

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF AUTHORITY  
County of Lackawanna Transit System  
March 27, 2024

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The regular meeting of the County of Lackawanna Transit System Authority was held on Wednesday, March 27, 2024 at 4:45 p.m. at the Lackawanna Transit Center.

Present were:	Martha Dougher	Brian Doughton
	Larry Wynne	Atty. Joseph DeNaples
	Atty. Timothy Hinton	Timothy McGrath
	Frank Soto	Jane Farrell
	Zain Rabbani	Keri Savage
	Nicole Ference	Greg Czyzyk

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, Brian Doughton and Martha Dougher were present. Michael Dougherty and Gregg Neito were excused.

Acceptance of Minutes

Mr. Wynne requested a motion to approve the February 2024 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 Finance Statements for the month of January 2024. Martha Dougher made a motion to accept the financial reports and Brian Doughton 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/Department Reports

- A. Mr. McGrath updated the board on a few items. He stated that Mike Danchak could not attend the meeting but, if there are any questions regarding the financial report, he advised the board to send him an email and he would look into their questions. Mr. McGrath noted that our operations were interrupted today due to a fatal car accident that occurred on Keyser Avenue. He thanked the first responders for handling the situation. He also offered thoughts and prayers to the families involved. Mr. McGrath stated that there are no major status changes to the facility project. They hope to have the floor for the administrative office complete in the next week and then they will close in the entire facility. Mr. McGrath announced that the Request for Proposals went out for the supplemental service to our fixed route and our para transit operations. To date, we received proposals from four vendors. There was a conference call to field any questions. A list of questions is being compiled and we are working to get answers to the

questions. Greg Czyzyk stated that an email was sent yesterday to Atty. DeNaples regarding the question. Mr. McGrath asked Greg to send him a copy of the email. Mr. McGrath stated that they received two bids for the RFP's for potential partners in advertising and there will be a meeting to review the information to see if there may be any questions. He also stated that the PPTA conference will be held in April so team members will be attending the conference. The Rodo will be held this year in Altoona and we will begin to review the criteria to see which drivers would be eligible to participate.

- B. Zain Rabbani reviewed the ridership reports for the January 2024 for the fixed route and the shared ride departments as Kelly Matone was unable to attend. Zain stated that the revenue for the shared ride department decreased by 7% from last year however, the ridership increased by 9%. The department is now at 92% of the pre-pandemic numbers. Zain stated that there was a CPR training course provided at the 911 Center. Some of the shared ride van drivers and administrative staff attended. With regard to the fixed route department, Zain stated that we are at 76% of the pre-pandemic level. They continue to work on route expansions in small increments. They anticipate changing the Shoppers Special effective April 1, 2024 to service the plaza that has the plasma center and Chuck E Cheese. This change was created for safety reasons for passengers being picked up in that area. A report was created and it found that, on average, there were approximately 500 passengers picked up in that area.
- C. Keri Savage addressed the board regarding communications department. Keri stated that several employees and family members participated in the S. Patrick's Day parade. Keri also stated that they had a meeting with the mayor's office, the blind association, Mr. Basalyga and Scranton police regarding issues on Lackawanna Avenue. On March 18, 2024 we celebrated Driver Appreciation Day and packed lunches were provided for all of the operators. Keri stated that they had travel training with employees at the Scranton Counseling Center to help provide their patients with better education and training on our services. The fundraiser for Detective Gilmartin was a success and Keri thanked everyone that donated to the cause. There was a meeting with associates from Johnson College to discuss how to improve our service their students and clear up some issues we have with the ridership on their end. Keri noted that, during the job fair at Johnson, there were two or three prospects for the mechanic position. She hopes they will reach out to her about the position. Johnson College is also holding an industry meeting in April that will be attended by over 100 local employers that COLTS will attend. The hope is to educate the employers on how we create our schedules and possibly have their schedules coordinate with ours. Keri also stated that they are working on things for Rider Appreciation Day which is on May 6<sup>th</sup> to May 11<sup>th</sup>. They are working on advertising and sponsorship for the event. Keri announced that the EEO Program is finalized and the draft will be presented to the board for review. They are also working to update the Disruptive Passenger Policy. The current policy doesn't go into detail on how to deal with ADA passengers. Brian Doughton stated that County, Area on Aging and the Legislatures are holding a combined Senior Fair this year. They are just beginning to plan the event and they hope to hold it in downtown Scranton. Keri suggested to Scranton Counseling that they put a tent up at the transit center to assist people.
- D. Frank Soto addressed the board regarding the safety department. Frank stated that the preventable accidents have remained low for the fixed route department in March. Many of the incidents have been mirrors and poles. For the shared ride department, there were

none. The drivers that had the accidents, were provided training with senior operators. Frank noted that, for the St. Patrick's Day parade, a second security officer was stationed at the transit center. He felt the additional security prevented any unwanted behavior and there were no incidents reported that day.

- E. Nicole Ference addressed the board regarding the human resources department. Nicole stated that there were two new hires since the last meeting. She also noted that Stephen Ruddy was promoted to a full-time position at the transit center. Derek Lopez was hired as a fixed route driver. He has a lot of experience as he comes from New York City Transit. They have been interviewing for the casual fixed route drivers as well as part-time shared ride drivers. Nicole believes they will be moving forward with hiring two candidates for the shared ride department. There were four due process hearings since the last meeting. She noted the positive point with that is, the safety department has done a lot of hands-on training with the drivers. Hopefully the additional training will help going forward. Brian Doughton asked if there was any luck finding a mechanic. Nicole stated that they haven't and she also stated that they will be posting a position for a part-time bus cleaner. Atty. Timothy Hinton suggested offering some type of exemption to lower the requirements for the position. Brian noted that, the lack of mechanics, is an issue all across the state. Atty. Joseph DeNaples asked if anyone reached out to Johnson College. Keri stated that they have and they attended a job fair.

Public Comment/Other Business

Timothy Kraft and Luke Byrne from Reinsel, Kuntz and Leshar presented and reviewed the June 30, 2023 Audit with the board. This was presented as an unqualified opinion. Brian Doughton made the motion for the approval of the audit and Martha Dougher second the motion. All were in favor.

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

Brian Doughton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:15 p.m. and Martha Dougher seconded the motion. All were in favor.

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Submitted by:  
Jane Farrell, Executive Assistant