

DELAWARE COUNTY TRANSIT BOARD

BOARD MEETING

MINUTES OF September 27, 2017

1. Roll Call

The DCTB Chair called the meeting to order and the roll was taken as follows: (17-09-01)

<u> X </u>	Boots Sheets-Chair
<u> X </u>	Ed Helvey-Vice Chair
<u> Ab </u>	Traci Cromwell -Secretary
<u> X </u>	Roger VanSickle-Treasurer
<u> Ab </u>	Craig Zimmers
<u> X </u>	Troy Sabo
<u> X </u>	Jacob Fathbruckner

Staff present for the meeting:

<u> X </u>	Denny Schooley-Executive Director
<u> Ab </u>	Crystal James-Operations Director
<u> X </u>	Ginny Berry-Marketing and Public Relations Specialist
<u> Ab </u>	Tonya Layman-Mobility Manager
<u> X </u>	Tina Smith-Controller/HR Coordinator
<u> X </u>	Ed Pierson-Facilities, Assets, and Technology Manager
<u> X </u>	Grant Bias-Safety and Security Training Manager

a. Approval of Absences (17-09-01)

It was moved by Roger and seconded by Jake to approve Traci's and Craig's absences (17-09-01). Motion passed.

b. Pledge

2. Public Comment none

3. Approval of Consent Agenda (17-09-02)

a. Agenda for September 27, 2017

b. Approval of minutes from August 16, 2017

It was moved by Ed H. and seconded by Troy to approve the Consent Agenda (17-09-02). Motion passed.

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4. Financial Status – Treasurer’s Report

a. Approval of Financial Status for month ending July 31, 2017 (17-09-03)

Income = Jan. – July = \$780,340.43

Expenses = Jan. – July = \$1,344,302.67

Checking = \$94,290.78

Payroll = \$62,206.73

It was moved by Jake and seconded by Ed H. to approve the Financial Status for month ending July 31, 2017 (17-09-03). Motion passed.

5. Reports

a. Department

Ed P. stated we are estimated to move back into our offices by the end of December. The expected end date for both phases of construction, offices and shop, is April.

Denny thanked Ed P. for all his work in setting everyone up to work at home, as well as Grant’s help with moving out of offices and running wiring.

b. Executive Director

Denny said he met with Commissioner Gary Merrell last week and Gary shared his thoughts on the future of DATA. Denny also attended the OTRP Board Retreat and got to mingle with other transit systems. He noted that the state budget was a big topic of discussion. Denny said he will be attending the Neo Ride Board meeting and explained that Neo Ride is a combination of Akron, Canton, Kent, and Lake County Transits all working together.

6. New Business

a. Approval to submit grant for the State Urban Transit Program UTP (17-09-04) (Denny)

This is our regular annual state grant in which the state uses a formula to distribute funds. Our share will be about \$54,000, which is down from hundreds of thousands from a few years ago.

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It was moved by Ed H. and seconded by Roger to approve submitting the grant for the State Urban Transit Program (17-09-04). Motion passed.

b. Approval to submit grant for the State OTP3 Program (17-09-05) (Denny)

This is another state program we do each year to help buy buses using federal funds. We are requesting about \$337,000 to replace four vehicles. We are also asking for the 20% match in transit credits to get 100% funding.

It was moved by Jake and seconded by Troy to approve submitting the grant for the State OTP3 Program (17-09-05). Motion passed.

c. Approval of the state E&D Contract (17-09-06) (Denny)

This is our elderly and disabled grant from ODOT which subsidizes the half price fares. It will be almost \$25,000.

It was moved by Jake and seconded by Roger to approve the state E&D Contract (17-09-06). Motion passed.

d. Approval of DATA/COTA Agreement (17-09-07) (Denny)

In the past, our exchange of funds with COTA, in which we trade federal money for local money, has been a lengthy multi-step process. This year we have requested to cut down on the number of steps and have the allocation go directly from FTA to us without having to actually trade back and forth. This will be a little over \$1 million.

It was moved by Ed H. and seconded by Jake to approve the DATA/COTA Agreement (17-09-07). Motion passed.

7. Discussion

a. DATA Bus Future – 2018 Budget, Services, Funding, Advertising, Community Relations and Community Support

Denny reminded the Board that when we went from rural to urban we lost two-thirds of our funding for operations. ODOT then offered us funds in 2014 that we couldn't match. Since COTA could match the funds, they took the money and then traded the \$1 million in federal funds with us for local funds. That \$1 million has gotten us through the last three years, as planned. Those funds are now gone, so in looking at the 2018 budget, we are about \$252,000 short in order to maintain services as we currently are.

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Denny explained he has asked Crystal to do some in depth analysis of our ridership and where cuts may be possible. Denny said he will probably be requesting to reduce service in order the balance the 2018 budget.

Denny reminded the Board that we only get funding for the urbanized area, which is only 1/3 of the county. We continue to serve the other 2/3 but get zero funding for it. He posed questions such as, should we only serve the city where most transit dependent people are? Should we raise fares? Most people who ride our buses couldn't afford that.

Denny said he asked Gary Merrell about a ¼% sales tax, and he replied that it needs to stay available in the case of some type of emergency. A property tax is a possibility, however, property taxes are already so high for people. Convincing the commissioners to put a levy on the ballot is one thing. Convincing the public to vote for it and support it, is another thing.

Denny noted that SourcePoint is probably our biggest advocate as they give an annual grant to support the 40% of fixed route ridership that are seniors, as well as providing the Bus Bucks program.

Denny said he has emailed the County Prosecutor to inquire about the possibility of us becoming a Regional Transit Authority (RTA) instead of a Board. This would allow us to go for a tax levy on our own, however, we would only be able to serve our authority. We could not overlap service with other transits and would not be able to receive revenue from areas we do not serve.

Denny said we have been discussing a lot of ideas related to advertising. What message do we want to send? Who and what do we want to advertise? The study we did last year told us to keep doing what we're doing until there is additional funding available.

Boots encouraged the Board to be thinking about where we should make cuts and where we can get additional funding. Ed H. said we should consider becoming an RTA if that is an option. Jake asked if we were to become an RTA if we could negotiate service area with COTA. Denny said no, that areas are already set by state law. Ed H. asked what percentage of usage we have in the 2/3 of the county that's not funded. Denny said most of the ridership in these areas are through contracts and Bus Bucks because the general public can't afford the demand response rates.

Jake asked if our only possible funding from the commissioners is a tax levy. Denny said no, that we used to be a part of their budget and did not have to compete for funds from the Community Enhancement Fund, which is only for capital, as we do now. Denny said he asked Gary Merrell about becoming part of the annual budget again, and he said he would be open to that. Denny still needs to meet with the other two commissioners. Jake suggested we make a pitch to both the county and the city.

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Boots suggested the possibility of working with other neighboring counties, such as Marion, Union, and Morrow. Denny agreed this could be a possibility.

Denny stated that cuts need to be made where they will affect the fewest number of people possible. Jake said he believes the ne Green Route is still too new and more people need to know about it and its benefits. Troy agreed that too many people still don't know enough about what DATA does. Ginny said she believes we need to put some money into advertising well. Troy asked if there were any specific grants available for advertising or rebranding. Denny said he really wasn't sure.

Denny explained he would like the Board to come to an agreement on where DATA is headed in the future so he has some guidance on what to work toward. Do we plan for growth, do we provide more service, do we find more money, or do we just stay where we are? Ed H. noted that DATA began with just serving DD, then expanded to serving JFS and SourcePoint, and then expanded again by adding fixed routes. Jake said he believes cutting service is the easy way out and we should work toward maintaining what we have to serve the people and only cut service as a last resort.

Denny said he would put together some options for the Board's consideration at the next meeting.

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8. Other Business – Open Comments

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9. Adjourn

With no further business to conduct, the Chairman adjourned the meeting.