

2250 Florida Boulevard  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802  
PHONE: 225.389.8920



## EXECUTIVE STAFF

**Bill Deville**  
*Chief Executive Officer*

### **MARCH 2021 Executive Report Bill Deville and CATS Staff**

#### **COVID-19 UPDATES: *Bill Deville***

- Governor Edwards 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.

#### **OPERATIONS: *Dwana Williams***

- There are 137 total operators, and there are currently 118 active operators available to work. There are 19 inactive operators who are out for various reasons.
- The February Operations challenge winners for OTP are Shelia Bennett, Terrica Tanner, Sheker Gipson, Re'ena Byrd, and Tabatha Armwood.
- The February Maintenance challenge winner for productivity is Paul Robertson.
- The February Customer Service challenge will for least abandoned calls is Agnes Brown.
- See attached Performance Measures that reflect measures for the month.

#### **PLANNING AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT: *Cheri Soileau* SERVICE:**

- February 2021 service change will take place March 28, 2021
  - Schedules have been finalized and are in the process of being printed
- The lease for the 30' electric buses has been finalized and service is anticipated for the downtown circulator/Capitol Park Trolley in early summer 2021; this is dependent on the COVID regulations from the CDC, State of Louisiana, DOT, and Federal Transit Administration.
- The Transit Development Plan
  - The Strategic Plan has been sent to all Board members. No comments were received. Planning Committee has reviewed the document and it will go to the Board for a March 2021 approval.
- 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 in March.
- Staff has met with the engineering firm and an Amazon representative regarding the Amazon/Cortana development; these meetings will continue to ensure no disruption to service during the construction process and to work with Amazon for service for their employees.

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- CRPC is beginning their Metropolitan Transportation Plan update as required, and CATS is beginning the discussion regarding regional transit relevant to CRPC's plan.
- The Planning Committee received a draft of a Ten-Year Capital Improvement Plan.
  - CATS and HNTB are currently identifying funding sources and projecting cash flow for the CIP; once these items are in place, the Board will receive the overall plan.
- Staff has met with representatives from Uber Louisiana regarding how Uber fits with transit and to understand Uber's transit support.

### ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES: *Pearlina Thomas*

- CATS had 16 employees from Operations, Human Resources, Finance, and Procurement (directors, managers, and employees) complete the Human Resources, Supervision, and Emotional Intelligence training.
  - Most found the emotional intelligence training helpful with resource tools to improve communication with their staff and other departments.
- There will be training on March 12<sup>th</sup> with Pierlott & Associates for FTA Civil Rights and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE).
  - This will cover monitoring DBE goals on projects for FTA reporting, creating prime contracting opportunities for DBEs, and increasing DBE subcontracting opportunities.
- Schedules are being finalized to provide all CATS frontline employees to attend Critical Incident Response, Conflict Resolution, and Desiccation Training provided by certified instructors with the Baton Rouge Police Department.
- The CAO continues to work with BRCC to advance the partnership to offer more professional advancement opportunities to CATS employees.
  - The agency anticipates including mechanics in a Hydraulics Certification later this month.
- The two-way messaging service with the AIM grant received favorable national press with Hitachi. CATS continues to meet weekly with the production team on development of Phase 1.
  - Go live of the first phase of the project will be in 90 days. This includes the following:
    - Development of a short text code/QR posted at high-frequency stops
    - The code will allow customers to text and receive bus schedule information.
  - Phase 2 will include development of two-way messaging between customers and customer service representatives.
  - CATS has received the grant in the TrAMS system.

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- The CAO is working with Acumen Building Enterprise and the FTA to scale the scope of the COVID-19 Mitigation Research Grant.
  - Theo Richards is coordinating the efforts among CATS, Acumen, and the public relations team.
- In accordance with their contract requirements, MV Transportation submitted a letter requesting to exercise the first year of the two-year extension options on the paratransit services contract.
  - Representatives from MV met with each board member as well as Baker Mayor Darnell Waites regarding this extension.
- CATS is working with Pierlott & Associates to establish new DBE goals to be applied on all projects that receive FTA funding for fiscal years October 2020 through September 2023.
  - The Civil Rights Office of the FTA is responsible for DBE oversight.
- CATS frontline employees have multiple options for receiving the COVID-19 vaccination.
  - CATS is partnering with the Mayor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (MOHSEP) to respond to disaster and emergency events; this allowed CATS employees to qualify as first responders.
  - CATS frontline employees (operators, supervisors, dispatchers, mechanics, custodians, building & grounds, and facility employees) to receive the vaccination on Friday, March 12<sup>th</sup> and Monday, March 15<sup>th</sup>.
- The Department of Health and Hospitals has classified public transit workers as non-law enforcement, which gives CATS employees the opportunity to schedule an appointment to receive the vaccine through OLOL.
  - The COVID-19 questionnaire can be found on the OLOL website.

### TECHNOLOGY: *Bill Deville*

- The Tyler Technology Enterprise System training sessions for CATS staff are continuing and are about 35 to 40%% completed; financials have advanced enough to begin focusing on HR modules.
  - Tyler has taken CATS recommended future status topics and uploaded them into the Tyler/Munis training database; this is now allowing CATS to start working and resolve bugs/kinks as they go through training.
- Planning and Operations, along with AVL and Maintenance staff are seeking solutions and grant funding for scheduling/AVL software.
- Once grant funding is secured and prioritized, a Business Analytics software solicitation will get underway to procure an agency-wide tool to gather reporting data automatically from core systems in order to create improved KPI reporting that is now lacking; this is needed for better management and control of finance, personnel, transportation, and maintenance operations.

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The use of “dashboard” reporting is strongly desired by CEO and senior management.

- An enterprise asset management system is being looked into by Planning and Finance, along with secured funding.

### CEO NOTES: *Bill Deville*

- The executive search conducted by Gallagher for CATS Human Resources Director has concluded, and CEO and staff have concluded committee interviews of finalists, and a new HR Director has accepted the job offer pending background checks, drug screening, etc., and will start April 5<sup>th</sup>.
- The CAO and COO are finalizing plans for CATS front line transit workers to receive vaccinations starting Friday, the 12<sup>th</sup>, and Monday, the 15<sup>th</sup>.
- OLOL, in cooperation with the State, is working with CATS to assist in getting eligible citizens to “certain group vaccinations sites”, using existing routes.
- Board member Laurence Lambert, connected staff with Uber leadership interested in our on demand services, and has proceeded to add CATS to its national program of assisting CATS with getting citizens to vaccination sites.
- CATS is wrapping up obtaining its education information and materials needed for its “Communications Action Plan” to run concurrently with outside millage tax renewal PAC organization plans. The Communications Action Plan will be carried out by the CEO and his management team with guidance and support from Atlas/Emergent Method/Clay Young Enterprises.
  - Timeline for October vote:
    - End of February – CIP and revenue projections completed by HNTB
    - April – CIP and revenue projections presented to Board
    - May 18, 2021 – CATS Board to vote on final ballot language
    - June 16, 2021 – deadline to submit final ballot language
    - Early voting – September 25<sup>th</sup> through October 2<sup>nd</sup> (excluding Sunday, September 26<sup>th</sup>)
    - October 9, 2021 – Election Day, open primary
    - March 2022 – millage expires
    - March 26, 2022 and April 30, 2022 – election dates
- MV Transportation met with CATS COO and ADA/paratransit management team in Baton Rouge the week of February 15<sup>th</sup>, followed by meetings with individual CATS board members to 1.) explain the cost impact caused by the Pandemic, 2.) explain how collaborating with CATS staff, they have identified ways to complete the staffing shortfall, and improve service routing, as the pandemic turns for the better; and 3.) concluding with explanation on plans for the next year options.
- MV Transportation is offering to assist with getting citizens to COVID vaccination sites and will be looking into ways to assist CATS in that effort.
- With the efforts of board member Laurence Lambert and Jonathan Charbonnet, Atlas Technical, CATS on call Program Manager, Amazon and its

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project management team for the Amazon Cortana Distribution Center, met with CATS to begin collaboration efforts on how CATS can best serve their employees (2,000 plus in the mornings and afternoons) transportation needs at the facility, and at the same time coordinate traffic flow so that neither gets in the way of the other (up to 200 18 wheelers) and maintaining all needed safety protocols; it appears that the CATS Cortana Transfer Transit Center may need to be relocated, and Amazon will work with CATS on this potential project.

- Amazon was pleased with the meeting, and made a point to say they will make sure CATS gets credit for the efforts being made in this process
- 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 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.
  - The winning artwork is now wrapped on two buses, the second place winner has their artwork in 10 shelters, and all entries are interior bus ads.

**Finance: John Cutrone**

- See attached financial report for the month.