Most of the time it goes to the transit authority, but at the time it came into being RTA did not have the match money, AAA3 did so they took the position along with money from United Way to assist with the grant match. Then they started doing some of their own transportation to collect some of the grant money ODOT provides.

Marlene said AAA3 took the position because at the time they had another grant they could use for local match money. RTA would have been a better spot to put it but there were so many federal regulations that didn't match for the other agencies, and AAA3 said they would take it and try to make it so the other agencies wouldn't have to follow the same things we did and it never worked out like that. They started making sure more of their clients were getting transportation. Under AAA3 guidelines, they were many working adults that did not qualify and could not get transportation until RTA got involved and started taking them and they won't be covered again if RTA is out. There is nothing else to take the slack.

ODOT has now gave the Coordination Plan to AAA3. RTA needs the whole, over 600 page Coordination Plan to apply for grants. All the other agencies need is a coordination letter from us stating what they are doing to coordinate. We are doing our part writing these letters spelling out what they are doing to coordinate with us. When ODOT decided to do this Mobility Management, most of them are going to the AAA3s in Ohio. Thom Mazur from RPC has had conversations with Central Office and District with David Seech and Macy about this. They have pointed out that this is a concern.

If they do not include RTA in the Coordination Plan like they have excluded us from other things we will not be able to apply for grants. From RPCs standpoint, if we need to make a change like asking for another bus, RPC always made sure it was included in the Coordination Plan, the TDP, the Long-Range Plan, and the TIP. Since they no longer have control of the Coordination Plan, they have no say in if it gets in there and if it is not in there we are not eligible.

Mr. Taylor asked about the communication that was supposed to come to us about the letter of intent, workshops, meetings, etc.; as to who it should have come from. It would have been the Mobility Manager from AAA3. It was Erica back in July; we can't blame the current Mobility Manager, she did not take office until after.

The current Coordination Plan covers four counties, but AAA3 cover seven counties. They will probably try to cover all of the counties under the plan. They are a 501 3(c) and have several 501 3(c) s under them. They have a Board of Trustees but we are not sure who the Board Members are. Marlene said the information should be easy to get, she is on one of their advisory boards. Ms. Rex said she was at the FACTS meeting that morning and there should not be competition since there is such a need for transportation. As I noticed at the meeting there are now more for profit companies sitting in on the Coalition than non profits. They have figured out they can apply for grant money for vehicles. Ms. Rex stated, if it would be beneficial for them to sit down Board to Board with AAA3s Board Members to try to resolve it. Everyone agreed this would be helpful.

Mr. Accountius mentioned that the Mobility Management has been going on for a long time, even when Gary Kitchen was the Director at RTA and back then we were going to split it with AAA3. Marlene agreed. She said the Ride Amigos program they have talked about is also going to AAA3. Regional Planning purchased the software and she didn't know if RTA was going to be able to use it. Shelia said we have not been included in it. All of the agencies were supposed to be included in it. Marlene had requested the Mobility Manager pay for the 2017 maintenance on it and they said they would pay for 2018 also even though RPC had it in their budget for 2018.

All members voted to accept the Operations Report.

Fifth Item of Business – Financial Report: For the month of November we had \$201,930 in revenue but \$396,930.21 in expense, which was a difference of \$195,608.41. The tear down of the building affected this some, as the money for it was drawn down in October but paid in November. This would affect the expenses by about \$120,000. Patty had sent the reconciliations out to Mr. Taylor and Mr. Schroeder. Ms Davis made a motion to accept the Financial Report and Mr. Accountius seconded the motion. All members voted in favor thereof.

Sixth Item of Business – Board Discussion/Motion – 2018 Budget: Shelia used the 2017 expenses and made cuts manually to adjust for the service reductions. The budget is subject to us receiving all the grants we applied for. The Budget is 3.6 million but it was hard to judge what the changes should be. The cuts will affect the payroll, electricity, fueling, etc. The budget was 3.45 million in 2017, 3.6 in 2016, 3.8 in 2015, and 4 million in 2014 and 2013. We have cut everywhere we can. We asked for the \$500,000 in operating money from ODOT but not sure if it will be accepted.

We also asked for \$125,000 in Capital Maintenance. We ran into a problem with capital maintenance at the garage where we were not able to draw down all of our capital maintenance funds. ODOT would only allow the money to be used for the vans they had purchased, which was only six out of the sixteen vans we have. We also had a new Maintenance Manager who was not very savvy with keeping up with the work orders. Since we had to cut hours we have one of our dispatchers going to the garage and entering the work orders and it seems to be getting done much sooner. With having new mechanics we have had to outsource more of our work than we would have liked but hopefully that will improve since they have some experience now.

The grant money is 50/50 since it is operational. We need local match to be able to draw down the money. Our budget is not set in stone, it is a guideline. We need the Board to approve it for the audits. Mr. Accountius asked about the line of credit we had. It has been closed and rolled over into a loan of \$371,000 that we make monthly payments of about \$5,000 a month on. We used that for emergency funds since we lost the pass through funds from DD at the same time we lost the JARC and New Freedom grants. If ODOT does not give us the funding we requested we will have to adjust the budget accordingly. M. Davis made a motion to approve the 2018 Budget and Ms. Rex seconded the motion. All members voted in favor thereof.

Seventh Item of Business – Board Discussion/Motion – Wages: Included in the 2018 Budget were the wages for the employees. We have always kept the employees under 50. There is a 0% raise included in the union contract for the union employees. Shelia handed out a paper to the Board Members showing what the drivers are being paid, who has longevity pay, and who carried over PTO. She also included what RTA pays for their retirement. It is a basic operational cost. It has full time drivers, then part time drivers and maintenance. It has changed a little already since some of the drivers have quit.

Mr. Accountius made a motion to approve the wage structure as submitted. Mr. Hayden seconded the motion and all members voted in favor thereof.

Eighth Item of Business- Board Discussion/Motion - Service Reductions Update: We have cut three routes that were our newest ones with the lowest ridership. We have had some backlash from riders. We had no other choice due to no revenue and no funding. We lost about 8,000 riders just from Saturdays so we will have to see what it is from cutting the routes and after 6:45 pm. The wheelchairs dropped almost in half. Bikes were always in the 200 range and dropped to 100. We don't know yet if part of the drop was due to the weather and the holidays. Our concern is the main operating grant we receive is based off of miles and passengers. We were originally going to shut down at 5:45 but decided to extend it to 6:45. We were worried about people who got off work at 5 only making it back to the station on the one hour routes and then being stuck here. Ms. Davis mentioned some riders had already told her they were glad they were able to get home.

Some of our new maps have come in. We did not have to pay for them since we still had a credit with the printer. We will no longer be going to Apollo so we lost the \$2500 they gave us to help with the route. We are still going to Rhodes so we will continue to receive the stipend they give us. We will be going by JFS seven times a day to continue with that contract. Anyone that needs to get to OIO, Occupational Health, etc. will have to switch back over to Uplift. This is a higher cost for us so it may not save us a lot of money by cutting those routes.

Shelia wants to start a marketing plan as she feels the failure of the levy was in part due to not getting enough information out to the public. She had a conversation with Carol Clark, the United Way President. They assist Council on Aging, AAA3, LACCA, and we provide more transportation to seniors and disabled than all three of them together. They apply for grants to assist these organizations so now that they understand more about the services we provide we are hoping we will be included in some of the grant money from United Way. If someone in her position did not know about the service we provide for seniors and disabled then the general public probably doesn't know.

We still provide service for Elderly and Disabled to Harrod, Delphos, Spencerville, Shawnee, Bluffton, and students with Hearing Needs equipment we are taking to the schools in Findlay, etc. We have seven vans that go out every day just for our school routes for special need students.

If we did not have the school contracts right now we would probably be closing, especially with all of the services we have lost from JFS and AAA3.

Shelia has reached out to marketing agencies to see about possibly doing some infomercials. We can educate people on what all services we provide. We have to even buy car seats as we transport a three year old to Findlay every day to day care for hearing impaired. When we had all the routes running we had a lot of elderly and disabled riding the fixed route buses to their appointments and had passengers going to Marimor. They are all going to switch back to Uplift. We lost most of the Marimor passengers. It can be stressful and we had a driver who wasn't used to the Autism kids and he quit at the end of his shift the other day. When the levy failed we had drivers leave right away and we didn't want to hire anyone with the upcoming cuts. Brian and JJ had to work a lot of overtime driving to cover them. Mr. Taylor expressed the Board's appreciation for the extra work Brian and JJ put in.

Ninth Item of Business – Board Discussion/Motion – Levy Updates: We had no campaign money last time; the staff ran the whole thing. We had \$3000 to run the campaign on, since we didn't get the \$1000 from the union until the last week or so before the election. The levy was not a blow out. Shelia handed out the unofficial election results. We actually won in the City of Lima. The Mayor and one of the Commissioners said we had proved our point that we have support from the community. Shelia's recommendation was that we try again for a levy. RTA has no choice or they will end up shutting down after a couple of years of declining ridership. The County Commissioners will not support us monetarily.

The public seemed to think we were asking for too much money, but at that point in time .25% was the lowest amount you were legally able to put on the ballot. It was not true that it was too much money as we could have added 30 minute service, more buses, sidewalks, etc. We can now ask for .10%, as the legislature made the change to the Ohio Revised Code. Even if the Commissioners ask for a sales tax levy there will still be room for us to have a levy also. We don't know when they are going for a levy but it will be in 2018. We will be asking for 1.5 million instead of 4.2. We will not be able to add 30 minute service, service for Rhodes when they come downtown, sidewalks or the other things we talked about but it will save RTA.

Shelia is looking for a motion today to move forward with going after a lesser amount in a levy; and if the Board wants us to try to get on the ballot in May or November. If we go for May, which we need to financially, we need to have a Resolution to the Board of Elections by February 7th. We won't have another Board Meeting before then. If we wait until November we still have a lot of work to do. We need public support for the levy, information to the community and money to run a campaign. Shelia has talked to Mr. Schroeder and he is in support of a levy. He agrees we have exhausted talking to the County Commissioners and there is no other solution. He asked her to reach out to the Mayor and Mr. Schroeder thinks we should wait until November. He also said we should continue reaching out to the Commissioners to see what their plans are.

Ms. Rex asked how we could ask for less money now and Shelia said they passed the change two weeks after the election. We had thought the change would not go through for another year. It can now be in .10 increments instead of the .25 it was.

Mr. Accountius made a motion to continue to discuss putting a levy on the ballot in November. Mr. Hayden seconded the motion. Ms. Rex was unsure about waiting since the Commissioners will be asking for a levy also. Shelia said we probably didn't want to run against the Commissioners in May. Mr. Taylor said waiting until November will give us more time to prepare. Shelia said Brian had brought up that by November people may have found another way of getting around and will be used to the service cuts. The RTA will be hurting financially by then. People will also not connect the dots that unemployment went up when we cut services and people moved away due to no transportation, I truly believe that RTA has a part in economic development in the community.

We probably have close to \$1000 in our campaign account now. The staff is working on raising funds. They extended wearing jeans and paying a dollar per day for it. They have also come up with a monthly carry-in where the staff provides the food and the employees pay \$5 to eat, with the knowledge that the money is going to the campaign fund. Shelia gave the Board Members a challenge to campaign and raise \$1000 each. If they raised \$7000 that would definitely help with the printing costs. We collected a lot of our old signs and can just put a new date sticker on them. Ms. Rex said the November date gave us more time to build relationships, such as with JFS and get their support.

The new date will be November 6th. The Board voted on the motion Mr. Accountius and Mr. Hayden had put forth and all members voted in favor thereof.

Tenth Item of Business – RPC Update – Coordination Plan: This matter had already been covered during the Operations Report.

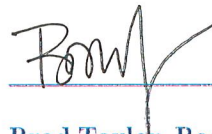
Eleventh Item of Business – Executive Session: Mr. Taylor made a motion to move to Executive Session to discuss the Management Agreement Services and Expenses. Mr. Hayden seconded the motion and roll call was taken. Michael – yes, Brad – yes, Joan – yes, Holly – yes. Mr. Taylor made a motion to return from Executive Session and Mr. Hayden seconded the motion. Roll Call: Mike – yes, Brad – yes, Joan – yes, Holly – yes.

Mr. Taylor made a motion to continue with the presented Management Agreement and Expenses for 2018 for the Executive Director Position with Shelia Haney. Ms. Davis seconded the motion and all members voted in favor thereof.

Shelia requested the February meeting be moved from the 6th to the 13th as she would be out of the office on the 6th. The Board agreed with the request.

Twelfth Item of Business - Adjourn: Mr. Hayden made a motion to adjourn. The agenda had been covered so no vote was necessary.

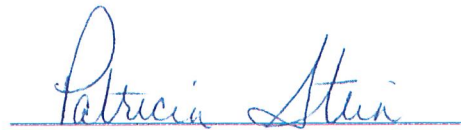
The next Board Meeting will be held February 13th, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brad Taylor", written over a horizontal line.

Brad Taylor, Board President,

Or

Michael Hayden, Board Vice President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patricia Stein", written over a horizontal line.

Patricia Stein, Board Secretary/Treasurer