

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF AUTHORITY
County of Lackawanna Transit System
April 27, 2023

The regular meeting of the County of Lackawanna Transit System Authority was held on Thursday, April 27, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. at the Lackawanna Transit Center.

Present were:	Larry Wynne	Martha Dougher
	Gregg Nieto	Brian Doughton
	Atty. Timothy Hinton	Atty. Joseph DeNaples
	Jane Farrell	Timothy McGrath
	Keri Savage	Steve Matassa
	Katie McAndrew	Jonathan Beckage
	Zain Rabbani	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, Martha Dougher and Gregg Nieto participated via phone. Brian Doughton was present and Michael Dougherty was absent.

Acceptance of Minutes

Mr. Wynne requested a motion to approve the March 2023 meeting minutes. Martha Dougher made a motion to accept the minutes and Larry Wynne 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 2023. Brian Doughton made a motion to accept the financial documents and Martha Dougher 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 ridership report for the month of March 2023 for fixed route. Mr. McGrath stated that we continue to be running at approximately 70% pre-covid numbers. This seems to be about average compared to other agencies around the state but a bit lower than we were performing. The revenue was up slightly from February 2023. Mr. McGrath noted that there were 28,598 passes purchased which increased the ridership numbers. Hopefully this will show an increase in trips going forward. Zain Rabbani stated that the fixed route department is working on several tasks for March, April and May. In March, they focused on updating the bus stops and routing. They have also been working on community outreach. Zain felt that the weather

for one or two days in March had decreased the ridership totals. When we serve approximately 2,000 riders a day, that can add up to approximately 4,000 for the month.

At this time, they are working on a new driver training checklist. Some of the training materials that we have are outdated so they are working to implement new training procedures for the new hires. Zain also stated that he has been working with Steve Matassa on the time points because they can get confusing when there are several points on one run. They are attempting to reduce the number of time points to make it clearer for the passengers and the senior citizens.

- B. Mr. McGrath presented the ridership report for the month of March 2023 for shared ride. Mr. McGrath noted that the revenue and the ridership is increasing exponentially. When comparing the revenue from February 2023 to March 2023, there is an increase of approximately \$28,000 in revenue and the ridership is up by over 1,000. Mr. McGrath also noted that the revenue is \$30,000 and ridership 1,000 more than March of 2019, which is pre-covid. At the bottom of the report, there are comments from Wayne Williams, which is a new addition to the report. Mr. McGrath shared that there is an 8.5% increase in ridership, which is above the state average. We are at 92% for our On Time Performance and the Average Trip Duration was .44 hours, which exceeds the state benchmark. Mr. McGrath noted that we have been hitting these goals with minimizing our overtime. This will likely change as the summer months approach.
- C. Mr. McGrath stated that Katie McAndrew has been taking on some of the marketing responsibilities and he asked Katie to update the board on items she has been working on. Katie McAndrew stated that they recently closed on advertising contracts with Lehigh Valley Health Network, Geisinger, Scranton Primary Healthcare Center and the YMCA. They are also working with the Scranton Wilkes Barre Railrider's with another advertising contract. COLTS is planning a 50th anniversary celebration for the employees, families and stakeholders. This past Monday, COLTS partnered with Simplex for an Earth Day clean up on North South Road. Approximately a dozen COLTS employees and family members participated in the event. We are currently running billboard, newspaper advertisements and Facebook posting with featured employees. Katie and Zain recently did travel training with some Carbondale High School students and they have another one scheduled for May 11, 2023. They also did a Community Resources Fair with Goodwill for students transitioning into the work force. Mr. McGrath commended Katie for her hard work. Mr. McGrath stated that we should have a date soon for the 50th Anniversary celebration that will be held at the Railrider's stadium. He will update the board with the details when they are available. Mr. McGrath noted that the advertising contract with the Times Tribune has been renegotiated. With the new contract, we will be diversifying our advertising. This will include billboards and other website related items, in addition to the newspaper advertising. Our employees have been featured in the advertising and we are getting a lot of positive feedback with that. This is also energizing the employees. Each week we will mix up the message to freshen it up.
- D. Keri Savage addressed the board. Keri stated that she has been working on job advertising. There has been a large influx of applications that came in. There have been five fixed route applicants that have been interviewed and another one tomorrow. The

shared ride department is looking for part-time drivers so she will be working on that. The current workforce is doing a great job filling in runs. Keri has Sexual Harassment training scheduled for this Sunday and videos will be running all next week for those who could not be in attendance. In the next couple of months, we will have Reasonable Suspicion, EEO Supervisor and Penn Train training sessions. Mr. McGrath stated that in

the past, individuals were not showing up for the interviews but now they are so there seems to be interest in the positions.

- E. Mike Danchak addressed the board. Mike stated that the costs have been moderating this fiscal year. The main cost centers are labor, overtime, benefits, pension, insurance, parts and fuel. Other items are coming into play with the new budget such as training and security. It has been determined as a group that security needs to be addressed. This last month there has been a spike in overtime with the fixed route department and Mike spoke with Zain about the issue. He stated that there is a correlation between paid time off and overtime. Mike believes that this will continue to be an issue through the summer months. The fuel prices have come down a bit and we are looking at a better contract on the diesel end. The cost for CNG has also moderated. Mike feels the pension and health benefits will continue to be a challenge.
- F. Mr. McGrath announced that invitations have been sent for the groundbreaking ceremony for the new operation center. The event will be held next Friday at 10:00 a.m. We plan to have many high-level Penn Dot officials attending. As the week unfolds, more details will be provided. Mr. McGrath hopes that everyone can attend.

Public Comment/Other Business

- A. Mr. Wynne requested a motion to approve the June 30, 2022 Audit that was presented at the last meeting. Martha Dougher made the motion and Brian Doughton seconded the motion. All others were in favor.
- B. Mr. Wynne requested a motion to approve the Resolution Certifying the Local Match for State Operation Financial Assistance. Gregg Nieto made the motion and Martha Dougher seconded the motion. All others were in favor.
- C. Mr. Wynne requested a motion to approve the 2023-2024 Budget. Martha Dougher made the motion and Gregg Nieto seconded the motion. All others were in favor.
- D. Mr. Wynne requested a motion for the Resolution to Approve the Technical Study Grant Contract with the Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission. Gregg Nieto made the motion and Martha Dougher seconded the motion. All others were in favor.
- E. Mr. Wynne welcomed comments from the public regarding other business; Steve Matassa addressed the board. Steve asked if COLTS has looked into offering Micro Transit. Mr. McGrath stated that they have had conversations with some vendors about the service but, it is still in the starting phase. They are looking at a plan to feed the fixed route service. Mr. McGrath stated that Mike Danchak has been having conversations with Penn Dot and they plan to continue to look into it. Some options would be for COLTS to purchase the software or they will come in and take care of all

of it. Steve asked that they include the ATU in the conversations so they are aware of what is going on. Steve also thanked COLTS for recognizing the union and staff members for their service.

Brian Doughton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:55 p.m. and Martha Dougher seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Submitted by:
Jane Farrell, Executive Assistant