

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF AUTHORITY
County of Lackawanna Transit System
April 21, 2021

The regular meeting of the County of Lackawanna Transit System Authority was held on Wednesday, April 21, 2021 at 4:35 p.m. at the Lackawanna Transit Center.

Present were:	Martha Dougher	Larry Wynne
	Gregg Nieto	Michael Dougherty
	Brian Doughton	Atty. Joseph DeNaples
	Atty. Timothy Hinton	Robert Fiume
	Jane Farrell	Michael Danchak

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

Mr. Wynne requested a roll call of the board members. Larry Wynne and Brian Doughton were present. Martha Dougher, Michael Dougherty and Gregg Nieto participated via phone.

Acceptance of Minutes

Mr. Wynne requested a motion to approve the March 2021 meeting minutes. Brian Doughton made a motion to accept the minutes and Martha Dougher seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Acceptance of Financial Documents

Mr. Wynne requested a motion to approve the Financial Statements for the month of March 2021. Brian Doughton made a motion to accept the financial documents and Gregg Nieto seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Public Comment/Agenda Items

Mr. Wynne welcomed comments from the public regarding agenda items; there were none.

Executive Director's Report

- A. Mr. Robert Fiume presented the ridership report for the month of March 2021 for fixed route. The fixed route average daily ridership for March 2021 was 1,409; which is up from 1,198 in February 2021. We are now running at full service and ridership has been increasing. We are now at approximately 48% pre-covid numbers. This is in line with other agencies across the state and country. He feels that ridership will increase as individuals get vaccinated and the weather gets better.
- B. Mr. Fiume presented the ridership report for the month of March 2021 for shared ride. The average daily trips for shared ride in March 2021 was 268 trips; compared to 231 in February 2021. Mr. Fiume stated that COLTS has been providing free rides for individuals to get to their vaccine appointments. COLTS will continue to work with the County to provide the service. Shared ride ridership is at approximately 82% of ridership prior to covid.

- C. Mr. Fiume explained that the State will be keeping our operation funding level this year. However, the costs are going up. The stimulus funds have been helping with the finances. Mr. Fiume is on a committee with other transit directors and they have developed funding principals. They have also written legislation to get to Michael Carrol, Chairman of the Transportation committee, to get the funding bill changed. The slideshow is almost complete to present to the legislature. Working on this should help with the loss of the turnpike funding.
- D. Mr. Fiume announced that COLTS will participate in National Bike to Work Week. It will be held May 17th through May 22nd. This is in partnership with the Anthracite Bicycle Coalition. Anyone that uses their bike and the bus, will be able to ride the bus at no charge.
- E. Mr. Fiume stated that the Department Reports are included in the board packet. He asked the members to let him know if they had questions.

Other Business

- A. Mr. Fiume requested a motion to approve the Articles of Amendment for COLTS Incorporation. Atty. Joseph DeNaples explained the Resolution was passed last month allowing for the extension of an additional 50 years for the COLTS Incorporation, or otherwise known as its Charter. This has to be done to have it remain in existence and to be compliant with the Municipals Act of Pennsylvania. Once the Resolution was approved, it was turned over to the Lackawanna County Board of Commissioners for their approval of that same extension. The County passed Resolution 21-0083 allowing for the Amendment to move forward. Atty. DeNaples is presenting today, for approval, the actual Article of Amendment which provides pertinent part that, the authority's existence shall be extended to a date not exceeding fifty (50) years from the date of approval of these articles of amendment. If this is approved by the board, it will be advertised in the Lackawanna County Jurist and the Scranton Times. After it is advertised, it will be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of State for filing. When it is filed, COLTS will have an additional 50 years to its charter. Martha Dougher made a motion and Brian Doughton seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- B. Michael Danchak, COLTS Finance Director, presented the 2021-2022 Budget for approval. Mr. Fiume explained that the fiscal year begins on July 1, 2021. The budget is a part of our application to Penn Dot for our operating money, which is due in a couple of weeks. Mr. Danchak reviewed the budget information, noting that COLTS was approved for American Rescue Plan Funding and CRRSAA Funding, which is approximately \$7.75 million. He plans to reserve the \$6.1 million that was provided through the American Rescue Plan through at least this fiscal year. We have until June of 2024 to exhaust the funding. Because of covid, we had to lay off some employees but, the Federal Government was not happy about that. They would like us to refrain from doing that in the future, if possible. Mr. Danchak feels we can do that with proper budgeting. A 3% salary has been included in the budget and he hopes to have full staffing levels. There is also an increase with the Medical Insurance. We expected funding to be flat on the State end and it may go down next year. Bob Fiume asked Mike Danchak about putting additional funds into the pension plan. Mr. Danchak felt

that we should inject more funds into the pension but, we aren't able to use CRRSAA or American Rescue Plan funds to fund prior liabilities. In the budget he has built in an additional \$350,000 to \$375,000 payment to Ralph Colo. He intends to process it the same way they did with the other contribution. Atty. Hinton questioned the 49% increase in the MATP department. Mr. Danchak explained that, in the past, Wayne Williams, Kelly Matone and possibly another individual were classified in the Shared Ride department. He moved them over to MATP for more accurate reporting. Atty. Hinton questioned the FICA expense increase of almost 19%. Mr. Danchak explained that that is tied to wages and additional hires in the Administration Department. Atty. Hinton questioned the increase in the dental insurance. Mr. Danchak felt that people are going to the dentist more now. Atty. Hinton asked if we had a self-insured dental plan. Mr. Fiume stated that we do. Michael Dougherty made a motion to approve the budget and Martha Dougher seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Public Comment/Other Business

Mr. Wynne welcomed comments from the public regarding other business; there were none.

Brian Doughton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:55 p.m. Michael Dougherty seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Submitted by:
Jane Farrell, Administrative Specialist