

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF AUTHORITY
County of Lackawanna Transit System
October 26, 2022

The regular meeting of the County of Lackawanna Transit System Authority was held on Wednesday, October 26, 2022 at 4:40 p.m. at the Lackawanna Transit Center.

Present were:	Larry Wynne	Brian Doughton
	Michael Dougherty	Martha Dougher
	Gregg Nieto	Atty. Joseph DeNaples
	Timothy McGrath	Atty. J. Timothy Hinton
	Jane Farrell	Zain Rabbani
	Michael Danchak	Alyne Scartelli
	Dave Kaczmarek	Steve Matassa
	Ralph Colo	Ray Greaves

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. Brian Doughton and Larry Wynne were present. Michael Dougherty, Gregg Nieto and Martha Dougher participated via phone.

Acceptance of Minutes

Mr. Wynne requested a motion to approve the August 2022 meeting minutes. Brian Doughton made a motion to accept the minutes and Michael Dougherty seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Acceptance of Financial Documents

Mr. Wynne requested a motion to approve the Financial Statements for the months of August and September 2022. Brian Doughton made a motion to accept the financial documents and Michael Dougherty 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. Timothy McGrath presented the Shared Ride and Fixed Route ridership reports for the months of August and September 2022. Mr. McGrath noted that the shared ride revenue for September 2022 was \$31,809, which is slightly below September 2019. It is also below August of 2022 however there were two less operating days in September. Mr. McGrath believes that inclement weather could contribute to the lower ridership. In September 2022, the ridership was 8,510, which is about 300 more than last year. There has been a consistent increase in the ridership in the department, which is positive sign.

- B. Mr. McGrath reviewed the Fixed Route report noting that the trend has been similar to the last few months. September 2022 revenue total was \$54,365 compared to September 2021, which was a little bit over a \$10,000 increase. It is down slightly from August 2022, once again, due to less service days in September. We are still far behind 2019, pre-covid. The ridership for September 2022 was 59,132 compared to September 2021, which was 46,178. Although the numbers are down from August 2022, the numbers are still strong. Mr. McGrath announced that the adjusted routes have recently started and that it includes the Clarks Summit run. With the changes our percentages should increase.
- C. Mr. McGrath stated that the Department Reports are included in the board packet. Mike Danchak addressed the board with regard to the Finance Report. Mike felt that the increase in ridership was helpful to the cost per passenger. Finance continues to have issues with the increase in gas prices. Mike stated that he had a meeting with a representative from Benecon, our health care provider. He was notified that we will be having an approximate increase of 18% in the premium for the upcoming calendar year. Atty. Hinton asked when the renewal date was and if there were any major changes. Mike stated that the renewal date is January 1st and there are no major changes other than the cost. Atty. Hinton asked Mike, what happens to the old buses when we get new buses. Mike stated that, it depends on the condition of the bus. At times, we salvage parts from the buses, if the parts are compatible to the buses that we have. If we do that, it saves money on purchasing parts. After the parts are taken, the bus is sent to the salvage yard. Any time an asset is sold and the fair market value is over \$5,000, the funds have to be returned to the FTA. Atty. Hinton thought that the money didn't have to go back if it was over 10 years old. Mike stated that that is the case if it meets its useful life but, if it is sold over \$5,000, the money has to go back. Most of the time, when we dispose of an asset, we make sure the asset is used up. By the time we are done with the asset, it has to be disposed of. Atty. Hinton asked if we would have storage capacity for the older buses. So far, the plan is to strip the old buses and use what we can and at this point we do not have storage issues. Dave Kaczmarek stated that the fire departments and cops have used the old buses for training. Tim McGrath stated that the SWAT team used one of the buses for training. Mike stated that, next fiscal year, we will be getting 4 buses. After that, we will be getting quite a few additional CNG buses. Atty. Hinton asked if the grants are already approved. Mike stated that the funds for the four that will be received next year have been approved through Gillig. They will procure the grants next year for the other order. They had discussed getting smaller buses but, then other issues came up with that so they are going with the regular size buses. Many times, the buses aren't full so getting the smaller bus would save on maintenance and fuel costs but, it just will not work out now. Tim McGrath stated that other agencies like the smaller buses for specific routes. Tim felt that Penn Dot has entered into a twenty-year agreement for CNG and now the concern is, they will change over to electric or something of that nature. However, Penn Dot did just confirm that they are standing firm with the CNG buses. Dave Kaczmarek asked if there have been any discussions about Covid or the air flow with the new buses. Mike stated that, a lot of times with the contracts, they are set several years in reverse so we would only get what was in the contract. However, if the buses don't have the upgrades we want, we can add after-market options. We would get grant money for the upgrades like filtration systems. Steve Matassa asked if we know what model we are getting. Mike stated that he didn't

have the information available but, he can get it for him. Steve stated that the union concern is, that there are blind spots with the front end on the VRT and they bottom out all of the time. Atty. Hinton asked if it is a specific model that is an issue. He thought the model that they prefer is called the Gillig Low Floor. Mike stated that they can work together on the order. Atty. Hinton asked if any of the drivers have looked at the factory installed shields on any buses. Steve stated that they did see one at the ATU convention and all of the safety concerns were met with the shield. Steve stated that he can get the information about them from the union. Alyne Scartelli felt that there were concerns about air flow and getting in and out of it. Ray Greaves stated that the union has been working with the FTA and some manufactures to get input on the design. There is a system they are using in Toronto that seems to be working out. He said he can see about getting a presentation together. Brian Doughton asked if we have a list of drivers concerns with the buses. Dave stated that he has a list but, mostly the front end on the one model is the issue. He stated that some divers have had broken fingers and carpal tunnel from when they have to pull the wheel. Atty. Joseph DeNaples questioned why they would continue to make this model knowing there are so many concerns. Dave felt that, the demand is there, so it did not matter to them. Dave stated that the international union came up with a new filtration system and they are working on getting them in the buses but, Gillig isn't doing anything about it. Brian asked if we can have a committee meeting to address the issues. Tim stated that they will certainly ask for input when the time comes. Atty. Hinton stated that we should not order the buses until we have the driver input. Mike stated that they will look at the contract and address the issues. Mike suggested waiting to order them until the issues are straightened out. Tim stated that he would like the specific specs before we order them.

- D. Mr. Wynne requested a motion for the Resolution to issue payment to Optibus in the amount of \$32,910 for the purchase of route planning software for 2022 through 2023. Brian Doughton made the motion and Martha Dougher seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- E. Mr. Wynne requested a motion for the Resolution to issue payment to Cummins in the amount of \$27,266.90 to rebuild the motor in bus number 325. Gregg Nieto made the motion and Martha Dougher seconded the motion. All were in favor.
- F. Mr. Wynne requested a motion for the Resolution to enter into negotiations with the local labor counsel for the COLTS construction project. This is subject to final approval of the PLA by the board at a future meeting. Martha Dougher made the motion and Michael Dougherty seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Public Comment/Other Business

Mr. Wynne welcomed comments from the public regarding other business; Dave Kaczmarek addressed the board. Dave asked if the work being done on bus 325 was warranty work. Mike said it was not warranty work and there has been several issues with the bus. Dave also stated that drivers and passengers have asked about having some of the board meetings start at 5:30. Larry Wynne stated that they will look into it.

Brian Doughton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m. and Martha Dougher seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Submitted by:
Jane Farrell, Transit Center Manager