

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
October 2, 2018 @ 12:00 Noon

Present were Brad Taylor, President; Richard Schroeder, Holly Rex, Joshua Parker, and Scott Cockerell; Board Members; Shelia Haney, Executive Director; Patricia Sein, Finance Director; Mike Chirveno, ClearVision Consulting; Danielle Henderson, Tony Golding, and Barry Sprague, Nelson Packaging Company, Inc.; Karen Grothouse, Spherion; Lima News representatives; and Teresa Brown, Administrative Assistant.

First Item of Business – Roll Call: Roll Call was taken and noted for the minutes. Mr. Hayden and Ms. Davis were not present.

Second Item of Business – Guests: We have some guests from Nelsons. Since we cut back some of our routes, they have had some issues with getting their employees to work. They reached out to us and we have begun providing door-to-door service for them. They are here to speak on behalf of their experience and the partnership. It is hopefully something we will be able to continue. Barry Sprague introduced himself, he is the Director of Business Improvement at Nelsons. They have about 25 employees being helped at the moment. They have trouble all over the country maintaining production when there are problems finding employees. They have seen a vast improvement in their production since we started the transportation partnership. Nelson has a number of entry level jobs, but many of those can move into more sustainable positions. Tony added they also use third party temp agencies and are offering the transportation service to any of the employees working at Nelson through them. In the past they had many employees calling off work because they did not have transportation, so this has been a big help.

Shelia said the Board had challenged her a few months ago to prove we had allies in the community to help support us for a levy. This shows that RTA is an economic engine for Allen County, not just in Lima. Partnerships like this show how important transit is in the community. We have been doing this since August and after working out a few bugs it is going very well. Shelia has plans to reach out to other industrial areas to see if this kind of service might be a benefit for them.

Third Item of Business –Approval of Previous Board Minutes: Mr. Parker made a motion to approve the previous minutes and Mr. Cockerell seconded the motion. All members voted in favor thereof.

Fourth Item of Business – Board President’s Comments: Mr. Taylor thanked the Board Members for the time they spent in the Study Session the previous week. It was very productive. He thanked Shelia for taking them on a bus ride. It was very informative talking with some of the people who ride the bus regularly on the South Main route.

Fifth Item of Business – Operations Report - August: Our ridership is still declining. Mike is here from ClearVision Consulting to come up with a Business Plan for the RTA. The 24/7 job access for Nelson is going well and we are planning to reach out and offer it to other businesses.

Our 2018 FTA grant is open but there are issues with the state 5310 grant. They had a conference call with ODOT yesterday and they are going to move forward with opening the grant. The hold-up was us providing service for AAA3 when they receive the same type of funding. We must stop providing service to them immediately. The service to them has been declining for the last three years. We would rather lose the \$20,000 we receive from AAA3 than lose a \$300,000 operating grant. The partnership was created as a collaboration between AAA3, RTA, ACCOA, and other non-profits. The only way to continue with the Coordination Plan as it was written is for us to apply for the Mobility Management Grant. Then all the 5310 funding would be going through RTA and we would have a list of providers we contract through for any transportation we can't do.

The letter of intent for the Mobility Management grant is due Friday. This would be for 2020. It is a two-year contract. ODOT and the MPO know we are going to try to get the grant. We have to do it to continue to get 5310 funding. We have already sent some of our staff to the Advanced Mobility Management classes. It will be more responsibility on the RTA but otherwise we will lose 5310 funding.

In November we have Technical Assistance coming in from ODOT. Shelia has requested they offer some recommendations as far as accounting software. QuickBooks does not seem to offer as much breakdown on the accounts as we would like to see.

We did not have any accidents in August. Our three-year union contract is due to start negotiations as it is due at the end of the year.

Ms. Rex made a motion to approve the Operations Report and Mr. Cockerell seconded the motion. All members voted in favor thereof.

Sixth Item of Business – Financial Report – August: Our revenue for August was \$286,612 while expenditures were \$247,434, with a net of \$39,177.

Mr. Parker made a motion to accept the Financial Report and Mr. Cockerell seconded the motion. All members voted in favor thereof.

Seventh Item of Business – Board Discussion/Motion – Job Shuttles/Nelsons: We have been doing the service for a couple of months and they seem to be very happy with it. Shelia has prepared a very simple contract for one year to continue with the service for them and needs the Board to make a motion for their approval to continue. We are now only providing service during the times the buses are not running and they are purchasing bus passes for the employees to ride fixed route during the day.

Ms. Rex made a motion to approve continuing the Job Access Shuttle services with Nelson. Mr. Parker seconded the motion and all members voted in favor thereof.

Eighth Item of Business – Board Discussion/Motion – State Audit Report/Executive Director Position: The Board is going to wait until the conclusion of the Audit and the recommendation from PERS before they decide on this matter.

Ninth Item of Business – Board Discussion/Motion – Levy Resolution – Spring 2019: Mr. Taylor said it was a great study session last week. Shelia said the County Commissioners had suggested we explore other avenues to do whatever we could to avoid going out for a levy. In the past year we

have done that. We have started door-to-door job access, cut our services, etc. but it is not enough. Since we cut our services we have already started to see our grants decline. A designated funding source is going to be the only solution for a solid foundation for the RTA. Without it, we will see grants continue to decline with cutting services and losing ridership. After too much of this there will no longer be an RTA.

Our employee retention has suffered due to the uncertainty. Last year we had a 68% turnover rate. We spend a lot of time and money training the employees and then they leave for better jobs. We are working on a business plan to decide the strategy of where we are and where we should be. When the report is back from our consultant we will have a better idea of how much we need to ask for in the Levy.

Mr. Parker said he wanted to reiterate his stance that he does support the RTA and the levy. He is also supportive of Nelsons and the business mindset of getting employees to work. He also said that with the benefits world because of the economy and our high turnover rate, we need to look at extending benefits to our employees to help with employee retention before we try to bring back routes or increase the number of times the routes run. We need to look at keeping our employees and making their lives better.

Ms. Rex made a motion to place a levy on the ballot on the spring (May 2019) ballot for the RTA. Mr. Cockerell seconded the motion.

Mr. Taylor said he says we need to continue thinking creatively. We are exhausting all our efforts and should continue that. Shelia said we will absolutely continue our current course. If we go with the lowest percentage of a tenth of a cent, it will generate approximately 1.2 million and will be a match for our operating grants. We will continue our fuel sales, our leasing, our maintenance work, selling honey buns, etc. Shelia has always had a vision of a robust bus system for the community but sees this area also needs the door-to-door service as is such a rural area.

Mr. Taylor said we need to be acutely aware of our context and he understands that RTA is the transportation expert. Mr. Cockerell added that the levy would not solve all the problems and we would need to continue being aggressive finding funding opportunities.

Roll call vote: Josh – yes, Holly – yes, Brad – yes, Scott – yes. The motion passed.

Mr. Taylor mentioned that Cory Noonan from the County Commissioners said they have no public stance on our levy campaign. If the RTA can say with a clear conscience that they have done all they can do, then we should go forward if needed.

Tenth Item of Business – RPC update: No update at this time.

Other:

Mr. Chirveno said he had identified the “Big Rock” items here at the RTA that if the whole staff disappeared, the following crew would find hard to reverse these decisions. He had highlighted on the Decision Grid the current positions the RTA has. He met with the staff the previous day to get their input on them. You could say for a short-term move, you could say in a year we want to be here, or long-term in 2-3 years we want to be here.

Mr. Chirveno had also identified four long-term objectives. The first one was to increase the number of employer-paid job access contracts. This would help us connect with a stakeholder group we need to connect with, businesses in the area. The second one is to improve service delivery


and safety by increasing employee retention. We have had a turnover rate of 49% over the last four years and 68% last year and we need to stem the tide. Benefits will be a big part of that. The third one is to identify our short and mid- term route service plans. In a year, what do we want our routes to look like and what will that cost? In 2 – 3 years, what do we want our routes to look like and what will that cost? That way we can attach dollars to our dreams. The fourth objective is to demonstrate and communicate the value of the ACRTA to the community. We need to have them see that we can are an economic engine for the county.

Mr. Chirveno feels there is real merit in creating a Business Advisory Council. We could get six or seven business leaders who will advocates for the RTA. They can identify what is important to the business community at large and provide feedback on existing offerings. They can make “asks” to the business community.

Ms. Rex mentioned that we should not just be focusing on manufacturing, we must also look at other agencies that have a need. Everyone is thinking employment, but we need to also consider medical and retail with the manufacturing. The Business Advisory Group is an idea we should consider.

Twelfth Item of Business – Adjourn: The entire agenda had been covered so no motion was needed.

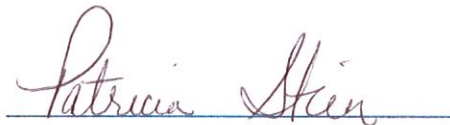
The next Board Meeting will be held November 6th, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.

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

Patricia Stein, Finance Director/Board Secretary