



CAPITAL AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM

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**MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
CAPITAL AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM  
AND  
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
MARCH 16, 2021  
4:30 p.m.  
Virtually and at the  
CATS Administrative Building  
350 North Donmoor  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806**

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Erika Green**

Ms. Green called the meeting to order.

**II. ROLL CALL: Ms. Amie McNaylor**

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; and members of the public.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 23, 2021 MEETING: Ms. Erika Green**

Ms. Green moved to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2021 meeting and Mr. Bellue seconded the motion. Ms. Green invited public comment and there was none. The motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.

**IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS: Ms. Erika Green**

Ms. Green noted that board meetings would be hybrid moving forward.

Mr. Deedrick Moore was introduced as the new general counsel for the agency.

**Ashley Mitchell has been hired as the new Human Resources Director, pending applicable tests and screenings.**

**V. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

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

**Mr. Deville let the board know that the governor announced that the state has moved into Phase 3 and this will be in effect until at least March 31<sup>st</sup>. Now that the state has moved into Phase 3, CATS will plan to resume fare collections and will also modify capacity limits, but only after providing the riding public a 30-day advance notice, and only after all safety protocols have been taken.**

**Ms. Williams noted that there are currently 137 total operators. There are 118 active operators. There are 19 inactive operators who are out for various reasons.**

**The February Operations challenge winners were Shelia Bennett, Terrica Tanner, Sheker Gipson, Re'ena Byrd, and Tabatha Armwood.**

**The February Maintenance challenge winner for productivity was Paul Robertson.**

**The February Customer Service challenge winner for least abandoned calls was Agnes Brown.**

**Ms. Williams let the members know that ridership for February was 84,605. The on-time performance for the month was 77.15%. The percentage of trips operated in February was 98.64%. The agency operated 166,402 miles, which is indicative of the service provided. There were 3.6 preventable accidents per 100,000 miles in February, and there were 5,200 mean miles between road calls.**

**There was a question of how many operators are needed to be at full capacity and it was noted that CATS needs 84 operators for the current service levels. 118 will be needed when the new service takes effect on March 28<sup>th</sup>.**

**Ms. Soileau noted that the service change will take place on March 28<sup>th</sup>.**

**The RFP for the Baker Transit Center closed and the submissions are being reviewed. CATS staff is involved in the review process and it is anticipated that a recommendation will go to the MPO TAC/TPC meeting in March.**

**CRPC is beginning their Metropolitan Transportation Plan update as required, and CATS is beginning the discussion regarding regional transit relevant to CRPC's plan.**

**Ms. Thomas noted that CATS had 16 employees from various departments complete Human Resources, Supervision, and Emotional Intelligence Training.**

**There will be training on March 12<sup>th</sup> with Pierlott & Associates for FTA Civil Rights and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE).**

**CATS continues to work with BRCC to advance the partnership to offer more professional advancement opportunities to CATS employees.**

**The two-way messaging service with Hitachi is expected to have go-live of Phase 1 in 90 days. Phase 1 includes development of a QR code posted at high-frequency stops that will allow customers to text and receive bus schedule information.**

**CATS is working with Acumen Building Enterprise and the FTA to scale the scope of the COVID-19 Mitigation Research Grant.**

**CATS employees have multiple options available to get the COVID-19 vaccination.**

**Mr. Deville stated that the search for a new Human Resources Director has concluded and an offer has been accepted, pending background checks, drug testing, etc.**

**Board member Laurence Lambert connected staff with Uber leadership interested in the agency's on-demand services. They have added CATS to its national program of assisting CATS with getting citizens to vaccination sites.**

**CATS, with the assistance of Mr. Lambert and Program Manager Jonathan Charbonnet of Atlas Technical, met with Amazon project management representatives for the Cortana Distribution Center. There was discussion concerning how CATS can best serve their employee transportation needs and also coordinate traffic flow around the center.**

**CATS and the Baton Rouge Center for Visual and Performing Arts School unveiled the winning art from the "Love Louisiana" contest that was held with their fourth and fifth grade students. The winning**

artwork is now wrapped on two buses, the second place winner has their artwork in 10 shelters, and all submissions were made into interior bus ads.

Mr. Cutrone presented the February financials and noted that the total current assets as of February 28, 2021, are \$42,145,311. The total assets are \$65,648,201. The total current liabilities are \$18,811,866 and the total liabilities are \$21,698,940. The total net assets are \$43,949,262. The total liabilities and net assets are \$65,648,201.

The total operating expenses for the month of February are \$1,816,056.

The total CATS-generated operating revenues for the month as of February 28, 2021, are \$76,771. The total non-federal subsidies for the month are \$1,599,856 and the total federal subsidies are \$685,495.

The total operating revenues as of February 28, 2021 are \$2,361,852.

The net operations balance for the month as of February 28, 2021, is a surplus of \$316,645. The net operations balance for the year is a deficit of (\$289,567).

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

### **1. Finance and Executive: Ms. Erika Green**

Ms. Green referred the members to the minutes of the March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting in their packets. She reviewed the highlights and noted that the committee recommended all items to be approved by the full board.

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

Dr. Breaux noted that the committee did not meet.

### **3. Audit: Mr. Cohran**

Ms. Green noted that the committee did not meet. She shared that Mr. Cohran has agreed to remain as acting Treasurer until one is elected.

### **4. Planning: Mr. Kevin O’Gorman**

**Mr. O’Gorman referred the members to the minutes of the March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting in their packets. He noted that the committee received updates on the Capital Improvement Plan, the Strategic Plan, service changes, and transit center updates.**

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

**Ms. Perkins referred the members to the minutes of the March 10<sup>th</sup> meeting in their packets. She reviewed the highlights and noted that Leslie Barnes is the new General Manager for MV. Ms. Perkins thanked Ms. Serena Thomas for her service.**

**Ms. Barnes shared that there were 3,569 scheduled trips for February. There was one complaint, and there were zero road calls for the month.**

**On-time performance for the month was 85%.**

**VII. ACTION ITEMS**

**1. Consideration of approval to purchase five support vehicles**

**Mr. Godwin noted that staff came to the board in 2020 to purchase five support vehicles and this request is for the other five. These new vehicles are replacing Street Supervisor vehicles that have surpassed their useful life.**

**Ms. Perkins moved that the CEO is authorized to purchase five Chevrolet Traverse support vehicles from state contract at a cost not to exceed \$124,832.00 and Mr. Hill seconded the motion. Ms. Green invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.**

**2. Consideration of approval of MV Transportation equitable adjustment request**

**Ms. Thomas and Mr. Hoover of MV explained that the adjustment was necessary to offset revenue losses in 2020.**

**It was noted that CATS and MV met with all board members as well as Baker Mayor Darnell Waites.**

**The equitable adjustment will be retroactive to January 2020 and will last potentially through April 2021.**

**There were two MV representatives on hand to answer questions and there was lengthy discussion regarding request.**

**It was noted that the contract does allow for an adjustment if there is a five percent or greater variance, and this is more than a five percent variance.**

**\$171,000.00 will cover the revenue loss for 202 only; it does not cover any losses in 2021.**

**It was noted that the request letter that was incorrect at the F&E meeting had not been corrected and still reflected an inaccurate amount requested; the correct amount is \$171,000.00.**

**Ms. Perkins moved that the equitable adjustment request by MV Transportation be approved at a cost not to exceed \$171,000 and to be effective from January through December 2020. Ms. Green seconded the motion. Ms. Green invited public comment and there was none. Ms. Pierre abstained. The motion carried.**

**3. Consideration of renewal of MV Transportation paratransit services contract**

**Ms. Thomas noted that MV is requesting to exercise the first of the two renewal options in the paratransit services contract. MV is requesting that a sliding scale be put in place in the event there are events in the future that lead to revenue losses.**

**The contract is a three year contract with two, one-year renewal options.**

**CATS got a letter from MV requesting that the renewal option be exercised as was required in the contract.**

**Mr. Cohran moved that the paratransit services contract with MV Transportation be renewed for a period of one year and Ms. Perkins seconded the motion. Ms. Green invited public comment and there was none. The motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.**

**4. Consideration of authorization to negotiate and enter into a contract with Acumen Building Enterprise for contactless fare payment solution**

**Ms. Thomas noted that this project is the result of the COVID-19 Mitigation Grant award. CATS will be working on a contactless fare payment solution.**

**The first phase will be cards and it will eventually transition to mobile phone accessibility.**

**Acumen has both the hardware and the software to implement the program.**

**The grant is for \$337,000 and it is a 100% grant.**

**This was presented as a large-scale project to the FTA and CATS is working to scale the project to something the agency can afford with the grant money. Things are still being negotiated.**

**The cost for the project is not to exceed \$300,000.**

**There was an inquiry as to the timeline for the implementation and Ms. Thomas indicated the agency is looking to move into implementation in 90 days. The hope is to have this project coincide with the Hitachi project implementation.**

**There was an inquiry as to whether or not there is additional funding and Ms. Thomas indicated the grant money is the only funding at this time. CATS is looking for other funding opportunities and the project will have funding opportunities built into it.**

**It was asked if this project is part of the Capital Improvement Plan and it was noted that this is not in the CIP. There were requests to have details to include in the CIP but information was not provided. It was noted that the Hitachi project is also not included in the CIP.**

**There was an inquiry as to how the \$300,000 becomes sustainable without additional funding. Ms. Thomas indicated no additional funding would be required and Acumen will train CATS staff.**

**It was noted that CATS is trying to outfit every bus that is possible but not all will be covered, according to an Acumen representative.**

**It was noted that there would be additional service cost agreement required but Acumen is trying to work within the agency's budget.**

**Board members stressed that they needed assurance that the agency can afford the project once the grant funds are expended. It was noted that there will be recurring fees for the project.**

**It was noted that Acumen is working to deliver a turn-key product to CATS.**

**There was an inquiry as to the timeframe to get this project underway in conjunction with the other project and it was stated that it is too preliminary to give a timeframe; everything will be outlined in a Notice to Proceed letter.**

**Mr. Cohran stated that this seems to have been handled in a backwards manner and that the agency should know that it is getting before bids are solicited. He inquired as to why an estimate could not be provided beforehand and it was noted that there is not much that can be done without the Notice to Proceed letter.**

**Mr. Cohran indicated he was clear why the board needed to give approval in order for staff to get estimates.**

**Ms. Green inquired if this was Acumen's first such project and it was noted that a similar project took place in Arizona and the documents that will be provided will contain the information.**

**Mr. Lambert indicated he did not want to take action as there are many questions unanswered.**

**Mr. Lambert moved that the item be deferred and Ms. Pierre seconded the motion. Ms. Green invited public comment and there was none. The motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.**

**Ms. Pierre requested that the board be provided a breakdown of cost, deliverables, etc. and whether or not the grant was a match grant. She requested a document showing what the amount of the grant is, what amount will be needed in the future, etc.**

**Ms. Pierre requested a timeframe to get the requested documents and it was noted that the board would receive them in 7-10 days.**

**Ms. Green noted that items should not be placed on the agenda until all documents relative to the item have been received by the board.**

**5. Consideration of approval of CATS Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal**

**Ms. Thomas shared that staff has been working with Pierlott & Associates to develop the DBE goal that will be effective for projects from October 2020 through September 2023.**

**The DBE goal is 11%, with 5% being race neutral and 6% being race conscious.**



**It was noted that the goal may be adjusted during this period.**

**The goal is established based on an FTA formula and work CATS is projected to undertake during this time period.**

**There was discussion of the particulars of the DBE program and ways the agency can conduct outreach to companies to encourage participation.**

**Ms. Green moved that the CATS DBE goal of 11% be approved and Mr. Hill seconded the motion. Ms. Green invited public comment and there was none. The motion passed unanimously with no abstentions.**

**6. Consideration of adoption of CATS Strategic Plan**

**Ms. Soileau noted that the plan has been presented to the Planning Committee and the full board was invited to provide feedback. The suggestions from the Planning Committee have been incorporated and the Planning Committee, though it did not have quorum, recommended unofficially that the plan be sent to the full board for adoption. The F&E Committee did unanimously recommend the plan be adopted.**

**Mr. Lambert moved that the Strategic Plan be adopted and Ms. Green seconded the motion. Ms. Green invited public comment and there was none. The motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.**

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

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