

MINUTES

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PLANNING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY

July 8, 2015

The Board of Directors Planning & External Relations Committee met on July 8, 2015 at 10:33 a.m. in the Board Room on the 6th Floor of the MARTA Headquarters Building, 2424 Piedmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia.

Board Members Present

Roberta Abdul-Salaam
Harold Buckley, Sr.
Robert F. Dallas
Jim Durrett
Jerry Griffin
Freda B. Hardage
Christopher Tomlinson

MARTA officials in attendance were: General Manager/ CEO Keith T. Parker, AICP; Chief Operating Officer Rich Krisak; Chief of Staff Rukiya Eaddy; Chief Administrative Officer Edward L. Johnson; Chief Financial Officer Gordon L. Hutchinson; Chief Counsel Elizabeth O'Neill; AGMs Wanda Dunham, Robin Henry, Ming Hsi, Reginald Mason, Ryland McClendon, Terry Thompson and Donald Williams (Acting); Executive Director Ferdinand Risco; Sr. Directors Rhonda Briggins and David Springstead; Directors John Bayalis, Jonathan Hunt, Jennifer Jinadu-Wright and Carol Smith; Manager Alisa Jackson; Manager, Executive Office Administration Tyrene L. Huff; Finance Administrative Analyst Tracy Kincaid. Others in attendance Davis Allen, Carlos Arietta, Denise Coleman, Abebe Girmay, Nicholas Gowens, Leeshu Kennedy, LaTonya Pope, Srinath Remala and Tameka Wimberly.

Also in attendance Charles Pursley, Jr. of Pursley Friese Torgrimson, LLP; Pam Alexander of LTK Engineering; Jack Buckingham of MATC; Derek Crider of AECOM; Betty Willis of Emory; Patrick Bradshaw and Steve Lewandawski of ARC.

Consent Agenda

- a) Approval of the June 4, 2015 Planning & External Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

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On motion by Mr. Dallas seconded by Ms. Abdul-Salaam, the minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 7 to 0, with 7 members present.

Individual Agenda

Briefing – Federal Legislative Update

Mr. Bayalis briefed the Committee on the status of the Highway Trust Fund, the status of the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Appropriations Bill and the work MARTA's Office of Government Relations staff have engaged in through the year in advocating MARTA's positions on Federal Transportation Funding.

Federal

- Current MAP-21 legislation expires on July 31, 2015 and the Highway Trust Fund is projected to be depleted soon thereafter
- Another temporary extension through the end of the year in the amount of roughly \$10B is likely to be agreed upon prior to or at the end of July
- As for a long term agreement, there remains a major lack of consensus on how to fund the needed funds for a long-term extension.
 - Gas tax increase
 - Repatriation of taxes on profits earned overseas by U.S. companies
 - Tax reform deal

FY 2016 House THUD Appropriations

- House legislation (H.R. 2577) maintains 2015 formula grant funding levels. However, it drastically reduces New & Small Starts monies, TIGER funding and Amtrak funding
 - New transit construction cut by \$200M
 - TIGER cuts by \$400M
 - Amtrak funding cut by more than \$250M
- H.R. 2577 passed the House on 6/10/15 by 216-210
 - Senate unlikely to take it up any time soon due to spending cap debate
 - President Obama has already said that H.R. 2577, in its present form, would be dead on arrival because of the numerous cuts to programs across the board, including transit

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FY 2016 Senate THUD Appropriations

- Senate legislation also maintains 2015 formula grant funding levels
- TIGER funding remains at \$500M, much higher than the House version, but New and Small Starts are also reduced in line with the House version
- Monies for Capital Investment Grants have been drastically reduced, consistent with the House version, though by an additional \$330M
- It is now available for a vote in the full Senate upon their return from July 4th Recess
- The bill in this form will also, almost certainly, face a veto from the President as well

2015 Federal Advocacy

- MARTA has engaged every office of the Georgia Congressional Delegation on these issues as well as:
 - THUD appropriations outreach
- Capitol Hill-In-District Meetings Completed With:
 - Senator Johnny Isakson (R/GA)
 - Senator David Purdue (R/GA)
 - Rep. Hank Johnson (D/GA-04) (MARTA jurisdiction)
 - Rep. Tom Price (R/GA-06) (Chair, House Budget Committee)
 - Rep. Rob Woodall (R/GA-07) (Transportation & Infrastructure Committee)
 - Rep. Austin Scott (R/GA-08) (Congressional Public Transit Caucus)
 - Rep. David Scott (D/GA-13) (MARTA jurisdiction)
- Engagement will continue as the issues evolve

State

- In late June, the GA House Committee on Assignments announced that Rep. Tom Taylor (R-79, Dunwoody) will become the next MARTOC Chairman
 - MARTOC member prior to appointment
 - Also serves on: Appropriations, Economic Development & Tourism, Government Affairs and is current Vice Chair of the Regulated Industries Committee
 - Avid MARTA rider during Session
 - Government Relations has already reached out to discuss 2016
- Several special elections will be decided on Tuesday, July 14th. The Government Relations team is closely watching:

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- House District 55 (Tyrone Brooks – Atlanta)
- House District 58 (Harry Geisinger – Roswell)
- House District 80 (Mike Jacobs – Brookhaven)
- DeKalb County Commission District 5 (Vacant)

Ms. Abdul-Salaam referenced Mr. Bayalis' update on congressional members and asked where are we with the House.

Mr. Bayalis said Congressman Bill Shuster, Chairman of the House came down to Atlanta several months ago and had a workshop at Georgia Tech. He invited metro representatives, transit-friendly, etc. There was a very open and honest forum on devolution of transit funding here in Georgia. Congressman Rob Woodall was not very optimistic about a long term package this year but he did acknowledge the role that transit plays in that package and said it is his opinion that they would get the Republicans to recognize you can't devolve funding for the Highway Trust Fund. Austin Scott (a member of the Public Transit Caucus) was wildly supportive of transit and MARTA. Clearly, transit is resonating with people outside Atlanta.

Briefing – Clifton Corridor Transit Initiative Update on the Environmental Review Process

Ms. Wimberly provided a briefing to the Committee on the status of the Clifton Corridor Transit Initiative.

In November 2014, the Board was briefed after the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register in October 2014. This initiated the environmental review process for the Clifton Corridor to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Public and Agency Scoping meetings were held on December 4 and 9, 2014. During NEPA Scoping, MARTA staff received feedback from stakeholders about the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), the alternative at-grade alignment, design options and station locations. Public input was also solicited for any potential environmental impacts that the alignments might present (i.e. noise and vibration, ecology, archaeology, land use, traffic and transportation, etc.). The majority of comments were centered on:

- Property impacts or property acquisitions
- Favoring a tunnel over an at-grade alignment
- Traffic impacts
- Impact to residential communities
- General support of the project

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This briefing provided an overview of the Scoping period as well as how input received will be used in the Environmental Assessment. The completion of this process is slated for late 2017 with a Record of Decision (ROD) from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) following. A concurrent objective would also be to request entry into Project Development, thereby positioning Clifton Corridor to compete for federal funds under the New Starts program.

Next Steps

- Environmental Technical Reports
- Draft Environmental Impact Statement (2016)
- Public Hearings
- Final Environmental Impact Statement (2017)
- Stakeholder/Public Meetings

Approximate Project Timeline

- Environmental Impact Statement (2014 – 2017)
- Project Development (2017 – 2020)
- Design/Construction (2020 – 2024)
- Transit Service (2025 – Beyond)

Mr. Buckley asked if the two alternatives were assessed for efficiency, i.e., the time it takes to get from point A to point B.

Ms. Wimberly said staff is making that assessment now. Once the technical evaluation is complete, staff will be able to determine the best alignment.

Mr. Dallas asked if this light rail would be similar to Denver's.

Ms. Wimberly said it would be.

Mr. Parker noted that the ultimate decision will have a profound impact on how well the service runs. He suggested at the appropriate time, it would be worth it for Board members, Emory and other stakeholders to visit other light rail systems.

Mr. Durrett asked if you make a turn on Haygood would it be necessary to rebuild the bridge over the train tracks.

Ms. Wimberly said that is her understanding.

Ms. Abdul-Salaam asked how long has staff been working on this project.

Ms. Wimberly said the project has taken different forms over the years – the Alternative Analysis was started in 2009.

Acknowledgment

Mr. Durrett recognized and welcomed Ms. Betty Willis, Sr. Associate, VP for Government and Community Affairs for Emory University.

Briefing – Fare Evasion

Ms. Smith provided a briefing on fare evasion study results and Task Force status.

The Department of Planning, Office of Research and Analysis completed a follow up study based on the results of two fare evasion surveys finished during FY 12 and FY 13, which reported an estimated \$3.5M loss in revenue for FY 13. The current study, completed in early spring indicates that the overall fare evasion rate at MARTA has dropped from 6.6% to 1.8% on bus and from 1.8% to 1.7% on rail.

The 73% decrease in fare evasion on MARTA's bus system was accomplished in large part by closing the bus doors at rail stations and is projected to collect \$2.1M in additional revenue in FY 15.

Members of the C-Suite, MARTA's Management Team and Task Force members recognized bus operations for their contribution by saying thank you to them during pullout at each garage.

The Fare Evasion Task Force is focusing on the misuse of special benefit cards as the primary area of concern.

This is the 9th rail study and the second bus study. On rail, staff looked at surveillance video for all 38 stations by weekday only. Random samples were done for bus of 535 trips over all routes, over all time periods for weekday, Saturday and Sunday.

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In FY 13 fare evasion was approximately 6.6% on the total bus system. Today, it is down to 1.8%. The large driver on fare evasion for bus was the procedure of keeping the doors open while the driver was on break.

The Authority did a very large community and rider education program about tapping fare cards. *Ride with Respect* kicked in approximately four months before the major push against fare evasion (people were now being arrested for violations) – all of this was instrumental in preventing fare evasion. Other forms of evasion are going through a gate if it malfunctions and sliding under a gate. Looking at both sets of studies, the total financial impact for both rail and bus was \$2.3M.

MARTA has gained approximately 7M passengers since FY 13. The losses are down almost a third. Closing the bus doors was a winning move. As of today (with one more month to add), MARTA is on target to collect an additional \$2.1M.

Staff continues to work on fare evasion with a major look at the misuse of reduced fare and mobility fare cards. MARTA is looking to streamline the program and make improvements on the certification process for individuals. Additionally, MARTA is creating a Breeze card that would be used for all benefit programs, i.e., employees, reduced fare and Mobility cards. Staff is committed to continuing to identify fare evasion and misuse of MARTA's fare media.

Mr. Griffin asked what is an acceptable level of 'leakage'.

Ms. Smith said there is sparse information on what is happening throughout the industry. From agency to agency the average fare evasion rate is believed to be between 3%-6%. Fare evasion is usually a little heavier on bus. On heavy rail, stations with the highest evasion rate are typically stations that are not manned. MARTA only has Station Agents at 17 stations and they are not there full time.

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Parker commended Ms. Smith, Mr. Hutchinson and MARTA Police on a job well done.

Briefing – MPD Community Outreach

Chief Dunham provided a briefing on the MARTA Police Department's Community Outreach Unit and its purpose, community involvement and programs.

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MARTA Police has a history of being involved with the community. The Community Outreach Program was formalized in 2009. Objectives are to provide support to MARTA customers throughout the service area, act as liaisons with the MARTA Police and the community, provide the public with a different perception of what the MARTA Police is like and increase MARTA Police visibility in the community. These efforts take a four-prong approach: community involvement, youth programs and leadership, educational experiences and senior citizen programs.

- The Community Emergency Response Team is made up of MARTA employees as well as regular citizens. This is a national program where individuals go through a 12-week training class. In emergency situations, they serve as helpers to MARTA Police. The program started in 2014. To date, 72 people have graduated.
- Citizens Police Academy – this year marks the 20th class. To date, 271 people have graduated. The graduates are asked to come back and help with volunteer opportunities throughout the year.
- Diverse Community Outreach Program – LGBT Parades, as well as Asian, Hispanic and community events.
- The MARTA Police Department adopted Special Olympics Georgia. Officers use payroll deductions to contribute to Special Olympics Georgia. Other activities to raise funds for Special Olympics are Torch Run, Cops on Donut Shop, The Polar Plunge/Costume Contest and Cuff for a Cause.
- Community Events – include local and national events
- Youth Programs:
 - Kids in Transit Program – free camp for at risk youth. A one-week camp during the first week of June. Youth are taught how to ride the system. Each day has a theme. All activities are done on transit. To give back to the community, the group hosts a community service day delivering meals to seniors.
 - Gang Resistance Program
 - STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Math – partnering with MATC, WTS Atlanta, Atlanta Public Schools and COMTO Atlanta.
 - Red Ribbon Week – teaching kids to stay away from drugs

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- Other activities include internships, college day visits, fare evasion, *Ride with Respect* Program, certification in first aid
- Senior Citizen Programs
 - Bowden Senior Center – educational sessions on how to ride MARTA and safety classes
 - Can Goods Fest for seniors
 - MARTA Police - East Precinct adopted a Senior Center in DeKalb County giving gifts for seniors during the Christmas season

Chief Dunham said Officer Natalie Johnson is the point of contact for all community outreach programs. She charts and tracks all community activities. Chief Dunham commended Officer Johnson on a job well done.

Briefing – DEO Outreach

Mr. Risco provided a briefing on the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity's (DEO) outreach efforts.

The Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity serves as the advocate to promote the diverse social profile of the service area, ensure equitable representation and advancement at all service levels of employment, utilize small and disadvantaged businesses, ensure equitable distribution of transit services.

DEO's mission is to ensure that all MARTA decisions, activities, programs and services are equitable and do not adversely impact current or potential employees, customers, communities, businesses or other stakeholders.

The core functions of the Office are achieved on a platform of compliance, education and outreach:

- Compliance
 - Equal Employment Opportunity Program
 - Title VI – Service and Fair Equity Analysis
 - Environmental Justice
 - Limited English Proficiency Program
 - American with Disabilities Act
 - Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program
 - Small Business Enterprise Program
 - Departmental Protocols for Discrimination Complaints/Investigations

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- Education
 - Sexual Harassment Prevention Training
 - Inclusive Leadership and Strategy
 - Diversity Management
 - Inclusive management and Supervision Training Series
 - Respect in the Workplace Training
 - Violence in the Workplace Prevention Training
 - New Employee Orientation Training

- Outreach
 - MARTA Accessibility Committee
 - Business Resource Groups
 - Cross Cultural Mentoring Program
 - Diversity Awareness Programing
 - Cultural Diversity Programs
 - Targeted Organization Memberships
 - Cultural Program Attendance

Why Outreach?

Outreach is federally mandated. In most instances, public participation and public involvement is a necessity to the decision-making process of the MARTA Board as well as the Authority as it relates to transit services. Outreach efforts span the areas of neighborhood associations to our largest Federal agencies – U.S. Department of Transportation, Atlanta Tribune, chambers of commerce, COMTO, etc.

Over the last ten months, DEO has been able to attend/participate in 100+ events. This has allowed MARTA to reach out to/contact approximately 10,000 individuals:

- GM/CEO Keith Parker and Regional Administrator Cassius Butts, of the U.S. Small Business Administration signed a strategic alliance memorandum
- Abilities Expo at GA World Congress Center - there were thousands of advocates for persons with disabilities
- Top 10 Forum
- Georgia Mentor Protégé Connection
- Regional Buyers Tour – procurement professionals were introduced to small and disadvantaged businesses in the area for small commodities buying
- DEO staff fed homeless Veterans on Veterans Day
- For the first time, all federally mandated programs were put on disc and sent to over 500 agencies

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To ensure MARTA's message reaches every community, information is translated into the top four languages - Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese and Chinese.

Social Media used are Twitter (800+ followers), weekly announcements to two list-serve, Facebook and a mobile application (Paso Lavas) for the Spanish and Hispanic community that helped tremendously in the vote for Clayton County (was able to reach 15,000 registered voters in Clayton County).

Outcomes

- Direct contact with many new communities
- Expanded the MARTA Brand to new potential riders
- Expanded resources and potential partnerships
- New Best Practices for communicating with diverse communities
- Provide a new entry point into MARTA – employment, ridership and business

What's Next ?

- The Authority is moving from compliance-driven to true diversity and inclusion
- Executive Diversity Council
- External Corporate Advisory Board
- Targeted Partnership Development
- Build Positive Brand
- Cultural and Diversity Awareness Programs

Mr. Durrett commended Mr. Risco on an excellent presentation.

Mr. Tomlinson asked how the two offices (MARTA and GDOT) interact.

Mr. Risco responded MARTA and GDOT are the two certifying agents for the Small and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program. He said Kimberly King is his peer at GDOT. Together he and Kimberly are working on automation to alleviate the paper-laden process of certifying DBEs. There has been a significant amount of synergy between the two agencies. Just three years ago the two agencies were running less than 10% in DBE participation. Last year, together, they were able to achieve 29% DBE participation. The goal is 30% for this year.

Mr. Dallas asked if MARTA is able to partner with the State procurement agency (Doas).

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Mr. Risco said MARTA is very in tune with those procurement opportunities.

Ms. Abdul-Salaam asked if there are any African countries that MARTA works with in terms of language. She said Clayton County has a huge Nigerian population that speaks the various languages of their native land, Igbo, Edo, Yoruba and also French.

Mr. Risco said MARTA would like the opportunity to be engaged with this group.

Mr. Parker said effective community outreach must happen before the crisis hits. He said Mrs. Dunham and the MARTA Police has done a wonderful job in this area. Additionally, Mr. Risco and his staff are getting out to community to let them know MARTA is open for business.

Mr. Johnson said Ms. Carol Smith and Ms. Alisa Jackson took him to several Spanish-speaking radio stations during the roll-out for Clayton County. The experience was great. They were very appreciative of MARTA coming out to share what MARTA was doing with Clayton County service. Media Relations, Government Relations, Community Relations, DEO and Police are opening doors to get the information out to the community.

Other Matters

Ms. McClendon announced the following events:

- COMTO National Meeting, Boston, MA, July 11 – 14, 2015
- Opening of West End Market – July 10, 2015 (Lunch event July 17th)

Ms. Jinadu-Wright showed a video of this year's Scavenger Hunt for Dump the Pump. This year marks the third annual Scavenger Hunt. Thirty-nine teams signed up with just over 130 participants.

Mr. Durrett asked how does the numbers compare in terms of the previous two years.

Mrs. Jinadu-Wright explained there are always more to sign up; but MARTA has to put a cap on the total number of participants.

Adjournment

The Planning & External Relations Committee meeting adjourned at 11:59 a.m.