



CAPITAL AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM

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**MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
CAPITAL AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM  
AND  
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
MARCH 30, 2021  
4:30 p.m.  
BREC Administration Building  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806**

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME: Mr. Clay Young**

Mr. Young welcomed those assembled and 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 Mss. Green, Perkins, and Pierre. Also present were Mr. Bill Deville, CEO; and other CATS staff.

**III. OPENING REMARKS: Ms. Erika Green and Mr. Bill Deville**

Ms. Green thanked the members for coming and she noted that she hoped this retreat would lead to the members feeling refreshed and reenergized.

Ms. Green thanked Ms. McNaylor, Ms. Simmons, and Mr. Richards for their work on the retreat.

Mr. Deville thanked the members for taking the time to come and shared that he is excited for what's to come and noted that we have come a long way since 2012.

Mr. Deville noted that the tax renewal is in our sights and he will be taking time to seek board input.

**IV. COMMITTEE MEETING DISCUSSION: Mr. Bill Deville**

**1. List committees and corresponding CATS staff liaison**

**Mr. Deville provided a listing of the CATS board committees and introduced staff liaison for each one. They are as follows:**

**Community Relations – Dwana Williams  
Finance and Executive – Pearlina Thomas  
Audit – John Cutrone  
Planning – Cheri Soileau  
Technical, Policies, and Practices – Ashley Mitchell**

**2. Discussion of committees and members**

**Ms. Green provided a listing of board members and their term expirations that was provided by the Council-Administrator’s Office.**

**Ms. Green stressed that she hoped the committees would be fully utilized this year.**

**V. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE: Executive Staff**

**1. Discussion of pandemic impact**

**a. ARP Act of 2021: Mr. Bill Deville**

**Mr. Deville let the members know that CATS would be awarded \$16 million in grant funding from the ARP Act that was just signed into law. He noted that staff would present more information to the board once it was gathered and completed.**

**b. COVID-19 safe practices implementation: Ms. Dwana Williams  
Ms. Williams thanked Mr. Richards for providing PPE updates that were included in the retreat packets.**

**CATS is working with Our Lady of the Lake and the Mayor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness to get operators vaccinated.**

**CATS never stopped service in the last 12 months as a result of the pandemic and only suspended service when there was dangerous, inclement weather.**

**Ms. Williams shared that all barriers were installed by January and that CATS has been proactively monitoring applicable guidelines.**

**c. Fare collection: Ms. Dwana Williams**

**Ms. Williams noted that, since Baton Rouge is in Phase 3 and all barriers are installed, CATS is looking to resume fare collection and increase capacity in the near future. The agency wishes to resume collection and increase capacity at the same time.**

**There will be a minimum of 30 days' notice to the public before changes are made.**

**There were discussions of what maximum capacity should be and what routes experienced maximum capacity pre-COVID.**

**It was noted that when collections resume, there will be no grace period as a 30 day notice is being given to the public.**

**d. Service change: Ms. Cheri Soileau**

**2. CATS Strategic Plan and Capital Improvement Plan: Ms. Cheri Soileau**

**Ms. Soileau shared that the new service took effect the previous Sunday and it will likely be a month before any changes are noticed in the metrics.**

**There is increased frequency on Route 44 Florida and Route 57 Sherwood. CATS is not currently operating on Government Street and does not plan to do so until the construction is complete.**

**There was discussion of route changes and service standards.**

**a. Transportation Development Plan**

**Ms. Soileau shared that the TDP is underway and the Strategic Plan is part of that larger plan. The Strategic Plan was approved by the Board at its March meeting.**

**The Capital Improvement Plan is still in draft form and was presented to the Planning Committee. Once it is finalized it will be presented to the board for adoption.**

**b. Fleet Management Plan**

**Ms. Soileau let the members know that the FMP is included in the CIP and there must be a 20% spare ratio per the FTA. The fleet will be a mix of diesel and electric buses.**

There are six electric buses on the property and three more will be delivered in late 2021 or early 2022.

CATS will be asking the board to approve disposing of various vehicles that have reached their useful life. The agency has received permission from the FTA to dispose of the property as surplus.

## **VI. EDUCATION AND OUTREACH UPDATE: Ms. Amie McNaylor**

### **1. Education outreach material review**

Ms. McNaylor let the members know that staff has been working with on-call consultants on an education outreach plan that will begin shortly.

Ms. McNaylor reviewed material that had been produced, including a document detailing “promises” made in 2012 and the status of those in 2021. She noted that various promises have either been completed, are underway, or were implemented but eliminated due to ridership; those resources were reallocated to higher performing routes.

Ms. McNaylor reviewed the timeline for the upcoming referendum and noted that it has been suggested that the renewal be placed on the October 9, 2021 ballot. CATS Board will be asked to vote on final ballot language at its May meeting. There are requirements that must be met and the agency is working to satisfy those.

There was discussion of a potential November vote but it was agreed that it was preferred to be on the October ballot.

There was discussion of what is being proposed for the next ten years, and it was noted there are four main pillars: serving our customers, creating jobs and opportunity, building a modern fleet, and investing in our system and community.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.