



CAPITAL AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM

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**MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
CAPITAL AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM  
AND  
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

**JUNE 23, 2020**

**4:30 p.m.**

**BREC Administration Building  
6201 Florida Boulevard  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806**

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Mark Bellue**

Mr. Bellue called the meeting to order.

**II. ROLL CALL**

All members were present at the meeting, namely Messrs. Bellue, Breaux, Cohran, Hill, Lambert, and O’Gorman and Mss. Green, Perkins, and Pierre. Also present were Mr. Bill Deville, CEO; other CATS staff; Creighton Abadie, CATS attorney; and members of the public.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 18, 2020 MEETING**

Ms. Perkins moved to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2020, meeting and Ms. Green seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.

**IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Bellue welcomed everyone back and noted the long absence due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and he noted that he hoped this marked the slow return to normal.

**Mr. Bellue welcomed new CATS Board member Johnathan Hill, who is serving the remainder of Jim Brandt's unexpired term.**

**Mr. Bellue reviewed the public comment process.**

## **V. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

### **1. Executive and Financial Report: Mr. Bill Deville and Executive Staff**

**Mr. Deville shared a summary of activities that have transpired since Governor Edwards declared a pandemic state of emergency on March 11<sup>th</sup> and signed the Stay at Home Order on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. He noted that the internal policy committee became the COVID-19 Response Task Force, and this group has been meeting and monitoring updates and changing guidelines.**

**The FTA Coronavirus Aid, Recovery, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was enacted into law on April 27<sup>th</sup> and superseded the March 18<sup>th</sup> Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), which made mass transit a U.S. Department of Homeland Security Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) "essential" service class, including CATS service. This DHS CISA compliance was merged into the Governor's orders.**

**The CARES Act supplemental grant funding allocation was awarded to CATS in the amount of \$17 million. The agency is able to use the funds for loss of revenues, all COVID-19 related operating expenses, and all "operating" expenses, effective January 20, 2020, until the funds are fully exhausted.**

**Mr. Deville shared that Arthur Gaudet was instrumental in developing the essential "lifeline" service that agency has been providing since April 5<sup>th</sup>.**

**It was noted that the Triennial Review responses were completed and as a result of the work done by the agency, all but one finding was removed.**

**The annual material audit is nearing completion and lacks only National Transit Database (NTD) and CATS Pension information.**

**Ms. Williams noted that there are currently 116 active operators. There are 145 total operators. The remaining operators are as follows: inactive – 9, and out due to COVID-19 – 20.**

**Ms. Williams shared that ridership for May was 90,485, which is 42% down from May 2019 but is higher than April 2020. The on-time performance was 64.76%. The percentage of trips operated in May was 98%. The agency operated 199,138 miles. There were 1.5 preventable accidents per 100,000 miles in May and 7,375 mean miles between road calls.**

**Ms. Williams let the members know that the following routes had impacts on the agency's on-time performance for May: 12 – Government Street; 14 – Thomas Delpit; 17 – Perkins Road/Mall of Louisiana; 18 – LSU-Cortana Mall; 46 – Gardere/OLOL/L'Auberge; 47 – Highland; and 60 – Medical Circulator.**

**Ms. Williams noted there were renewed fleet issues that began mid-January and contributed to the on-time performance and cancelled trips.**

**Ms. Thomas echoed Mr. Deville's statement regarding the COVID-19 Response Task Force. She noted there were no new cadets currently in training.**

**Ms. Thomas shared that there is a position being advertised for the Planning Department.**

**13 cadets have passed the training class. There are five or six cadets that will be retested.**

**There is a reorganization underway in the Training Department and the department is expanding. The agency is working with the Louisiana Workforce Commission for a certified apprenticeship program.**

**Mr. Deville noted that the agency hosted its first Juneteenth celebration on June 19<sup>th</sup> and it was attended by Mayor Sharon Weston Broome, Baker Mayor Darnell Waites, and other members of the community.**

**There was discussion of various policies in need of creation as well as a timeline to get them presented to the board for adoption and implementation.**

**Ms. Green requested that a timeline be provided to the board members detailing the policies that will be brought to the board in the next four months.**

There as discussion of the number of operators and it was noted that currently 82 operators are required to fully operate the lifeline service being offered.

Mr. Deville shared that the agency has applied for several grants, including an FTA Bus & Bus Facilities Grant, an FTA Helping Obtain Prosperity for Everyone (HOPE) grant in conjunction with New Orleans, and an FTA Accelerating Innovative Mobility (AIM) grant.

It was noted that a major milestone was met with the Plank-Nicholson BRT Corridor project in the State Historic Preservation Office approved the project and the FTA provided the environmental clearance. There will be meetings scheduled with the City-Parish, Build Baton Rouge, HNTB, and CATS for the design of BRT and transit center station shelters.

Mr. Deville let the board members know that the current Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Local ATU 1546 is set to expire on December 31, 2020, and that those negotiations will need to get underway soon.

Mr. Cutrone shared that CATS used its cash position to give us the time needed to fully study our options and respond in the most beneficial way to the COVID-19 crisis. The agency elected to delay the normal monthly drawdowns on formula grants and applied for federal assistance under the CARES Act.

It was determined that it was in the best interest of the agency to not use any formula grants until the CARES Act application process was approved and completed. We funded our operations using our current cash reserves and replenished them with a \$7,460,001 drawdown from the CARES Act in June.

Mr. Cutrone presented the May financials and noted that the total current assets as of May 31, 2020, are \$23,754,817. The total assets are \$45,554,343. The total current liabilities are \$15,483,870 and the total liabilities are \$18,979,828.

The total operating expenses for the month of May are \$2,817,262.

The total CATS-generated operating revenues for the month as of May 31, 2020, are \$32,375. The total non-federal subsidies for the month are \$1,481,667 and the total federal subsidies are \$2,841,415. The net operations balance as of May 31, 2020, is \$1,309,044.

## **VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ANY ACTION THEREON**

**1. Finance and Executive: Mr. Mark Bellue**

**Mr. Abadie informed the committee that this a reassessment year for the property taxes and the reassessment will be completed by the end of June. Consideration of rolling forward will take place at the August board meeting.**

**Mr. Bellue referred the members to the highlights of the minutes of the June 18<sup>th</sup> meeting and shared the highlights. He noted that an there was an action item regarding on-call contracts but after discussion, it was decided that the item would be introduced when more information was gathered.**

**2. Technical, Policies and Practices: Dr. Peter Breaux**

**Dr. Breaux noted the committee did not meet.**

**3. Audit: Mr. Cohran**

**Mr. Cohran noted the committee did not meet but shared that the auditors were concluding their work.**

**4. Planning: Mr. Kevin O’Gorman**

**Mr. O’Gorman noted that the committee did not meet.**

**5. Community Relations: Ms. Linda Perkins**

**Ms. Perkins noted that the committee had not met since March as a result of COVID-19.**

**Mr. Cooksey shared that ridership on CATS On Demand has decreased as a result of COVID-19.**

**Mr. Cooksey noted that CATS On Demand had 3,935 scheduled trips in May. Of those, 112 were cancellations and 157 were no shows, for a total of 3,823 completed trips.**

**The on-time performance for the month was 84.6%.**

**VII. ACTION ITEMS**

- 1. Consideration of authorization to extend adjuster claims services contract with Brown Claims Management Group, LLC**

**Ms. Thomas noted that this item was originally intended to come to the board in March and the extension has been executed. This item needs to be ratified by the board.**

**The current contract has been extended until December 31, 2020. The agency will advertise an RFP to secure a new contract for the services.**

**Mr. Lambert moved that the CEO is authorized to extend the contract with Browns Claims Management Group, LLC for adjuster claims services through December 31, 2020 and Ms. Green seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**It was noted that Thomas Cating is the new Procurement Manager for the agency.**

**2. Consideration of authorization to extend drug and alcohol testing services contract with IHSN**

**Ms. Thomas noted that this item was originally intended to come to the board in March and the extension has been executed. This item needs to be ratified by the board.**

**The current contract has been extended until December 31, 2020. The agency will advertise for bids to secure a new contract for the services.**

**Mr. Cohran moved that the CEO is authorized to enter into a contract extension with IHSN for drug and alcohol testing services and Mr. Lambert seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**3. Consideration of authorization to extend service planning and scheduling assistance contract with Arthur N. Gaudet & Associates**

**Mr. Deville introduced Arthur Gaudet to the board and invited him to summarize his work with the agency to this point.**

**Mr. Gaudet shared that he has been with the agency in this capacity since February and he started by evaluating the existing schedule because there were schedule adherence issues due to bad timing and inadequate running times.**

It was noted that the agency has completed 11 weeks of lifeline service to this point and it will likely extend into September 2020. It was stressed that this is a moving target.

There was discussion of the service and board members expressed their cautious optimism at the goal of Mr. Gaudet's work.

It was noted that getting feedback from the operators is essential and it was appreciated that this is being factored into future schedules.

Mr. Gaudet emphasized that the agency must get better at service and on-time performance.

Mr. Cohran noted that he made several requests for a service report that he has not received to this point. He reiterated his desire to have a report detailing what is being done with service, and how and when targets will be reached with service.

Mr. Gaudet noted that the on-time performance is not tracked accurately due to the RouteMatch software.

Dr. Breaux moved that the CEO is authorized to amend the contract with Arthur N. Gaudet & Associates for service planning and scheduling through February 1, 2021 and for a total contract amount not to exceed \$125,000. Mr. Hill seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and ATU Local 1546 President Yvette Rhines said she was very happy to hear that Mr. Gaudet was helping the agency because operators are being written up for some of the schedule issues that Mr. Gaudet referenced. She also asked about adding the 72 – Florida Limited back into service as well as the 56 (which is not active at this time). The motion passed unanimously.

**4. Consideration of authorization to purchase two power backup generators**

Mr. Godwin informed the board members that the agency is seeking to purchase backup generators for the main facility and the fueling station at 2250.

The generators will be purchased from the state contract and will be funded with existing grants.

It was noted that the cost of the purchase does include installation of the generators.

**Mr. Lambert moved that the CEO is authorized to purchase two backup generators at a cost not to exceed \$170,000 and Mr. Cohran seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**5. Consideration of adoption of Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan**

**Ms. Thomas and Mr. Deville noted that this plan has been created in conjunction with Alliance Transportation Group and the plan will last for five years. It must be submitted to the FTA by July 20<sup>th</sup>.**

**This plan is a requirement of the FTA.**

**Ms. Green moved that the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan be adopted and Ms. Pierre seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**6. Consideration of authorization to award ERP implementation contract to Intueor Consulting, Inc.**

**Ms. Thomas shared that this contract is for the implementation of the ERP contract that was approved in 2019. The payroll system will be the first system to be implemented.**

**Intueor was the highest rated proposal of the four submitted.**

**It was noted that the contract will be grant funded and will not exceed \$147,500.**

**Mr. Deville shared that the mapping for Human Resources and Accounting could begin as early as July 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**Mr. Lambert moved that the CEO is authorized to enter into a contract with Intueor Consulting, Inc. for the implementation of the ERP system under such terms and conditions as the CEO deems appropriate and Mr. Cohran seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**7. Consideration of authorization to purchase Gillig bus operator protection barriers**

**Mr. Godwin noted that the agency is seeking to purchase operator protection barriers that will be placed between operators and the**



**fareboxes on the vehicles. This will ensure the safety and physical distance for operators and also allow fare collections to resume.**

**It was noted that the purchase of these barriers will mean all buses and vans with the exception of 14 cutaway vans have the protection barriers. The cutaway vans are not configured in a way that allows for these barriers so alternative measures are being sought for them.**

**It was noted that the barriers will be paid 100% with CARES Act funds.**

**Ms. Green moved that the CEO is authorized to purchase 28 Gillig bus operator protection barriers at a cost not to exceed \$137,400 and Mr. Cohran seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**8. Consideration of authorization to purchase ADA/paratransit van operator protection barriers**

**Mr. Godwin noted that the agency is seeking to purchase operator protection barriers that will be placed between operators and the fareboxes on the vehicles. This will ensure the safety and physical distance for operators and also allow fare collections to resume.**

**Mr. Godwin shared that these are for the ADA paratransit vans in the fleet.**

**It was noted that the barriers for the ADA vans will be purchased from Creative Bus Sales and paid 100% with CARES Act funds.**

**Ms. Pierre moved that the CEO is authorized to purchase 21 ADA/paratransit van operator protection barriers at a cost not to exceed \$25,560 and Mr. Cohran seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**9. Consideration of authorization to purchase two BYD electric charging stations**

**Mr. Godwin shared that the agency is seeking to purchase two additional BYD electric charging stations for the expansion of the electric bus fleet.**

**It was noted that CATS currently has three electric buses and four charging stations. There are three additional buses and three charging stations on order.**

**These are the last two remaining chargers on the contract.**

**It was noted that the cost includes the purchase and installation of the charging stations.**

**Mr. Lambert moved that the CEO is authorized to purchase two BYD electric bus charging stations at a cost not to exceed \$56,667 and Ms. Pierre seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**10. Consideration of authorization to increase external audit services contract with Postlethwaite & Netterville**

**Mr. Cutrone noted that this is the second proposed amendment for this contract. The original contract value was \$97,000. Amendment One to the contract increased the total contract amount to \$119,500. The 2019 Financial Audit Amendment Two is for an additional \$63,000.**

**Mr. Cohran moved that the CEO is authorized to increase the external audit services contract with Postlethwaite & Netterville by \$63,000 for a total contract amount of \$279,500 and Mr. Lambert seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**11. Consideration of authorization to renew RouteMatch annual technical support, maintenance, and warranty services**

**Mr. Deville shared that this contract is an annual contract for technical support, maintenance, and warranty work with RouteMatch for the AVL system.**

**Mr. Deville noted that the agency is looking to replace the software but has not completed a new RFP and it is therefore necessary to continue the contract with RouteMatch.**

**It was noted that the final amount was negotiated down from an original billed amount of \$212,000 to \$117,500.**

**Ms. Perkins moved that the CEO is authorized to renew the annual technical support, maintenance, and warranty contract with RouteMatch through July 31, 2021, for an amount of \$117,500 and Ms. Green seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**12. Consideration of authorization to designate The Advocate as the official journal of CATS as set forth in the CAT Board of Commissioners Bylaws**

**Mr. Abadie noted that this is a formality and is required annually. He shared that CATS has designated The Advocate as it has the highest circulation in the area.**

**Mr. Lambert moved that The Advocate is hereby designated as the official journal of Capital Area Transit System as set forth in the Capital Area Transit System Bylaws and Ms. Pierre seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Mr. Lambert moved to amend the agenda to take public comments before entering into executive session and Mr. Cohran seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Shavez Smith, who has been an ATU officer since 2019, said there is a problem with the Training Department because we cannot keep operators. The taxpayers deserve better. Social distancing is not being provided for customers or operators and strapping customers in a wheelchair is a problem because customers are not wearing masks. Operators are not being treated fairly.**

**Yvette Rhines, ATU Local 1546 President, said a bus went up in flames on an operator and there are safety issues at CATS. The board needs to step in and do something. A customer pulled a gun on an operator and there was no footage available from the bus. Another customer ripped off the tape for social distancing and no one is doing anything. Operators' lives are in danger and they are not safe.**

**Ms. Green asked what safety measures are in place and Ms. Williams shared that Unit 1 is called when there is an incident, and Unit 1 sends a supervisor to the scene. She noted that Baton Rouge Police Department must get involved if a customer is to be banned.**

**Ms. Green noted that CATS cannot force people to wear masks; we can only strongly encourage it.**

**Ms. Green asked that a report be compiled of banned customers and shared with the board members as well as the union leadership.**

**Mr. Abadie referenced a letter written by Ms. Thomas related to wheelchairs being secured in vehicles and noted that outside counsel reviewed the issue before it was distributed to the staff.**

**Mr. Bellue moved that the board enter into executive session to discuss the pending litigation that is referenced in Action Items 13 and 14. Mr. Cohran seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Upon the completion of the executive session, the board continued in regular session.**

## **IX. CONTINUATION OF ACTION ITEMS**

- 13. Consideration of authorization to settle the claims of Dawn Altazan under the terms of the settlement and judgment payment policy adopted by the Board on July 20, 2004 as amended. (This matter might possibly be discussed in Executive Session. As required by the Open Meeting Law, notice is hereby given that this claim is pending in the 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court and is Suit Number 681,503, Section 25; and that Dawn Altazan is the plaintiff and Leatrice Gray, Capital Area Transit System, Jonise Williams, and Progressive Insurance Company are the defendants.)**

**Ms. Pierre moved that the CEO is authorized to settle the claims of Dawn Altazan for the sum of thirteen thousand five hundred and 00/100 (\$13,500) dollars under the terms and conditions of the settlement and judgment payment policy adopted by the Board on July 20,2004 as amended. Mr. Cohran seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

- 14. Consideration of authorization to settle the claims of Linda Clayton under the terms of the settlement and judgement payment policy adopted by the Board on July 20, 2004 as amended. (This matter might possibly be discussed in executive session. As required by the Open Meeting Law, notice is hereby given that this claim is pending in the 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court and is Suit Number 665,144, Section 27; and that Linda Clayton is the defendant and Capital Area Transit System, State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, and Robert Tate are the defendants.)**

**Ms. Pierre moved that the CEO is authorized to settle the claims of Linda Clayton for the sum of sixty thousand and 00/100 (\$60,000) dollars under the terms and conditions of the settlement and judgment payment policy adopted by the Board on July 20, 2004 as**

**amended. Mr. Lambert seconded the motion. Mr. Bellue invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously.**

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

**Ms. Perkins moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Lambert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.**

DRAFT