

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF AUTHORITY  
County of Lackawanna Transit System  
September 19, 2017

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The regular meeting of the County of Lackawanna Transit System Authority was held on Tuesday, September 19, 2017 at 11:05 a.m. at the Lackawanna Transit Center.

Present were:	Carmen Libassi	Michael Dougherty
	Gregg Nieto	Larry Wynne
	Robert Fiume	Joseph DeNaples
	Timothy Hinton	Douglas Hein
	Jane Farrell	Gretchen Wintermantel
	Mark Gifford	Dave Kaczmarek
	Steve Matassa	Joan Hodowanitz
	Evan Xanthis	Krysten Xanthis

Mr. Carmen Libassi opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Libassi added that an Executive Session was held prior to the meeting to discuss personnel matters.

Mr. Libassi requested a Roll Call of the Board Members. Carmen Libassi, Gregg Nieto, Larry Wynne and Michael Dougherty were present; Martha Dougher was excused.

Acceptance of Minutes

Mr. Libassi asked if anyone had questions regarding July 2017 meeting minutes, there were none. Michael Dougherty made a motion to accept the minutes and Larry Wynne seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Acceptance of Financial Documents

Mr. Libassi asked if anyone had questions pertaining to the Income Statements for the months of July 2017 and August 2017, there were none. Larry Wynne made a motion to accept the financial documents and Michael Dougherty seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Public Comment/Agenda Items

Mr. Libassi welcomed comments from the public regarding agenda items. Joan Hodowanitz questioned the board about the changes on the pension plan and where the new bus shelter would be built. Robert Fiume stated that the contract isn't for one bus shelter however, it is a contract that was drawn up because the current shelters are owned by Lamar Advertising and we are taking them over. The contract would be to repair and replace some of the shelters and possibly adding new shelters.

Maria Williamson from AFG responded to the question regarding the pension change. Maria stated that the investment firm had changed hands from Integrated Capital Management to Morgan Stanley. Maria stated that effective January 1, 2018 there would be an increase in the benefit payout for the union employees. Dave Kaczmarek explained that the maximum payment after 30 years of service had been \$1,200 monthly and now it would be \$1,350.

### Executive Director's Report

- A. Mr. Robert Fiume presented the ridership reports for the months of July and August 2017. Mr. Fiume stated that the average daily ridership for shared ride in July was 470 trips as compared to 455 in June. The fixed route ridership for July was down approximately 200 trips from June 2017. For the August shared ride, there were 474 trips as compared to 470 for July. The fixed route report for August showed an increase of approximately 300 riders from July and about even with August 2016. Dave Kaczmarek suggested that the lower ridership in July could have been caused by schools being out.
- B. Mr. Fiume stated that COLTS is working on some routes to make better connections and possibly adding service to areas that we aren't servicing now. He said that it would be a long process and the changes will be done over the next few months. Mr. Fiume stated that COLTS is also looking into having a transfer center in the Mid-Valley area and Penn Dot has already agreed to assist with funding for the project.
- C. Mr. Libassi requested a motion for the approval of the Resolution Amending the COLTS and Local 168 ATU Pension Plan to provide an increase in the Pension Benefit Formula. Michael Dougherty made the motion and Gregg Nieto seconded the motion. All were in favor.

### Other Business

- A. Mr. Libassi requested a motion for the approval of the contract with Neopost for the Postage Machine Lease. Mr. Fiume explained that all contracts have to be approved by the board. This is a contract that needs to be renewed. Larry Wynne made a motion to approve the contract and Michael Dougherty seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- B. Mr. Libassi requested a motion to award the Bus Stop Signage Contract. He also noted that this would be pending Solicitors review based on the delivery of a sample sign. Gregg Nieto made the motion and Larry Wynne seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- C. Mr. Libassi requested a motion for the approval of the Bus Shelter Construction and Erection Agreement. Larry Wynne made the motion and Michael Dougherty seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- D. Mr. Libassi requested a motion to change the dates of the October and November meetings due to scheduling conflicts. It was decided to poll the board to determine the best dates, then a legal notice would be sent to the newspaper. Michael Dougherty made a motion to change the dates and Gregg Nieto seconded the motion. All were in favor.

### Public Comment/Other Business

Mr. Libassi welcomed comments from the public regarding other business; Joan Hodowanitz addressed the board. Joan complimented the board for providing service to the Air Show in August. She asked if the changes to the Route 99 bus had been advertised. Gretchen Wintermantel stated that it was advertised in the paper. Joan thanked COLTS for the service noting that the additional

service to Shoppes at Montage will be great for the local shoppers. Joan questioned if there was an article in the paper regarding the payback to Penn Dot. Mr. Fiume stated there was not. Joan recommended a press release. Joan stated that she would contact the newspaper and possibly write a letter to the editor about the payback.

Evann Xanthis addressed the board, representing the people of Dickson Avenue, regarding changes to the Highworks bus route. She also provided a petition from residents in the area to reinstate the route to service Dickson Avenue all day. She stated that she timed the route while riding the bus and it is only an additional one and a half minutes to go to Dickson Avenue. She stated that in the three years that it has been going in the area several residents are using the bus. She stated that each month, she purchases three monthly passes for herself and her family. Evann stated that she has stopped purchasing the passes because of the changes. She also claimed that the bus services Allied all day and when she is on the bus, no one gets on or off at Allied. Evann feels that getting off on Greenridge Street and having to cross the street is dangerous for senior citizens and the disabled. Carmen Libassi stated that the seniors and disabled passengers are able to use Coordinated Transportation. Evann felt that the people would rather be independent and use the bus. Mark Gifford stated that the bus will still service the area five times a day or they can get off on Greenridge Street. Also, the Carbondale and Greenridge buses service the area one block away. Evann stated that would be a problem for people with work or doctor's appointments with the limited schedule. She also stated that the sidewalks going to Sanderson Avenue are damaged and the people would have to walk on the road. Mark Gifford stated that the ridership to the area does not warrant the service. Krysten Xanthis complained about the buses being late. Gretchen Wintermantel stated that the operations department has been working with the drivers to make changes to the routes so that the buses aren't late. Bob Fiume explained that, one of the reasons they are doing the changes, is to make better connections. He also noted that the changes are saving COLTS money which can possibly allow us to have funds to service other areas. Evann stated that she took the 9:05 Highworks bus from town and she didn't get home until 9:27 which she felt was too much time. Dave Kaczmarek explained that there are many variables that contribute to the buses running late, such as, traffic and construction that COLTS has no control over. Krysten stated the bus leaving the Giant at 5:01 does not show up all the time. Carmen stated that they will look into the problem with the bus not showing up. Evann stated again that she felt that going the three blocks to service Dickson Avenue should continue. Dave Kaczmarek stated that he and Mark Gifford determined the distance from Dickson Avenue to Sanderson Avenue is only 140 feet. Evann asked if they noticed the condition of the sidewalks. Carmen explained that we can't base our bus routes based on the terrain of the area. He suggested contacting the property owner of the city to have them fixed. Mark Gifford explained, the reason they choose the times for the service to the area, was based on the busiest time for ridership. Evann stated again that passengers aren't going to Allied. Krysten stated that she went to Eye Witness News about the problems. Carmen explained that the changes are being made to make our service more efficient and he acknowledged that the changes will effect certain people. He also stated that he will look into all of their comments and the changes will be reevaluated. Bob Fiume commended the people working on the changes for their hard work. He also noted that we are funded by Penn Dot and they want changes done to make us more efficient. If they don't see changes, they may cut our funding. Dave Kaczmarek explained that if they see that the changes aren't working properly, they may consider changing it back.

Larry Wynne made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 a.m. Gregg Nieto seconded the motion and all were in favor.

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Submitted by:  
Jane Farrell, Executive Assistant